

# Inspection of The Village Montessori Nursery School

27 York Road, Birtley, Chester Le Street, Gateshead DH3 2BD

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Inspection date:

28 March 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Outstanding

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is inadequate

The setting is unique in that children are not consistently cared for in designated rooms or groups for their age. Children are allowed to access freely all areas and age groups in the setting. The provider's intention is for older children to nurture the younger ones and for babies and toddlers to learn from the older children. However, not all children benefit from the system because the individuals in each room can constantly change. This results in some of the younger children being unsettled and upset throughout the day.

In addition, the key-person system is not always effective. Some children can spend most of their time in a different room from their key person. However, children have good relationships with the caring staff. Some children also form friendships with their peers. Children talk about what they like to do at the setting, such as 'play with their friends'.

Leaders have not devised an ambitious or well-sequenced curriculum. As a result, not all children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are making good progress in their learning and development. For example, some older children are not supported with toilet-training routines. Other children have a dummy throughout their session, when they are not upset. This does not promote children's physical or personal development or their language and communication skills. It also does not prepare the older children for school.

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

- The majority of children's play is self-directed with little adult input, support or teaching, including minimal Montessori teaching. This does not help to support children to practise and consolidate their learning or build on what they already know. Despite this, older children have a positive attitude to learning and have become skilled at occupying themselves. They play well and creatively with the resources available, for example when building a camping area from wooden bricks.
- Staff act promptly to request outside agency support and refer children with SEND. Children's development is tracked and recorded by staff. However, the recommendation from the last inspection has not been addressed effectively. The provider does not focus on or address any gaps in children's learning and development. There are some planned next learning steps for children with SEND. However, the next steps do not focus and build on the gaps in a child's development, such as their language and communication or toileting skills. This has a significant impact on the progress children could be making.
- Leaders and managers do not plan, monitor or assess the quality of teaching and learning effectively in the setting. Staff have access to online training and

development courses. However, any training completed does not focus on improving staff's knowledge of the areas of learning or how to support young children in their learning and development.

- Staff have appropriate expectations for children's behaviour. They apply these consistently with calm explanations about what is expected. However, children are often directed to play with toys in specific areas and not move them around. This does not support or encourage children's own ideas, imagination or problem-solving.
- Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, parents do not enter the building. However, they will do so when attending scheduled parents' evenings. Parents speak very highly about the provision and the caring staff. Parents are happy with the care their children receive.
- Some staff have worked at the setting for many years. However, as the children move around in the setting, staff are not always deployed effectively to meet children's learning needs. It is unclear who takes responsibility for children's learning and development when they are not with their key person. In addition, some resources are not appropriate, sufficiently challenging or safe for all age groups. These weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of education children receive.
- Children receive healthy and nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day. They learn some skills at mealtimes, such as pouring drinks. However, physical skills are not continuously developed as all children are given a spoon to eat their lunch. For the older and most able children, this also does not support school readiness.
- Children enjoy outdoor play. They also participate well in regular singing and story times throughout the daily routine. These help to promote children's listening, concentration and language skills.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe. They are able to recognise and identify the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and neglect, and know how to act to safeguard children. However, staff are not aware of some of the wider aspects of abuse that can have an impact on a child's well-being. They do not demonstrate an awareness of the 'Prevent' duty guidance. In addition, children's safety is compromised when they spend time in different rooms. For example, there are small items in the pre-school room that pose a choking hazard for babies.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:**

	Due date
improve the key-person system to ensure that every child's learning and care are tailored to meet their individual needs	29/04/2022
ensure that children with SEND receive the support they need to help them make as much progress as possible	29/04/2022
devise a broad, ambitious and challenging curriculum that promotes all areas of learning for all children effectively, including children with SEND	29/04/2022
improve the process for assessing children's level of achievement and interests to ensure that it is accurate and is then used to inform teaching and learning experiences for each child based on the assessments	29/04/2022
improve the leadership and management of the provision by enhancing and monitoring staff's knowledge of how children learn, how staff use assessment and how they teach children	29/04/2022
ensure that all staff are aware of the 'Prevent' duty guidance and also have a better understanding of the wider aspects of abuse that can affect a child's welfare	29/04/2022
take all reasonable steps to ensure children are not exposed to risks, for example by conducting risk assessments for children moving between rooms.	04/04/2022

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY441567
<b>Local authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	10220586
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	1 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	72
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	72
<b>Name of registered person</b>	VMNS Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP910288
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4111999
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 September 2018

## Information about this early years setting

The Village Montessori Nursery School registered in 2012. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff and a student. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The manager has qualified teacher status and another member of staff has an early years professional qualification. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 49 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.45am until 5.45pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Elaine McDonnell

## Inspection activities

- This was the first inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider. The provider has taken effective steps to comply with actions raised by Ofsted following a visit on 3 December 2021.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about what they want their children to learn.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at nursery.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the registered individual about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at a sample of key documents, including evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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