

Inspection of Elms Montessori School & Day Nursery

2 Elm Lane, Lower Earley, Berkshire RG6 5UF

Inspection date:

4 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Some improvements have been made since the last inspection. For example, children take part in a wider range of outdoor activities. This includes outings to local animal parks and nature walks to a nearby field. However, the quality of teaching is variable. Some staff do not extend children's knowledge and skills well enough through their interactions and teaching. Nevertheless, children settle well on arrival and enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff know children as individuals well and observe and assess their development securely. However, at times, some children wander around and are not involved in purposeful play and activities. Staff do not consistently motivate and enthuse children to join in, such as during dancing activities. However, the manager and the owner do demonstrate some positive teaching skills with children.

Children take part in activities happily. For instance, a group of children enjoyed making dough, learning to take turns when putting the ingredients in the bowl. They developed small physical skills when using tools with the dough, such as different-patterned rolling pins. However, some staff did not extend discussions or ask questions to support children's learning. Sometimes, good hygiene measures are not followed consistently to help children learn about taking care of themselves and to reduce the spread of infection. Children sing songs and regularly listen to stories being read, which helps to support their language skills. They are offered suitably nutritious meals, such as lentil curry and rice for lunch.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager is able to evaluate the quality of teaching accurately. She identifies the weaknesses in teaching. She is taking steps to address weaknesses in practice, including through staff's access to online training and creating a stable staff team. There are some good processes implemented to help begin to improve the quality of teaching, such as peer-on-peer observations and regular supervision meetings with staff. However, these are not sharply focused enough to quickly improve staff's teaching.
- Parents have positive views about the nursery and state that their children settled well when they started. They say the staff are 'lovely'. Their views and opinions are sought by the management team and acted on to help improve the service provided. For example, parents requested outings for their children.
- Some staff's teaching skills are variable and do not extend and build on children's learning well enough. At times, they do not provide good-quality interactions with children to help them fully gain and develop skills for the future. However, there is some good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The manager and staff work closely with professionals and implement guidance and advice well to support children's

needs consistently.

- At times, staff do not implement good hygiene routines to minimise the spread of infection. Children were observed to frequently have runny noses that were not cleaned quickly. Staff do not teach children to learn good hygiene measures, such as covering their mouths with their hands when coughing. However, other aspects of hygiene have been reviewed and improved by the management team, such as nappy changing. Children do wash their hands regularly, such as before eating.
- Children generally behave well. Although, sometimes, staff do not consistently increase children's understanding of the behaviour expectations, such as explaining to them why behaviour is not acceptable. Staff praise children regularly, which promotes their self-esteem and confidence well.
- Overall, the provider has robust recruitment procedures. New staff's suitability is checked through obtaining a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and references are obtained. However, the provider has not sought an overseas check for staff who have lived and worked abroad, as required. This does not have a significant impact due to the other checks the provider completes for new staff.
- Children learn about their own and other people's similarities and differences. They play and interact with resources that reflect the wider world. They celebrate different festival and religious dates, such as Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff know and understand their responsibilities to safeguard children. They know the indicators that would raise their concerns about children's welfare or other adults. Staff are knowledgeable about wider safeguarding matters, including extreme views and beliefs. They have a confident understanding of how to manage any concerns, such as reporting these to outside agencies if required. The premises is safe and secure along with being welcoming and inviting for children. Staff complete regular safety checks of the environment to promote children's safety.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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extend the recruitment process to fully check staff's suitability, such as completing checks for staff who have lived or worked abroad	17/01/2020
implement effective hygiene practices consistently to support children's good health	18/12/2019
continue to review and develop the supervision process to more sharply focus on staff's practice, to identify and provide coaching, mentoring and training to improve the quality of teaching.	17/01/2020

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

- build on children's knowledge and understanding of the behaviour expectations, to help them learn more about these and what is expected of them.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY537446
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10101997
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 to 5
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Swans Day Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP526215
Telephone number	01184676743
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Elms Montessori School & Day Nursery registered in 2016. The nursery is located near Reading, Berkshire. It opens each weekday from 7.30am until 6pm for 50 weeks of the year offering both term time and all year round options, closing for a week at Christmas and Easter. The nursery offers term time and all year round options. It offers care for children aged from six months to five years. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three. There are nine members of staff, including the manager and owner. The manager holds a level 5 qualification and the owner holds a level 4 qualification. There are four staff who hold early years qualifications at level 2 or above, and one staff member is completing training to gain a recognised qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Sheena Bankier
Tracy Bartholomew

Inspection activities

- The lead inspector completed a learning walk with the manager and discussed the learning intentions of resources and activities.
- A joint observation of an activity led by a staff member with a group of children was evaluated by the lead inspector and the manager.
- The inspectors spent time individually observing daily routines, play and activities, and tracking children's experiences.
- Meetings were held with the manager and the owner to discuss how the nursery is organised and managed. A selection of documentation was reviewed, including staff's suitability checks, children's records and some policies, including the safeguarding policy.
- Parents' views were gathered and taken into account through discussions with them on the day and from written surveys.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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