

Christchurch Montessori

Beauchamp Place, Reid Street, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2BS

Inspection date	07/01/2014
Previous inspection date	21/09/2010

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		2
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

- Children are very happy, motivated and keen to learn. They demonstrate high levels of independence, curiosity and use of their imaginations, developing strong relationships with staff and each other.
- A well-established key person system is in place, which supports staff's relationships with children and families.
- Staff have a good understanding of how children develop. They plan and provide challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child to learn and develop.
- All staff consistently give the highest priority to the safety of children and effectively support children's growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not take all opportunities to promote children early writing skills in preparation for their eventual move to school.
- There is scope to enhance children's understanding of the wider world, and of their communities in particular.

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 activities in the main playroom and the outdoor area.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and staff.
- The inspector examined children's observation and assessment records, and planning documentation.
- The inspector sampled the policies and procedures, including the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Marie Bain

Full report

Information about the setting

Christchurch Montessori is privately owned and has been registered since 2002. It operates from a large hall and smaller room off the hall in a scout hut, close to Christchurch town centre in Dorset. The setting serves the local area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is open Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am to 1pm and on Thursdays and Fridays from 9am to 3pm, during term times only. There are currently 26 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting is in receipt of funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language.

The setting employs four members of staff work directly with the children, all of whom hold early years qualifications. The setting uses the Montessori method of teaching.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide a range of opportunities for children develop their literacy skills and to experiment with writing for themselves by, for example, by resourcing role-play areas with writing materials

- extend the programme for understanding the world to help children learn more about their community, such as through inviting more visitors to the nursery, such as librarians, fire fighters, health professionals and other emergency workers.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are enthusiastic and keen to participate in activities. They displayed good motivation levels throughout the session as they moved around the playrooms with direction and purpose. Staff use the Montessori philosophy to blend with the learning and development requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff provide a prepared environment where children are free to respond to their natural tendency to play. Through their explorations, children learn through experience to develop concentration, self-discipline, self-choice and independence. This complements and emulates children's progression in the other play room in a different range of activities; for example, role play, the 'reading bus', dressing up, messy play, puzzles, and

construction. These activities also teach children to develop good concentration and perseverance in tasks and activities, and to engage their attention and imaginations. Staff allow children to progress at their own pace and rhythm, according to their individual capabilities through spontaneous, purposeful activities. Children develop their hand control, for example, through buttoning and using tongs to transfer objects.

Children use their imaginations when playing in the role play area, playing co-operatively with other children to act out familiar roles from home, which replicate places they may go or personal experiences. Staff change the focus of the home corner frequently so that it becomes a shoe shop, a Chinese restaurant, a vets' surgery or an office, which extends children's experiences. Staff provide additional resources to represent the actual places, such as menus with pictures and different writing. They include a range of multi-cultural foods such as Chinese dumplings and croissants. These resources promote children's imaginative play and creativity. However, staff miss some opportunities to further encourage children's early literacy experiences here; for example, by encouraging children to use their early writing skills to write for a purpose, such as taking caf orders or creating a menu.

Books, however, are used throughout the setting to support children's literacy skills and develop an understanding what a useful resource books are. Children have access to wonderful story sacks, using props and puppets to support stories. Staff use the 'sound wall' and 'sound of the week' to teach children about different phonic sounds. Staff relate well to the children. They encourage children to talk and listen attentively. These activities promote children's communication, language, vocabulary and articulation. Children show a good knowledge of shapes and numbers within their environment and this is reinforced through tasks they complete with their parents at home. For example, the 'maths challenge' whereby the children and their parents find squares, circles and rectangles in the house or look at the numbers on doors or on number plates. This shows how the setting works with parents to promote children's learning and development.

Many art and craft activities allow the children to express their creativity. They thoroughly enjoy making cards, using glitter and coloured card. Children's creations are put on the display boards in the setting. This enhances their self-esteem and pride in their achievements. Children enjoy many textured play activities in the sensory areas or through planned 'messy play' activities, such as when using shaving foam or play dough. Children learn about festivals and cultures and staff teach them about different aspects of the wider world and community around them. However, there are few visitors from the community, as part of the plans to help children learn about others; for example, librarians, fire fighters, health professionals and the police.

Staff use effective systems to assess and record children's progress and development. Staff plan to meet children's individual targets and interests well. Themes derived from children's interests are used to consolidate children's learning because staff effectively link activities and adapt the environment to the running topic. For example, during a discussion at group time a child asked if they could have a treasure hunt. The treasure hunt led to map making that resulted in a 'pirates week'. This demonstrates that staff can identify children's interests and follow up on them to motivate learning. They track children's progress over time. Well-presented 'learning journeys' record evidence of

children's progress and their time at Christchurch Montessori, which is shared with parents.

