

Cobham Montessori Nursery School

The Hall, 21-23 Spencer Road, COBHAM, Surrey, KT11 2AF

Inspection date	15/11/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The staff team uses assessment very effectively to identify and target gaps and successes in children's achievement, so that all children achieve their potential; staff fully involve parents in this process.
- Children's learning is very well supported by experienced Montessori teaching staff and the provision of high-quality Montessori teaching materials.
- Staff successfully help children to become independent learners and develop critical thinking skills.
- Children learning to speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and /or disabilities make rapid progress because they are supported by experienced and skilled staff.

It is not yet outstanding because

- While the indoor environment fully challenges children to reach their potential, staff's planning for outdoor play and learning is not fully developed.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's play and activities in the indoor and outdoor play areas.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and manager, and undertook joint observations of the outcomes for children's learning with them.
- The inspector spoke to parents, taking account of their views.
- The inspector sampled children's assessment records, the setting's quality assurance documents, safeguarding policies and procedures, and staff suitability records.

Inspector

Amanda Tyson

Full report

Information about the setting

Cobham Montessori School opened in 1965 and re-registered in May 2013 under new ownership. The setting operates from a girl guides' hall in Cobham, Surrey. There are two adjoining halls, a small side room and enclosed gardens. The setting operates during term time. Morning sessions are between 9am and 12.15pm and afternoon sessions are between 12.15pm and 3.15pm. The setting closes at 1.15pm on Fridays. All day sessions are also available, as well as a breakfast club that starts at 8.30am and a holiday club that operates mornings only. Children aged two to five years attend. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The provider works with the children at the setting and employs five staff, including a manager. The manager holds a relevant Level 3 childcare qualification and a Montessori teaching certificate. The provider and two other members of staff hold a level 4 Montessori teaching diploma. The deputy also has an early years foundation degree. One member of staff has a level 1 qualification in early years and one member of staff is unqualified. There are currently 28 children on roll, of whom 12 receive funding for early education. The setting supports a number of children learning to speak English as an additional language, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop provision and planning for outdoor learning to complement the high-quality opportunities for children indoors.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The nursery has not been operating long under the new ownership but children are already making at least good progress in their learning and development. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning, child development and Montessori teaching methods are highly secure. Their assessments on children, including the progress check for children aged two years, are thorough and precise. The strategies used by staff, for instance to track children's levels of involvement and to determine the exact difficulties they are having, are impressive. Staff use the information very well to plan for children's individual progress. More than one member of staff is skilled and experienced in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These children thrive in this environment, which provides a wide range of sensorial-based activities. Staff actively encourage children learning English as an additional language to use their first language within the setting, to support them in becoming bilingual.

Staff create an inviting learning environment. The Montessori teaching equipment and materials excite children and encourage their natural impulse to explore and investigate. They are very well supported by staff to learn how to use the specialist equipment, such as the precisely measured rods, cubes, spindles and graded cylinders, to support their progress in mathematics. For example, two-year-olds help themselves to the set of ten cubes ranging from one to ten centimetres in diameter. The pink colour helps them to differentiate between sizes, to see when the cubes are in the wrong order. They persevere with remarkable self-determination to 'get it right', applauding themselves when they do. Children use their imagination as they explore and experiment with three-dimensional shapes; for example they make an ice cream by placing a hemisphere on top of a solid cone.

Staff help children to develop hand and wrist control so they are well able to learn how to use pencils. For example, children have lots of opportunities to use tools such as tweezers and spoons to transfer grains, and jugs to pour water. They develop awareness of letter shape by tracing their fingers over letter-shaped sandpaper. These strategies prepare them well for developing good pencil control in readiness for school. Staff emphasise letter sounds and engage children in rhyming and rhythmic activities and games. For example, they break down words into three syllables vocally and by clapping. Children make frequent visits to the enchanting practical life area where they enjoy transferring water from ceramic and glass jugs, pegging out washing and scrubbing soap with nail brushes. Children show creativity and critical thinking skills as they trim stems of flowers and arrange them in vases. Children learn about technology by having access to and using real equipment such as torches, magnifiers, cameras and stethoscopes. They also have computer available and would use it for specific activities where guided by a child's needs. Outdoors children enjoy searching for mini-beasts and tending their 'bug hotel'. They practise balancing and pedalling skills using bikes and scooters and enjoy painting fences with water. However, children are not challenged to the same level outdoors as they are indoors because the outdoor environment is not as well presented or equipped.

