

The Colourwheel Montessori

The Colourwheel Montessori Nursery, Denton Crescent, Black Notley, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8ZZ

Inspection date

30/05/2014

Previous inspection date

11/11/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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

- Babies and children are very well cared for in a safe, stimulating and fun learning environment. Strong bonds with their key persons mean that babies and children are confident and are developing a high degree of independence.
- Systems for assessing and tracking children's progress are robust so staff have an accurate understanding of children's skills knowledge and abilities. This enables them to plan appropriate next steps in learning for each child, ensuring that all groups of children make at least good progress.
- Strong partnerships with parents and other professionals ensure that children receive the appropriate support and continuity in their learning and development.
- Good transition arrangements ensure that children are emotionally well prepared for entry into the nursery and for the next stage in their education.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is a lack of written words and labels around the room to promote and enhance children's vocabulary and early reading skills.

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 spoke to the manager, deputy manager and some members of staff.
- The inspector sampled documentation relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation, staff records and children's learning and development records.
- The inspector observed a range of activities and adult interaction with them.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers.

Inspector

Vicky Turner

Full report

Information about the setting

The Colourwheel Montessori was registered in 2000 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted hospital building in the Black Notley area of Essex, and is managed by the owner. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a converted hall and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery follows the Montessori approach. It employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including one with Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 109 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who 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:

- increase opportunities to extend children's vocabulary and early reading skills, for example, by labelling shelves and displaying topic-related vocabulary to support their already good language skills.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is good so children make good progress in their learning and development. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and plan rich learning experiences that promote their learning through the Montessori approach. Children start each session with 'brain gym', which keeps them alert and prepares them well for learning. The learning environment is well organised with a wide range of quality resources, which are easily accessible from the shelves. However, the shelves are not labelled to help children understand that print carries meaning. Children are purposefully engaged in various self-chosen activities and staff are at hand to scaffold the learning. They find their own work space and settle down to a chosen activity. For example, they choose to share books with an adult, cut up paper with scissors and practise fastening and undoing buttons. Electronic systems for assessing and tracking babies' and children's progress are robust. Staff make careful observations of the children and record these instantly on tablet computers. This information is used to plan children's next steps in their learning. Children's progress is tracked regularly, so staff have an accurate understanding of children's skills abilities and knowledge. This enables staff to identify those children who are working with skills below that typical for their age and can put in appropriate support. Each child has an individual plan and next steps of learning on the tablet computer for

each area of learning. Any member of staff can instantly access children's next steps in learning and move them on to the next stage in their learning.

Children's communication and language skills are well promoted through stories, children retelling stories, puppets and role play activities. For example, they listen with keen interest to a story about animals and thoroughly enjoy interacting with the puppets. This session is very lively and highly motivating so children are eager to contribute. Staff model language well and use effective questioning to extend children's thinking. Children learn to link letters and sounds, segment and blend sounds to real words. However, there is little evidence of the written word around the room to help children understand that word carries meaning. Correct letter formation is modelled well and children have plenty of opportunities to practise forming letters correctly in sand and using a range of tools and materials. Sandpaper letters give children the sensory experience of feeling the shape of the letters. There are good opportunities for children to draw and write freely. Children and parents participate in a themed week based on a popular monster character, when they set up a cafe and make and serve themed foods. They also enjoy dressing up as the characters from the book.

Staff take every opportunity to reinforce mathematical skills and concepts as children sing the days of the week song, sequence the months of the year and say the days of the week in French. Younger children also join in. This is supported by Makaton sign language to aid communication. Children learn about solid shapes and count confidently. There are plenty of opportunities for problem solving. They learn to subtract numbers as they sing a counting song and act it out with soft toys on the parachute. Children learn about diversity as they celebrate various festivals throughout the year. Regular walks to the park and the fields nearby provide greater opportunities for play and exploration and to develop children's knowledge of the world. They experience more challenging physical equipment at the park and explore the natural world as they hunt insects and go on a 'bear hunt'. Children visit various local shops and begin to learn about people and communities. Visits to the farm support children's knowledge of farm animals well. Children have plenty of opportunities to be creative. For example, they sing songs, paint pictures and role play. They benefit from weekly French sessions and soccer skills training once a month. Each child has a key person who knows the children well and develops a strong partnership with parents. Parents contribute to their child's initial assessment when they first join the nursery. Buddy key persons ensure continuity should the child's key person be absent at any time. Learning journey records are well documented with examples of children's work, annotations and photographic evidence of their achievements. The progress check for children between the ages of two and three years is firmly embedded and shared with parents. Babies and children learn how technology works as they take photographs, explore programmable toys and discuss their online learning journey records with the staff.

