

# Oak House Montessori Ltd

77 Wimborne Road, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, SS2 4JR

## Inspection date

02/05/2014

Previous inspection date

02/10/2008

## 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

- Teaching is effective as staff have a secure understanding of how children learn and have high expectations of them all. As a result, children are confident, motivated to learn and make good progress across all areas.
- Children's welfare and safety are effectively assured because staff follow safe practices and demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Children and babies form secure emotional attachments with their key persons, which helps them gain a good sense of well-being and belonging.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are successful in promoting positive outcomes for all children.
- The management and staff team constantly monitor the effectiveness of the service they provide. As a result, they identify clear and thoughtful plans for sustained improvement over time, to build on children's progress and achievements.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance further the opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and skills in mathematics.

## 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 indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the registered provider, manager, staff team and children.
- The inspector viewed a sample of children's development records.
- The inspector saw evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff, self-evaluation, risk assessment and policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from their responses in questionnaires organised by the nursery.

## Inspector

Patricia Champion

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Oak House Montessori Ltd opened in 2003. It is privately run and managed. The nursery operates from a converted two-storey house in Southend-on-Sea, Essex. It serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Opening times are from 7am until 7pm. Children are cared for in eight playrooms and have access to enclosed areas for outdoor play. There are currently 225 children attending, who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. Staff support children's learning by following the Montessori philosophy and principles alongside traditional teaching methods. There are currently 26 staff working directly with children, 21 of whom have an appropriate early years qualification. There are two members of staff that hold early years degrees, 14 staff hold early years qualifications at level 3 or 4 and five staff hold qualifications at level 2. There are five staff working towards an early years qualification. The nursery also employs a cook, cleaner and a caretaker. The nursery receives support from the local authority. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the use of space and resources to ensure that activities constantly inspire children to build on their knowledge and skills. For example, by ensuring that staff consistently take account of children's preferred learning styles when planning experiences to extend understanding of numbers, shapes, space and measure.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children and babies are confident individuals, who benefit from the stimulating activities and good quality play materials provided. A good blend of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensure that children are the prime instigators in their own learning. Staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and provide a mixture of Montessori and traditional early years educational experiences. Therefore, children are developing well and make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have high expectations of children and each child's progress is regularly assessed. Staff observe and capture children's starting points and effectively plan for their next stages of development. Each child's 'learning journey' development record includes positive observations, illustrated by photographs and examples of children's artwork and early writing. Staff clearly identify the learning priorities they need to plan for. The required progress check at

age two is also successfully completed. Information is promptly shared with parents to let them know if development is less than expected. This also means that any necessary early intervention from outside professionals is sought and secured without delay. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very good. Staff successfully use visual prompts to help children request what they need and picture timelines to communicate what is going to happen next. Children gain confidence and respond well to these methods of communication.

Teaching is good. Children's communication and language skills, including those with English as an additional language, are promoted well throughout the nursery. Staff listen carefully to what children or babies say, speak to them clearly, using eye contact at children's level and continually encourages them to talk. For example, as children and babies explore messy, tactile or sensory materials they are encouraged to describe how it feels and smells. Staff give children time to think and respond to questions, they introduce new words and repeat them often. This extends and builds children's vocabulary range. Parents are strongly involved in their children's learning. Staff share information regarding children's achievements and how learning can be supported at home. In addition to this, parents are encouraged to share their thoughts, ideas and their children's interests when at home. This enables both staff and parents to consolidate and extend children's learning and promote even swifter progress.

Children are effectively developing the skills they need for future learning and in readiness for starting school. A high focus has been placed on children developing the personal and social skills they need to become motivated and independent learners. They enjoy learning about technology when using the computers and there are good opportunities for children to develop a love of books. Staff are very animated while reading to children in small groups. Older children show good levels of concentration as they explore or predict the story line. There are many opportunities for children to develop their pre-writing skills when playing. Younger children make marks using chalks and use paint brushes to make patterns, while older children are encouraged to write their names on their artwork. Children are generally effectively supported to use numbers. They skilfully count and sort items according to shape, size and colour, when using a wide range of graded Montessori resources. However, staff are not consistently taking account of children's individual preferred learning styles when planning activities to extend their mathematical skills. This means that there is scope to make better use of space and resources, particularly during role play scenarios or outdoor play, to help children learn about numbers, shapes, measure and capacity.

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

The nursery provides a secure and welcoming environment where children feel safe. Resources are plentiful, safe and clean and mainly encourage children's natural curiosity as learners. Although, there have been recent changes to the deployment of staff, there is an effective key-person system in place. The settling-in arrangements are flexible and tailored to suit the needs of children. Parents supply photographs of familiar family members or pets and these are displayed where children can easily see them to help them

feel at home. Staff are kind and caring and exchange information with parents about children's home routines, needs and preferences right from the start. As a result, children settle quickly and parents are reassured that their children receive consistency of care. As children move on to the next playroom, staff work with parents to ensure that children are ready and prepared for the move. Time is spent sharing information with the new key person and children are offered settling-in sessions in the new playrooms. The support for children during their transfer to full-time education is also very good. Staff contact the local primary schools and arrange for teachers to visit the nursery, so that children become familiar with their new carers. Reports and transition forms are completed so that the school are aware of each child's needs and can promote continuity in children's care and learning. In addition, prior to children leaving, staff ensure they are effectively prepared through more structured activities that prepare them well for the next stage in their learning.

