

Inspection of The Woodland Montessori Group

The School House, Well Lane, Danbury, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 4AB

Inspection date: 24 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are well settled and make strong bonds with staff at this inclusive nursery. They feel welcome and valued each day. Close friendships are created. Older children support younger children to explore and discover activities. Children freely access a wide range of well-designed resources with confidence. They quickly become independent learners and realise what interests them the most. Staff know children well and are receptive to their individual likes and needs. They encourage children to challenge themselves to take their learning further.

Children's behaviour is good. They are aware of the nursery's ethos, rules and expectations from an early stage. Staff sensitively prompt children and they respond well, tidying away resources ready for the next child. Staff encourage children to use sand timers and write their name on a list to wait for their turn to use the scooter outside. This results in children tolerating delay and sharing resources well.

Children have a good understanding of how to make healthy choices and 'keep germs away'. They talk about what foods are healthy and learn how to recycle waste at nursery. Children learn about the possible risks around them. They actively risk assess the garden and nursery rooms. Children understand that wood becomes slippery when wet and that they should be careful around certain wild plants.

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

- Children have countless opportunities for role play, construction, physical play, reading and being creative. They take the lead in play, expressing desires for the garden. Adults listen and put actions into place. For example, children asked for a woodland walk in the garden. Staff provided bark for children to spread around. This resulted in a winding walkway around trees, creating new areas for children to create dens and fairy gardens.
- Children gain an appreciation of looking after living things. They have an untouched area in the garden where they can observe what grows naturally. Children have seen hedgehogs and butterflies. They learn to respect them from a distance in their natural habitat. Children are taught to be citizens of the world. They created a 'bee garden' to encourage bees to collect pollen from the plants to help look after the planet.
- Independence is highly promoted at the nursery. Staff encourage children to risk assess the nursery and explore for themselves to find answers to their questions. Leaders set examples of guiding children to problem-solve with meaningful conversations and questions, such as 'how can you solve this problem?' or 'perhaps you could work together to find the answer?'.

- Leaders have an exceptional understanding of how children progress, and how they all learn differently. They are able to differentiate activities, providing the same opportunities to all children. Leaders recognise when children need support or are progressing well through regular observations and reflections. The manager provided climbing apparatus for support with physical development. As a result, children make rapid improvements in strength, coordination and balance.
- The manager has high expectations and visions for the nursery. She has future plans to create resources to further support children with their speech and language development. The manager aims for the resources to be used both at the setting and at home to support children to continue to express their needs, wants and opinions clearly.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents highly praise the nursery and staff. They are incredibly pleased with the communication received. Parents appreciate the regular information of what their children have been enjoying and learning. They feel secure that their children's needs are met. Parents are taught the teaching approaches so they gain an understanding of how their children are learning.
- Partnerships with other schools and professionals are well established. The manager contacts schools to share information about children. She also obtains details about schools to share with families. The manager recognises the skills and knowledge that children need before starting school. As a result, she receives positive feedback from teachers of how well the children settle and adapt to school life.
- The manager and deputy set high standards for teaching and interaction with children. Staff with less experience and knowledge of the curriculum benefit from these examples and the support given. However, they currently do not provide the same high standards in their practice yet.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a strong knowledge and awareness of safeguarding children and the wider aspects, such as the risks of radicalisation. They complete training on a regular basis to ensure their knowledge stays current. Staff know the nursery's procedures for reporting concerns. They know where to find information to report outside of the nursery if managers are not taking action. Staff encourage children to risk assess and maintain their own safety. Staff induction processes ensure that safeguarding and risk assessing are understood, including for agency staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to support staff to gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum in order to consistently take the quality of teaching and learning to the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY563194
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10191013
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	65
Name of registered person	The Woodland Montessori Group Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP563193
Telephone number	07714 203644
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Woodland Montessori Group registered in 2018. It is located in Danbury, Essex. The nursery employs five full-time members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery operates Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions run from 9am to 3pm. The out-of-school club for early years children and up to 11 years operates from 8am to 9am and from 3pm to 5pm during term time only. The holiday club runs during all school holidays.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marianne Brown

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The managers joined the inspector on a learning walk of the nursery to discuss the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity.
- Staff, children and parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection, sharing their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff.

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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