

Eastbourne Montessori School

United Reform Church, Watts Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 1NP

Inspection date

17/12/2013

Previous inspection date

23/06/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	4
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The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Staff do not meet the requirements for adult: child ratios at all times. This means children's health, safety and learning is compromised.
- Staff do not provide appropriate equipment in the first aid kit to help ensure children receive suitable emergency treatment.
- Staff do not plan activities and experiences effectively in the outdoor area, which restricts the children's development of skills and understanding in all areas of learning.
- Staff do not make children's and staff records accessible and easily available for inspection. This means they are unable to evidence they effectively support children's learning and safety.
- Self-evaluation systems are not effective enough to support the setting to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses to help make improvements in all aspects of the provision.
- There are weaknesses in encouraging parents to support children learning at home, which restricts effective cohesion in children's care and learning

It has the following strengths

- Staff implement good behaviour management strategies for positive behaviour. As a result, children are developing genuine care and consideration for others.

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 in all areas of the setting, including the hall on the first floor.
- The inspector sampled a range of available documentation, including medication and accident records, the children's attendance records, staff records and the settings safeguarding and complaints policy and procedures.
- The inspector held ongoing discussions with the manager and staff throughout the inspection, including safeguarding issues.
- The inspector gathered parents' and extended families' verbal views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation and discussed leadership and management with the registered person, who was also the manager.

Inspector

Jacqueline Walter

Full report

Information about the setting

Eastbourne Montessori School registered in 2008. It is a privately owned group that uses the Montessori method of teaching. It operates from within the United Reform Church, in Eastbourne. The setting has access to a first floor room with toilet facilities. There is a kitchen available on the ground floor. They also have occasional use of a hall on the ground floor. There is easy access to the ground floor for wheelchair users, but not for the first floor. The setting is open each weekday from 8.30am to 3pm during term time only. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 18 children attending in the early years age range on a part time and a full time basis. The group is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years of age. The provision also offers care to children aged over five years to six years. The provision employs two members of staff. Both staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure the required adult child ratios are upheld at all times
- ensure the first aid kit has appropriate contents that enable children to receive appropriate emergency care
- develop the planning for outdoor play to ensure children get daily access and have frequent opportunities and experiences in all areas of learning
- make all children's and staff records accessible and easily available for inspection, with particular attention to the progress checks for two-year-old children, staff reference forms and all the required information regarding Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- ensure the systems used to foster continuous improvement are robust; make sure that self-evaluation identifies and addresses key weaknesses, priorities and targets for improvement based on rigorous monitoring of practice.

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

- further develop opportunities for parents to understand and support their children's next steps in learning at home.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff do not have an adequate understanding of how to support children's learning and development, as the educational programme they plan is very limited in providing children with outdoor play and experiences. As a result, they are unable to fully meet children's individual learning and developmental needs and support children in making adequate progress. They have effective systems in place for assessment that cover all areas of learning when inside the premises and they use this successfully to inform planning. For example, they talk to parents about the children's developmental stages and abilities when they first join the setting. They also observe children and complete a baseline assessment of the children's abilities in their first few weeks. To identify their starting points and needs, staff link these early observations to children's ages and stages of development. However, as a result of staff not planning daily outdoor experiences, the opportunities for children to learn skills and consolidate understanding during their outdoor play is restricted in all the areas of learning. For example, children are limited in developing and

strengthening skills in their physical development, such as enjoying wide open spaces in which to run, climb and balance. They also are limited in developing a secure understanding of the world, such as learning about different places, communities and living things. This in turn restricts children in acquiring the skills and capacity to develop and be ready for their next stages in learning. In addition to this, as staff do not meet the required adult: child ratios this has an impact on the quality of teaching and learning outcomes for children. Nonetheless, the staff complete the required progress check for two-year-old children to monitor their development in key areas and share this with their parents.

Overall, the staff provide an appropriate range of activities that capture children's interests and hold their attention. Most children are very confident and explore independently. They are motivated and enjoy developing some creative skills and understanding of the world. For example, they look at and explore some objects such as cones, chestnuts and wheat on an interactive display table. They also extend their interests through expressive art and design as they create collages of snowmen using materials such as cotton wool. They enjoy first hand experiences of exploring wooden blocks and rods that increase in height and width. This helps them to develop understanding of shape and measure. Children enjoy practising some smaller physical skills during a variety of activities. For example, they develop good coordination skills by using knives to butter their crackers at snack times.

Staff are skilful in promoting most aspects of children's learning overall. They always work down at the children's level and take time to make activities fun. For example, they use whispering games to encourage the children to listen and follow simple instructions. As a result, children are motivated to engage in the activities, develop their listening skills and maintain attention. Staff effectively encourage the more able children to develop their literacy skills. They play games of 'eye-spy', using the phonic sounds of everyday objects on a tray. This successfully encourages children to identify sounds of familiar words and to begin to word build themselves. The staff promote communication and language well overall. They use open-ended questions when sharing books with children and make time to discuss children's interests. For example, when children comment that they eat beans at home, staff ask questions such as 'what type of sauce do you have with them?' This helps children think, focus and develop their communication skills.

Staff have appropriate systems in place overall that involve parents in supporting and extending their children's learning. Parents discuss with staff and sometimes complete a comments sheet to share their children's interests, events and development at home. This in turn, allows staff to consolidate and extend children's learning in the pre-school. However, although parents have regular access to the children developments files and discuss with staff their children's progress, their opportunity to effectively support children's learning at home is limited. This is because staff do not identify the actual next steps in their children's learning and share these with parents. Staff value parents' and children's extended families expertise and use it well to support children's understanding of different cultures and individual needs. For example, they welcome them into the setting to show children their national costume and taste their cultural food.