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

Babies and children are well cared for in a safe, stimulating and fun environment. They are happy and settled because of the strong bonds they have formed with their key persons. Home visits form part of a gradual transition process into the nursery. Babies and

children can have as many home visits as necessary to settle them in. They are encouraged to bring in a comforter from home should the need arise. As a result, children and babies settle in well. Children confidently move around the room selecting activities and show high levels of sustained concentration on their chosen activities. Well-established routines mean that children know how things work in the nursery. For example, they choose an activity, work mat and work space. On completing an activity, children roll up their work mat and put the mat and equipment away. Self-help skills are very well promoted as children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves. For example, they put on their boots and coats before going out to play, and cut up their own fruit when they choose to have their snack. They lay the table, help themselves to lunch and tidy away their dirty plates and cutlery. Children adopt good hygiene practices as they wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. Visual prompts displayed in the toilet area remind children of the hand washing routines.

Children's health is nurtured well. Nutritious meals are cooked on the premises taking into consideration children's dietary and medical needs. Children can sleep during the day when they want to, and babies settle down in cots to sleep. Parents receive daily feedback about their baby's feeding, sleep and nappy changing routines at nursery. Children have daily access to the outdoors where they develop their physical skills as they play parachute games, ride wheeled toys confidently, climb the climbing wall, practise their balancing skills and run around in the fresh air. Children engage in forest school activities, enhancing their knowledge of the world. There are good strategies in place to manage children's behaviour, and they know what is expected of them. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary. Purposeful praise is used effectively to acknowledge children's achievements and positive behaviour. The 'wow' board celebrates children's successes and is shared with parents. Various strategies are employed for children with challenging behaviour. The golden rules developed by the children help keep them safe. Children are taught to be able to say if they do not like something. They are also encouraged to assess risks themselves, and respond well to staff's gentle reminders to push chairs in when they get up. They are taught about 'stranger danger' and learn how to stay safe on the roads.

Children are emotionally well prepared for transition in to primary school because of the good arrangements that exist. Staff talk to the children about transition, and school staff visit the nursery. Children engage in role play activities around starting school. For example, they dress up in school uniform. The nursery has established good links with receiving schools and support children with difficulties when they start school. The manager visits schools once a week to seek different ways in which the nursery can further support the children during the transition period. Staff, children and parents look forward to the graduation ceremony at the end of term, when children receive certificates and attend the 'strawberry fair'.

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

Staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities for keeping children safe. A range of policies and procedures are fully in place to ensure that children are safe. These are regularly reviewed and updated. Procedures for recruiting staff are robust to ensure

that staff are suitable to work with the children. The premises are secure and visitors are asked to sign in and out of the nursery. All members of staff are trained in safeguarding children and most hold current first-aid certificates. Staff know how to report any concerns they may have for a child's safety and welfare. Accidents and incidents are well documented and parents are informed if their child has had an accident. Regular risk assessments and daily safety checks ensure that the learning environment and equipment are safe. Children practise fire drills on a regular basis and know the routines for safe evacuation of the premises. Staff are very well deployed so that children are supervised at all times.

The owner manager and deputy manager provide good leadership for a team of well-qualified and enthusiastic staff. Staff performance is monitored through regular observations, staff supervision meetings and annual appraisals. The manager has an accurate view of teaching. Staff are encouraged to update their training and to reflect on their practice. Peer-on-peer observations provide good opportunities for staff to share good practice, reflect on their own practice and identify areas for improvement. Monthly face-to-face meetings and weekly online meetings enable staff to discuss their ideas or any concerns they may have. Management and staff make accurate evaluation of the quality of the provision, taking into account the views of parents and children. As a result, the nursery has a good understanding of their strengths and areas for development in order to improve outcomes for children. For example, there are plans to record children's views more formally, include more cooking activities, develop the sensory room and construct another canopy outdoors. They have successfully addressed the recommendations set at the last inspection. The garden has been redesigned to incorporate shelves for practical life activities, a sand pit, a mud kitchen, a climbing wall and net, a balance beam and stepping stones. This has enhanced all areas of learning offered to children in the outdoor environment.

The nursery has established strong partnerships with parents so they are actively involved in their children's learning and development. They receive daily feedback about their child's progress, have online consultations and attend parents' meetings once a year. Parents access their children's learning journey records online and make their own contributions. The nursery organises a mums' night out and dads' afternoon, when dads come into the nursery and engage the children in outdoor activities, such as den building. Parents report that they are pleased with the way the nursery develops children's independence. They comment that staff are friendly, approachable and willing to help. They value the opportunity to access their children's learning journey records online. The nursery also has good partnerships with the children's centre and external agencies. This enables staff to seek expert advice and appropriate support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. As a result, these groups of children are well supported and make good progress.

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	EY373962
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	858216
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	46
Number of children on roll	109
Name of provider	The Colourwheel Montessori Nursery Limited
Date of previous inspection	11/11/2008
Telephone number	01376 339 139

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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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