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

Children are well settled and thoroughly enjoy their time at this stimulating and friendly setting. A 'key person' system, where staff take responsibility for particular children, enables the staff to form positive relationships with both the children and their parents. The key person 'buddy' system ensures that there is a second person available in the absence of the key person, which means there is always a familiar adult to meet children's care needs. Both adults get to know the children well and are able to help them settle and develop their own interests. Children build warm and friendly relationships with one another as well as the adults around them, consequently behaviour is good. They follow the good role models of the staff and display a good understanding of the rules and routines of the setting. This understanding is supported by the praise and encouragement offered by the staff who show respect, care and understanding by treating each child as an individual.

The range of resources is good and easily accessible to all children, supporting their learning in all areas. The furniture and equipment are of good quality, and suitable for the children's needs. Staff arrange resources to support children's development as independent learners, a useful skill for their eventual move to school.

Children play in a very safe environment because risk assessments have been carried out and any hazards have been identified and eliminated. Children show a secure understanding about keeping themselves safe by, for example, taking part in the risk assessments of the outside area and taking part in emergency evacuation drills.

Children have constant opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors, to gain a secure understanding about the importance of regular exercise and fresh air. The outside area has activities and equipment to encourage a range of physical play, so children gain new skills. Children display well-developed personal independence, for instance when putting on their coats and wellingtons.

Children have a good understanding about the importance of personal hygiene routines, enjoying being independent in using soap and hand towels before eating and after using the toilet. Staff teach children about healthy life styles through discussing nutritious, healthy snacks, providing cooking activities and by growing fruit in the garden. Children who stay for lunch bring a packed lunch and staff work with the parents to encourage healthy lunchbox contents. Children are adept at helping themselves to drinks when they are thirsty. After lunch the children help to wash up the cups and plates. This system allows children to take responsibility for suitable tasks and teaches them useful skills for the next stage in their learning.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

Staff have a comprehensive understanding of how to safeguard children's well-being and receive regular training to maintain and update their level of understanding. Effective safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented consistently and robustly by the staff team, to ensure any concerns are prioritised and addressed. Staff have a good understanding of the steps to take and who to contact should they have a concern about a child in their care.

Staff recruitment and employment is managed through thorough checks and robust procedures to ensure their suitability to work with children, supported by regular appraisals and staff meetings. These procedures are supported by well-managed risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, providing safe, secure environments for children's play. Children show a feeling of security, building good relationships with their key person and are able to demonstrate how to keep themselves and others safe, both verbally and through their actions.

The provider places high priority on promoting equality of opportunity within the nursery. All children are welcomed into the setting with staff developing a very good knowledge of each child's backgrounds and needs. They use this knowledge to ensure all children are well integrated into the setting, providing resources to reflect their different cultures and others, to support children's understanding of diversity. This results in children making very good progress in their development in relation to their starting points. Staff monitor children's progress continuously and evaluate the environment and activities to maintain and improve the setting's effectiveness.

Staff work extremely well together to provide a stimulating environment which is conducive to children's learning. The motivation and enthusiasm shown by the manager encourages the staff team to be committed and eager to continuously evaluate, monitor and assess the environment together with children's learning and development. The procedures for self-evaluation are constantly being updated and recorded to promote continuous improvement and to ensure outcomes for children are good. The setting has made significant strides forward since the last inspection. Actions and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been successfully addressed which has had a positive impact on the outcomes of children.

The staff team have very positive relationships with the parents and carers. Staff include parents in decision-making choices for the setting through verbal discussion, parents' coffee mornings and questionnaires. Staff use the feedback they receive to ensure the service offered is responsive to its users; for example, by providing policies in different languages. Parents have a designated area in the foyer and good levels of consistency have been achieved in relation to reinforcing children's learning and development at home. Notices and regular newsletters keep the parents informed about the setting, changes of staff or activities the children are enjoying. Parents hold the setting in high regard, giving highly positive comments including those on how they feel the setting has 'a warm and homely atmosphere'. All parents state that they are happy with the organisation, daily care and education of their children.

Links with other early years providers that the children attend, such as childminders, are well established, with information being exchanged through a communication book. The setting also invites teachers from local schools to visit the setting to facilitate the smooth transfer for children from the setting to school life. The staff work extremely closely with many professionals, such as those connected with Portage and medical practitioners in order to support the individual needs of the children.

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	EY136941
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	948418
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Gillian Mary Thomas
Date of previous inspection	21/09/2010
Telephone number	01202 487045

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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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