Children develop their understanding of personal safety as they practise fire drills or are reminded to look out for risks as they play outdoors. Their self-esteem is enhanced as they receive purposeful praise for good behaviour, effort and achievement. Children behave well and play cooperatively with their friends because staff use positive behaviour management strategies. Staff ensure that children learn about taking turns and understand the importance of demonstrating kind and respectful attitudes towards others. For example, children use a sand timer so they know how much time they can spend using the computer. They eagerly help to tidy up and know to return the Montessori resources to the shelves when they have finished using them. Staff encourage children to do things for themselves appropriate to their stages of development. For example, older children put on their own jackets and shoes before going outside and attend to their own personal care routines in the bathroom. Nappy changing and toilet training is hygienically and sensitively carried out. Babies and toddlers are supported when feeding themselves. This helps to build their self-help skills and independence. A rolling snack bar has also recently been introduced. This gives older children the opportunity to choose when they wish to eat or when they wish to persevere and concentrate on their activities.

Children's good health is well-promoted through sensible routines and a commitment to a healthy lifestyle. Active play is effectively encouraged both indoors and out, as children move expressively to music indoors and enjoy a range of songs or circle games with actions. They have daily access to the outside areas, where they enjoy the challenge of the climbing equipment and steering wheeled toys, as well as taking part in group games. Children are provided with a range of nutritious snacks and meals, which are all prepared on the premises. Staff are well aware of any special dietary requirements and have a full understanding of the importance of preparing food safely. The nursery kitchen has been inspected by an environmental health officer and has been awarded five stars for food hygiene. Drinking water is freely available so that children do not become thirsty or dehydrated. The babies' personalised cups are kept within eyesight and older children can independently pour their own drinks. In addition, all children also have their own named placemats at lunchtimes. These individual and personal touches help children to feel valued.

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

The nursery management has a secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to guide staff and effectively inform parents about how the nursery operates. The safeguarding policy is strictly adhered to and this means that staff are clear about their responsibilities in protecting children from harm. They have a good understanding of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and know the procedures to follow should they have any concerns. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to check staff's suitability to work with children and to ensure they know their responsibilities. For example, staff complete the appropriate background checks and there are clear induction procedures for trainees. Effective risk assessments are in place that ensures all areas which children access are safe and suitable. Children are well supervised and ratios are maintained at all times. Any minor accidents are managed effectively. There are always staff holding first aid qualifications in the playrooms, clear accident records are kept and parents sign to acknowledge the entry. In addition, the management rigorously monitor the frequency and location of accidents to ensure that risk assessments are reviewed and adjusted accordingly.

There are good systems in place for monitoring and evaluation of practice. The nursery has successfully achieved accreditation with an approved quality assurance scheme. Staff have regular supervision meetings and appraisals. There is a strong focus on reflective practice and survey forms are provided for staff to record their thoughts and observations. As a result, staff are encouraged to attend a range of both external and in-house training opportunities to ensure their knowledge and childcare skills are continuously developed. The 'learning journey' development records are regularly monitored by management to ensure that staff are accurately assessing each child and providing appropriate activities to help them make the best possible progress. Room observations are also regularly undertaken to help all staff improve on their practice. This also means that the management are well aware of the strengths of the nursery and continuously identify areas for further development. Since the last inspection, many improvements have been made to the premises to make it even more welcoming to children and their families. The garden has been significantly improved to ensure that children have high quality learning experiences in all weathers, throughout the year.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very good. This is because the management and staff see this as being crucial in enabling them to fully support the needs of children and babies. Communication is effective and key persons spend time each day talking to parents about their children. There is an informative website; the noticeboards and newsletters also give parents a wealth of information about the care provided. Parents take an active part in their child's learning and are involved in decision making on key matters. Regular parent consultations with key persons ensure that they are continually aware of their child's progress and they are encouraged to make their own contributions to the development records. In addition, active parental involvement is fully promoted through parents' forum meetings or workshops to discuss childcare issues, such as behaviour management. The management take the views of parents seriously. There is a

clear complaints policy and the management promptly act and make changes when concerns are raised. Feedback from parental questionnaires demonstrates a good level of satisfaction with the nursery. Parents speak highly of the care provided. They say they appreciate staff's competence when promoting children's development and value the warm interaction staff have with their babies and children. Highly effective partnerships with external agencies strongly contribute to meeting children's individual needs. Staff have regular discussions with other professionals involved in children's learning and when children attend more than one nursery, relevant information is shared effectively to maintain continuity in their care and learning.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY379463
<b>Local authority</b>	Southend on Sea
<b>Inspection number</b>	966568
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	87
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	225
<b>Name of provider</b>	Oak House Montessori Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	02/10/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01702 611991

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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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