

# The Montessori Place

45 Cromwell Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 3ER

**Inspection date**

15 October 2020

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

#### *Paragraph 2*

- Leaders have plans in place to ensure a suitable curriculum for new post-16 students should the Department of Education (DfE) grant the material changes requested.
- The school's proposed curriculum makes appropriate provision for pupils' choice of subject at A level. Suitable schemes of work are in place for subjects including biology, mathematics, art, English literature, sociology, history and psychology. The proprietors have selected A levels examination boards and are in the process of registering the school as an examination centre.
- Indicative timetables suggest an appropriate balance of subjects and experiences. The curriculum includes opportunities for students to participate in a range of activities in addition to examination subjects, such as discussions on ethics and citizenship; workshops on relationships, intimacy and sex; opportunities for educational trips and visits to universities. It is intended that students will use time outside scheduled lessons for independent study.
- Leaders have appropriate plans in place to extend the school's current careers guidance programme to prepare students in the 16 to 18 age range for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

#### *Paragraph 3*

- The school has suitably qualified specialist teachers in post who will teach subjects at A level. Leaders have considered the school's needs carefully, ensuring that they recruit additional staff with the subject knowledge and teaching skills necessary.

#### *Paragraph 4*

- The school's current assessment procedures are well established, so that teachers know how well students are learning and what students need to do next. Leaders have made slight modifications to these procedures to support teaching and learning for post-16 students.

- School leaders have ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the material changes.

## Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

### *Paragraph 5*

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the school's ethos. The school aims to foster open-mindedness and tolerance. Pupils are encouraged and supported to develop responsibility, independence and empathy for others. They learn about right and wrong from an early age and are encouraged to seek resolutions to conflict where it arises. This same approach will underpin learning for students in the 16 to 18 age range should the DfE approve the material changes.
- Pupils develop an understanding of society more widely through regular trips into the local community. The school's resources include books and pictures which reflect a wide range of cultures and religions. The school celebrates traditional festivals, such as Christmas, Chinese New Year and Diwali.
- Regular discussions and debates help pupils to consider thought-provoking issues, such as the nature of society, humanity and future roles in adulthood. The older pupils consider issues such as sustainability, equality and democratic process. The proprietors intend that this approach will be extended into the proposed sixth-form curriculum if the material changes are agreed.
- The proprietors have ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the material changes requested.

## Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

### *Paragraph 7*

- Leaders give pupils' safety an appropriately high priority. Leaders ensure that staff are suitably qualified in safeguarding procedures through regular training and discussions.
- The school's safeguarding policy adheres to current government guidelines and is published on the school's website.

### *Paragraph 11*

- The school's comprehensive health and safety policy is implemented effectively throughout the school.

### *Paragraph 12*

- Leaders commission regular reviews of the school's fire safety arrangements, which are completed by suitably qualified consultants. Records indicate that leaders address any actions required quickly. The most recent review included checks on the newly built classrooms and confirmed that the premises comply with fire safety regulations.

### *Paragraph 14*

- Her Majesty's Inspector observed pupils working and socialising during the inspection. The school provides ample supervision for the number of pupils on roll. Leaders have ensured that the staff-to-pupil ratio will remain high if the material change is granted.

### *Paragraph 16*

- The school's risk assessment policy is fit for purpose. Risk assessment procedures are a well-established part of the school's health and safety measures. Leaders make sure that risk assessments are routinely completed, and measures put in place to mitigate risk for different parts of the school, such as the woodland area and the meadow, and for specific activities, such as bee-keeping.
- The proprietors have ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the material changes requested.

## Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

### *Paragraph 17 and 18*

- Leaders have completed all required pre-employment checks on current staff, including for those recruited more recently. Robust recruitment procedures will ensure that the same checks are likely to be completed for any new members of staff.

### *Paragraph 19*

- The school does not use supply staff. However, the school's rigorous safeguarding systems would ensure that all required pre-employment checks are carried out should this become necessary or desirable.

### *Paragraph 20*

- All required checks have been carried out on the proprietors. The proposed material changes will not require any change to the proprietor body.

### *Paragraph 21*

- The single central register currently meets requirements. Well-established procedures mean that this is likely to remain the case in the future.
- The proprietors have ensured that standards are likely to be met by the school if the DfE approves the material changes requested.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

### *Paragraph 23*

- The school's current toilet, changing and showering facilities are for the sole use of pupils and meet all the required standards. The facilities are sufficient for the number of pupils on roll and will continue to comply with requirements should the proposed material changes be agreed.

### *Paragraph 24*

- The school has separate medical rooms for male and female pupils. The rooms are clean, suitably equipped, with access to hot and cold water.

### *Paragraph 25, 26, 27*

- The school has tripled the floor space available for classrooms and for pupils' study. The new rooms created by the recent building work include a science laboratory, an art studio and a main study room. All have been equipped and finished to a high standard.
- The school is orderly and well maintained. The classrooms and study areas are

spacious, with plenty of natural light in addition to suitable artificial lighting. The acoustic conditions are good, including in the music room, which has been soundproofed.

*Paragraph 28*

- Washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. Drinking water is clearly marked as such and is freely available to pupils.

*Paragraph 29*

- The school has extensive outdoor spaces for pupils' use, including a one-acre walled garden, where pupils work under the guidance of a professional horticulturalist to tend a productive market garden, and a 10-acre mixed woodland, where pupils learn stewardship skills under the guidance of a professional ecologist.
- The proprietors have ensured that standards are likely to be met by the school if the DfE approves the material changes requested.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

*Paragraph 34*

- The proprietors have established and implemented a range of robust policies and procedures which ensure that the school operates smoothly and safely. These policies and procedures will provide an effective framework for the school if the increase in the request for material changes is approved.
- The proprietors have ensured that the independent school standards are likely to be met should the material change be granted.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## School details

Unique reference number	136947
DfE registration number	846/6018
Inspection number	10163429

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent boarding school
Proprietor	Robert Gueterbock
Headteacher	Mr Robert Gueterbock
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,500 – £15,654
Telephone number	01273 773764
Website	<a href="http://www.montessoriplace.org.uk">www.montessoriplace.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@themontessoriplace.org.uk">info@themontessoriplace.org.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	19–21 September 2017

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	1 to 16	1 to 18	1 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	136	165	165

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	134	157

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Not applicable

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	14	14
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	3
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

## Information about this school

- This is a Montessori school, led by Montessori principles and practice, following the training and guidance of the Association Montessori Internationale. The school's stated aim is 'to aid [each] child's natural development from birth to maturity'.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place on 19–21 September 2017. The school has had one other material change inspection. Following this inspection, the school was permitted to operate across two sites, expand its age range up to 16, increase its capacity to 130 and to admit boarders. The boarding provision was not considered as part of this material change inspection.
- There are three communities at the original site in Hove. The Infant Community, which provides for children up to the age of three, is registered and inspected separately. The Children's House caters for children aged three to six, and the Elementary for pupils aged six to 12. The Hove site was not part of this material

change inspection.

- The school's secondary site, Eason's Green in Framfield, also has a Children's House, an Elementary Community, and a Young People's Community, catering for ages 12 to 16.
- The boarding provision accommodates up to 30 residential pupils, aged 12 to 16, in two separate wings.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- A small number of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A small, but growing, number of pupils speak English as an additional language.



## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to evaluate the school's application for a material change. The proprietor wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils on roll from 138 to 165. The school is also seeking to extend the upper age of students to 18 by providing sixth-form provision.
- This was the second material change inspection.
- I reviewed the school's website and considered a range of documentation. I met with the proprietors, one of whom is also the headteacher.

## Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Parent View**

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2020