

Oaklea Montessori CIC

Ogilvie Hall, Wignall Street, Lawford, MANNINGTREE, Essex, CO11 2JG

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

25/02/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 make good progress in all areas of learning because the staff confidently use their expertise in applying Montessori principles, while successfully incorporating all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development.
- All aspects of children's well-being are sensitively considered from the earliest days. Consequently, they develop firm attachments and a strong sense of belonging, which allows them to play and learn with growing confidence. Safeguarding is well understood by all staff and ensures that child protection has the highest priority.
- The staff and children benefit from continuous improvement. This is due to the identification of areas for development through the thorough self-evaluation undertaken. Parents' views are valued and their suggestions and ideas incorporated where this is practical.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor area is less well-resourced to provide children with stimulating opportunities to fully extend their creative thinking and develop their problem-solving skills, particularly through open-ended and natural play.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector interacted with children in the playrooms and in the outside area.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider and all staff, and carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector viewed a sample of documentation including evidence of suitability checks and qualifications, policies and children's development profiles.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

Oaklea Montessori CIC at Ogilvie Hall, Lawford, was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a community hall in Lawford, Essex. It is one of two nurseries managed by Oaklea Montessori Community Interest Company. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from two main rooms and there is an enclosed outdoor area available for outside play.

The nursery opens on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during school term time, from 8.30am until 5pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are currently 12 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. It uses the Montessori approach to education. The nursery employs three members of childcare staff. Of these, all staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status, one has a level 4 Montessori diploma and one has a qualification at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the range of resources freely available for outside learning; include open-ended resources, which will develop children's creative thinking and problem-solving skills, so that children can make meaningful choices and continue to be active learners when they use the garden area.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of development and gain the skills and attitudes they will need when they start school. By employing well thought out and effective teaching methods, staff help children achieve progress in the prime areas of learning. For example, they speak carefully to children and get down to their level, making sure they are understood. Children respond, knowing that they are listened to. They learn new vocabulary as they listen to stories and think about the characters and where they come from. Small muscle skills develop as children use the Montessori equipment as well as a range of tools for crafts and gardening, preparing them for holding a pencil so they can start to form letters and learn to write. Staff understand how children learn, and know that every child develops at their own pace. By observing children closely they are able to pinpoint accurately what each child needs to do next in order to make progress. Providing children with choices allows them to develop their exploratory urges and think creatively. For example, they arrange a set of 'footsteps' in a pattern and go on a fantasy journey. By having free access to the toys and equipment

children are able to revisit items, make connections and work out how they can improve their own skills. The nursery uses the Montessori principles and bases the day-to-day programme on these. Staff use a range of teaching methods to successfully incorporate the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning to ensure that children's good progress is effectively promoted. For example, children take part in a whole group circle time for stories and 'show and tell'. At other times they work independently, supported by staff, selecting their choice from the materials set out on the low-level storage or table tops. Children sometimes initiate activities, such as, ring games, role play or hide and seek. This ensures a balance of adult-directed and child-led play and learning and keeps children actively involved. Children have access to crayons and pencils so they can practise making marks. When they show readiness they are introduced to letter sounds and letter formation, so they can start to practise writing letters and words. They make rubbings and practise with scissors, providing them with experience of various tools. A painting easel is set up for children to access and use colour to create pictures and experiment with colour mixing.

The nursery benefits from being in a semi-rural setting. Neighbouring ponies can be visited and some woodland walks are undertaken. The management are keen to introduce regular 'forest school' sessions, and have identified this on the development plan. Currently, the range of resources available to children in the outside area is rather limited and contains few open-ended resources for children to create exciting play scenarios and practise their problem-solving skills. They enjoy playing hide and seek, using the large trees and mounds as hiding places. A hard area allows wheeled toys to be used even on damp days. All children have full protective clothing and boots so they do not miss out on the fresh air and exercise even when the weather is less than fine.

Staff observe children closely and track their progress against a set of criteria which shows what they have achieved and what they need to do next. Parents are kept well informed of their child's achievements through regular, formal meetings with their child's key person and informal daily discussions at home time. Children at age two have an in-depth assessment to ensure they are reaching expected levels of development. Any gaps can be addressed with additional support, so children make the best progress they can. A report for parents is prepared, which they can share with their health visitor.