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

Staff take some positive actions to effectively contribute to children's good health and safety. For example, they administer medication safely and have appropriate procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. However, they are in breach of safeguarding and welfare requirements because they do not have appropriate contents in the first aid kit, and do not meet the required adult: child ratios. Hence children are not always able to receive appropriate first aid treatment and their individual needs are not always met. Consequently their well-being cannot be assured. Children are happy and display confidence in talking and playing with staff. They confidently inform staff of their needs to engage in activities. For example, they request more butter to enable them to prepare and eat their snacks. There is an appropriate key person system in place. This provides appropriate continuity and consistency of care for the children. Staff implement effective strategies to help settle new children in. For example, they encourage parents to participate in settling in visits and welcome them and the children's extended family into the setting to support the children in acquiring new skills, such as potty training. This enables them to have a good understanding of children's individual needs or routines and effectively meet these.

Some aspects of the learning environment help children to progress well towards the early learning goals. For example, staff promote a calm and focussed atmosphere and provide a good range of quality child sized, stimulating resources that reflect all the areas of learning indoors. These are organised on low-level shelving, which encourages children to develop good independence and decision-making skills.

Children are effectively encouraged to develop habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners, their own needs and those of others. Staff use good strategies for positive and negative behaviour. In particular, children benefit from the staff being very good role models. Staff demonstrate calmness and consideration; they give lots of praise as well as apologising for their own misleading mistakes. As a result, some children are beginning to develop a genuine consideration for others. For example, they offer to get a chair for members of staff to sit upon during a group time activity.

Children are developing some appropriate self-care skills. They learn about some risks and keeping themselves safe as they engage in fire drills and discuss dangers and how to avoid these with staff. Children develop a good understanding of hygiene through staff encouraging them to independently use the easily accessible tissues to wipe their noses. Children learn to use the toilets independently. There is a very good emphasis on some aspects of healthy lifestyles. In particular, children are developing a good understanding about healthy eating through staff reading books which introduce and give children confidence to try new foods. They also grow and sample fruits such as strawberries. Consequently, children know which foods help them to become strong. Children develop some understanding of the importance of exercise through participating in some physical play in a downstairs hall. Here they have opportunities to develop skills using balls, hoops and a small trampoline. However, the weakness identified in planning a suitable range of learning experiences in the outdoor area limits children's overall physical development.

Staff help children prepare and deal with their move on to school well so they feel happy and secure. The setting has links with the local school and as a result children participate in visits to the school before they actually transfer. Staff also use resources such as books from the local library to help children gather confidence and familiarity in this situation. These strategies help the children feel confident when they ultimately transfer to school.

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

The management team have an inadequate understanding overall of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. There are weaknesses in the planning of the outdoor environment and in encouraging parents to support their children's learning at home. This restricts the children in making sufficient development in all areas of their learning.

The staff's knowledge and understanding of implementing the safeguarding and welfare requirements is also inadequate. This results in a number of breaches of requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, staff do not meet the necessary adult: child ratios. This impacts on the staff's opportunities to engage and fully support children's individual needs regarding both their learning and in promoting their safety. For example, as a result of staff being unable to fully participate from start to finish in some activities, some children lose interest and spend prolonged times wandering and observing other children. Staff take some positive steps to promote the safeguarding of children. They are fully aware of procedures to follow when safeguarding concerns are raised with children and adults in the setting. The conduct daily safety checks of the indoor environment and they leave the door between connecting play areas open so they can hear and attend to children's needs as quickly as possible. However, they are unable to fully minimise risks and effectively supervise children as they do not meet the required adult: child ratios. This compromises the children's safety.

Furthermore, staff do not make all the required children and staff records easily accessible and available for inspection. For example, although the leadership uses appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure staff are suitable and safe with children, there is no record of when Disclosure Barring Service checks are completed and by whom. There are also no records of staff references held in the setting or of the progress checks for two-year-old children. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate how staff effectively support children's learning and their safety.

The leadership team has systems for self evaluation of their provision and practice in place but these are not sufficiently robust to help them identify key weaknesses to inform the nursery's priorities. They use their findings to create development plans and set targets for improvement in the outcomes for children. For example, as part of their development plan to gain accreditation for Montessori teaching they now complete observations and use parents' information to plot children's starting points. Staff have attended additional training courses in the Montessori method of teaching. For example, by attending a course on Montessori Teacher 'the Special Educator'. However, they have failed to identify and

address the weakness to the planning for outdoor learning. This means they are not fully successful in helping support children's learning or in monitoring children's progress in all areas of learning.

Annual appraisals take place for staff to enable them to effectively identify training needs and secure opportunities for professional development. This helps drive improvement within the nursery and therefore benefits the children. The management implements appropriate supervision opportunities for staff to discuss any issues concerning children's development or well-being. This helps staff to support the children's individual needs.

Staff provide a good range of information for parents. This is shared well and includes the nursery's policies and procedures. This helps everyone be aware of his or her responsibilities. Parents say the care and education of the children is very good and some feel it is a truly inspiring setting. They are extremely happy. They feel their children have become very independent and that staff help the children to be calm and to focus on their activities. They also feel that staff are welcoming and they work effectively with them to meet their children's individual needs.

Children benefit from the staff developing some good links with other professionals. For example, they welcome and implement advice successfully from the local authority support workers. In particular, regarding the fostering and adoption of children and in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enhances the care, learning and development for each child and supports their improving outcomes.

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	EY387557
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	838284
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	18
Name of provider	Lucy Claire Forrester
Date of previous inspection	23/06/2009
Telephone number	07946 356271

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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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