

Kingfisher Montessori School

Gaddesden Row Community Hall, Gaddesden Row, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Hertfordshire, HP2 6AG

Inspection date	09/10/2014
Previous inspection date	03/03/2009

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

- Children learn to concentrate and work independently due to the highly effective teaching and enthusiasm of experienced staff and Montessori teachers.
- Staff provide an exciting and enabling environment for all children to engage in purposeful play. This means that children are able to make good progress across the seven areas of learning.
- Children show high levels of independence and demonstrate strong self-assurance. They form secure attachments with staff and this effectively promotes their well-being.
- The management and staff understand their roles and responsibilities to ensure that children are safeguarded. They are also very committed to continually developing the provision for the benefit of the children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always maximise opportunities for parents to be fully involved in the next steps in their child's learning. This includes helping parents to understand the use of the Montessori learning environment, in order to enable them to fully support children's learning needs in the setting and at home.
- On occasions, a few children are less well engaged during lunch and snack time routines because these are not so well suited to their individual needs.

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 classrooms, the outside learning environment and talked to the staff and children.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager/registered provider of the provision.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Sheila Harrison

Full report

Information about the setting

Kingfisher Montessori School was registered in July 2007 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of two privately owned nurseries and operates from Gaddesden Row Community Hall, Gaddesden Row, near Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The nursery school follows the Montessori educational ethos. All areas of the premises are included in the registration and this contains two rooms used as the main play areas for children with associated facilities. A secure outside play area is also available. The nursery school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one holds a qualification at level 4 and the manager holds Early Years Professional status. The nursery opens Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 3pm, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 30 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the already successful engagement of parents and enhance their understanding of children's learning and development, for example, by fully involving parents to help children achieve the next steps in their learning, requesting parents comments and expanding on the value of the Montessori learning environment
- review lunch and snack time routines to enhance children's experience to eat in a calm and relaxed atmosphere by monitoring and minimising waiting times during mealtimes.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Staff have a clear understanding of how children make progress across the required areas of learning. They make comprehensive observations and assessments of children's development. They use this information to sensitively respond to children's emerging needs. Staff are good role models as they help children to be motivated and eager to learn. They effectively encourage children to be curious and solve problems by asking for their thoughts. Staff promote children's communication and language development very well. They engage in sustained conversations with children, some of whom are confident talkers. Those with less confidence are gently encouraged to speak to a group about an object that captivated

their interest. Staff speak clearly, repeating back to the children the correct pronunciation and grammar. They inspire the children with a love of books and stories as they read a favourite story outside. Children respond well as they are eager to join in the phrases and actions. In the afternoon, children act out the story by pretending to go through the long grass and splash through the water. This helps children to talk and communicate in a wide range of situations.

Staff display the play equipment attractively to encourage children to settle and become readily involved in their play. Children enjoy the Montessori equipment, which is specially devised to help them to become successful and independent learners, who are encouraged to select resources and make choices about what they play with. They enjoy the learning processes and will happily repeat exercises again and again until they complete the task to their satisfaction. Children show deep concentration while using the attractive nesting dolls, as they fit the different size dolls inside each other. They show high levels of fascination as they use small pipettes of coloured water to suck up liquid and squirt onto absorbent paper and see the changes in the paper. Younger children see the older children practise their skills on the challenging Montessori equipment and they want to try too. They attempt to build a tower with the sensitive support of the staff. Children relish their time outdoors and the staff encourage them to explore and be fully engaged in their play. For example, children devise their own imaginative games as they climb the small trees and use the bushes as hiding places. This means that by the time the children are ready to move onto the next stage in their learning and to school, they have acquired the skills and dispositions they need to help them continue to make good progress.

Staff and parents share updates about children's learning and development in a variety of ways. Parents provide information on children's starting points through the 'All about me' document and staff undertake the required progress check for children aged between two and three years. Parents are very appreciative of the information staff provide in the daily communication books and the book swap scheme that helps children's early reading skills and learning at home. Staff have modified the documents used for sharing individual planning and the next steps in children's learning with parents. They send these documents home for their information and comments to support children's future learning. However, on occasions, staff do not fully inform parents about their plans to help children to achieve the next steps in their learning or include input from parents. This includes helping all parents to understand the use of the Montessori learning environment, in order to enable them to fully support children's learning needs in the setting and at home.