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

Children's emotional welfare is carefully and sensitively considered, as this is seen as crucial to their overall development, as well as their confidence and self-motivation, to allow them to engage at the nursery. Before children attend, staff gather information from parents regarding the child's home and family, their medical and health needs, and their likes and dislikes. This way, they can begin to plan for children immediately and provide tailored activities to suit their individual needs. The key person system helps children and families form a supportive attachment to a named individual, who will be responsible for communicating with parents and sharing information on a day-to-day basis. Where children attend other early years settings, contact is made in order to share vital information to ensure continuity for the child.

Children learn to behave in ways that consider the needs and feelings of others. They are taught to be helpful, share and take turns, and listen when others are speaking. This way, everyone's ideas and opinions are valued and children's self-esteem is assured. Children are learning about their local community as visitors are invited in to share their talents. For example, a florist shows them how a wreath is made, and links are being established with the nearby church. Parents say they have confidence in the nursery and many have been loyal through several children, who attended the previous setting owned by the same provider.

Children at Oaklea Montessori learn habits that will keep them healthy and help them maintain a healthy lifestyle. For example, they enjoy a diet of snacks and meals based on nutritious, fresh ingredients, with milk or water to drink. Children are involved in the preparation and serving of the food, and take a full part in helping to clear up and wash their own plates and cups when they have finished. This develops their sense of responsibility and independence. Children follow handwashing routines before they eat and after outdoor or messy play. Staff are conscious of children's privacy when they change nappies, or children's wet clothes, maintaining their dignity. Children can play out of doors, protected from the weather in suitable clothing and boots, and with sunscreen on warmer days. This promotes physical development as children run and move freely, gradually gaining control over their movements, and challenging themselves as they run up and down the mounds, and around the trees.

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

The nursery management team have worked hard to establish the nursery in its new premises. The staff and children have settled well and make good use of the spacious indoor care rooms to deliver the educational programme and provide a safe, secure environment in which the children are flourishing. A staff member has the role of designated person with lead responsibility for safeguarding. She ensures that all staff are well informed and enabled to respond to any concerns in regard to a child's welfare. Parents are made aware of the nursery's policy and procedures in regard to child protection and how concerns will be dealt with. Children's best interests are at the heart of everything that staff do, and parents can be reassured that children are well protected from harm or abuse. All adults working with children undergo stringent vetting and checks to ensure their suitability. Robust recruitment procedures take account of qualifications, experience and aptitude, and ongoing supervision and appraisals ensure that staff follow individual professional development plans. This has the effect of constantly raising the levels of skill and expertise within the nursery. Staff are very clear about their roles and work as a team to cover all aspects of the children's care and education.

The quality of teaching is closely monitored to ensure consistency and high quality at all times. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status and all staff adhere to the Montessori principles and ethos on which the nursery is based. Planning is based on individual children's next steps in their learning and includes their interests, as well as taking account of their emotional needs and specific stages of development. By systematically observing and assessing what they see children doing, staff are able to

meticulously track their development and ensure that each child fulfils their potential, and gains the skills they need for future learning. Regular parent meetings are set up, to keep parents fully informed about what their own children are doing and how they can continue the learning at home. This is also a forum where parents can discuss wider matters related to childcare and education, and builds very positive links for the children as they understand that their home life and nursery life are linked.

A clear and focused development plan is in place and identifies areas for further development and new initiatives, such as the forest school sessions, and strengthening the partnership with parents to ensure that their contributions are included and valued. By sharing expertise and resources across the two nurseries in the group, best use is made of the talent pool and ideas for activities, so children's experiences are enriched and maximised. Staff report that they feel nurtured and respected, and can approach the managers freely with any matters they wish to discuss. This goes a long way to assuring the high levels of staff retention, positivity and good morale. In turn, children are cared for by enthusiastic and passionate, dedicated staff who have high expectations and a desire to see the nursery succeed and improve.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY467104
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	935438
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	12
Name of provider	Oaklea Montessori Community Interest Company
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01255887902

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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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