The staff team are successful in securing partnerships with parents, external agencies and early years providers. Parents are fully involved in planning for and supporting their child's learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are exceptionally well supported to settle into nursery life through a gradual parent separation process and effective key-person system. Staff consistently engage children in warm, supportive and interesting interactions. They help children prepare for change, through carefully planned activities and sensitive discussions. For example, staff plan a 'wear your uniform day', and talk to children about family changes, including the birth of siblings. They help children become independent by showing them how to use the Montessori teaching materials and encouraging them to practise practical life skills. For example, children practise skills needed for dressing and undressing using a wooden

frame with different types of fastenings, serve themselves snacks and practise pouring skills all the time. Children have highly secure relationships with staff, particularly their key person, and each other. They show concern about their friends and are very willing to help each other. Squabbles are rare because children are consistently absorbed in learning. Children show a strong sense of belonging to their environment as they fetch the mop bucket to clear water spillages and wipe tables without being asked.

Parents are provided with good support and advice about child health, such as sleep, toilet training, diet difficulties, and food safety. Staff organise for health professionals, such as the local dentist, to visit the children to promote dental hygiene. Children engage in a good deal of physical activity in the garden and indoors they enjoy music and movement and ballet. Staff promote good eating habits by sitting and eating with children at lunchtime and talking to them about the fruits they select from the snack caf. Children learn about food safety and the importance of hygiene. They help to carry out risk assessments and know, for instance, to mop up water spillages to prevent someone slipping. Children learn about fire safety through evacuation. They use very sharp scissors sensibly when making flower arrangements and carry glassware around with caution.

Children thrive, physically and emotionally, in this nurturing and happy environment. They confidently express their thoughts and wishes and demonstrate a delightful 'have a go' attitude. Children attempt new challenges and when they make mistakes merely try again until they achieve the goal they set for themselves.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The combined knowledge, experience, qualifications and skills of the management team ensure the overall effectiveness of this setting. Staff are united in their commitment to a continuously improving provision and are making good progress towards achieving all round excellence. The systems used for completing observations and assessments on children, and how staff use the information, are very effective. Since registration the provider has replenished the setting with high-quality play and learning resources. Management has made links with the local authority early years advisory service and implemented an exciting improvement plan. This includes developing the outdoor play areas and exploring the possibility of training staff in Forest School leadership.

The nursery has established a strong partnership with parents and children's other carers, such as childminders. They are well informed about the nursery's policies and procedures, including how to make a complaint. Management regularly seeks the views of parents and takes action to address any ideas for improvement. For example, after hearing how annoying it was that children came home with very muddy outdoor shoes, boots were introduced. Management is introducing a programme of parent social events to promote various teaching methods and early childhood development concepts, to strengthen parental involvement in children's learning further. Parents are provided with good information about children's learning and are encouraged to become actively involved in

their children's learning. They are delighted with the welcoming and stimulating nursery environment created by the new management and the obvious progress children make within a short period of time. The nursery has established links with local agencies, such as speech and language therapists and the local authority special educational needs coordinator, who are involved in supporting individual children. Staff have also made links with local schools that children transfer to.

Management is clear about its safeguarding responsibilities and implements rigorous and effective procedures. Procedures for recruiting, vetting and inducting suitable staff, and managing staff performance, are robust and clear. For example, a Disclosure and Barring Service check is completed before staff start working with the children and these are repeated every three years.

Staff have a yearly appraisal, which identifies a professional development plan. Management monitors the effectiveness of this by directly observing and evaluating teaching practice and reviewing this with staff individually at set times throughout the year. There are clear procedures in place for dealing with any underperformance. Management completes child protection training for leaders every two years and for staff every three years. There are clear procedures in place for monitoring children's welfare and for acting on any concerns about a child. Staff use risk assessments effectively to minimise accidents. The premises are well maintained, clean and secure. Fire evacuation is regularly practised and fire detection and control equipment inspected yearly.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY461173
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	916787
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	Cobham Montessori School Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01932 863397

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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