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

Staff provide a calm and welcoming environment that enables children to choose freely and make their own decisions about their play. They successfully guide children to make friends and behave well. They gently remind children about sharing and showing kindness to each other. Children make successful relationships with other children and adults, including their key person. Staff give lots of praise and encouragement, which develops children's confidence as they try out new experiences and activities. This increases their

self-esteem and their feelings of security. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's care routines are maintained, including respecting their need for a comforter. The support children receive to prepare them for the move to school is very good. Children enjoy looking at the scrapbook with pictures of the various schools that they will attend. Teachers from local schools visit the children in the nursery school before they leave to start school. This helps to build children's confidence and prepare them emotionally for their move. As a result, children pass seamlessly into school when the time comes.

Children are very independent in their self-care skills. They have many opportunities to find their belongings on their named pegs and in the drawers. Children quickly learn to put on their coats and shoes. Children independently use the toilet and wash their own hands. They learn to move around the premises safely and they begin to be confident to take small risks as they enjoy riding the bicycles down the slight slope from the door. They greatly enjoy climbing the low trees and learn how to handle the real tools when digging in the growing area. This helps them to be physically active and to learn to be safe, as they assess the risks without being fearful.

Staff encourage healthy eating as they provide fresh fruit on most days to encourage children to try new tastes. Parents are able to order a nutritious hot meal for their children's lunch or bring a packed lunch. Staff support children's learning as they provide mid-morning snacks that they can access at a time, which suits them. This allows children to bring a natural conclusion to their play. Children respond well to appropriate and real responsibilities, such as tidying up and by preparing and serving their own snacks. They are encouraged to develop their independence as they place the bread in the toaster and spread their own toast. Staff support children very well to gain a good understanding of the expected behaviour in social situations. They mainly sit with the children at mealtimes to guide conversations and encourage good manners. However, occasionally, a few children wait with nothing to do while their friends are eating because some staff are busy organising the meals and snacks. This leads to occasions when the routines are not so well suited to children's individual needs.

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

Staff have a good understanding of how to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements. They acknowledge their responsibilities to safeguard the children attending and understand the procedures to take if they have a concern about a child in their care. Staff regularly complete safeguarding training and a paediatric first-aid qualification to keep their knowledge and qualifications current. There are effective recruitment and checking systems to assess that staff are suitable for their role of working with children and remain suitable to do so. There are robust risk assessments and daily checks on the environment. This helps staff to support children's safety and allows them to be protected indoors and outside. The nursery school shares their policies with parents on admission. Staff provide helpful information on the procedures that are in place to support their children's health, safety and well-being. Parents report they are very happy with the care and support their children receive. The nursery school works in close partnership with the

nearby children's centre and other early years settings that children attend to support and achieve continuity in their care and learning.

The setting has effective systems for monitoring the children's learning and development. The manager has recently updated all of the tracking documents and checked the accuracy of all the assessments of children's learning. This ensures that staff are able to identify and address any gaps to enable children to continue to make good progress in their learning. Staff demonstrate that they build strong and effective relationships with other professionals. This ensures that appropriate interventions are secured for children when required.

Management and staff are dedicated to self-evaluation and reflective practice. The manager regularly updates the nursery school improvement plan, based on the observations of staff practice and including the views of parents and staff. This clearly targets priorities to drive improvement. Well-qualified staff evaluate the effectiveness of the activities that they offer to the children and adapt games, so they find them more enjoyable and achievable. Staff are well supported to gain appropriate childcare qualifications. Managers support staff with their course work and guide staff's teaching practice. Staff comment that this helps them to offer challenging activities to support children's learning. They also regularly attend short courses to update their skills in safeguarding and working with children under two years of age. This shows a positive impact on the well-being of the children and demonstrates how all staff are committed to driving continual improvements.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY357152
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	857520
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Camilla Bruce and Ruth Good Partnership
Date of previous inspection	03/03/2009
Telephone number	01582849351

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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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