

Brighton & Hove Montessori School

67 Stanford Avenue, Brighton BN1 6FB

Inspection dates

22 September 2022

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2A(1), 2A(1)(f) and 2A(1)(g)

- At the last standard inspection, leaders had not consulted with parents regarding the school's relationships and sex education programme.
- The school is providing appropriate relationships and sex education in line with its policy. Leaders are using a commercial scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE) which includes age-appropriate relationships and sex education. Some of the PSHE programme is delivered in discrete lessons. Some is covered in 'grace and courtesy' group sessions. Some is delivered on a one-to-one basis when required.
- The policy is published on the school's website. Parents have now been consulted on its contents. The policy makes provision for parents to request that their child is wholly or partly excused from sex education.
- Previously unmet requirements in this part are now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c)

- At the last standard inspection, it was found that staff safeguarding knowledge was poor. School safeguarding documentation was contradictory, and some staff did not know who the designated safeguarding lead was. Not all the required checks had been made on some staff employed at the school. Furthermore, leaders had not conducted appropriate risk assessments or checks on volunteers, or checked that volunteers fully understood their role in safeguarding pupils.
- The school's safeguarding policy complies with current guidance and is published on its website. It contains appropriate information and guidance for staff and volunteers at the school. It also provides parents and carers with the information required. It details key

responsibilities and roles, including the designated safeguarding leads, the headteacher, who is the sole proprietor, and the safeguarding governor.

- The school's single central record is complete and contains all the information required. This includes checks that were found to be incomplete at the last standard inspection. The single central record is administered appropriately. Leaders understand their responsibilities to make the appropriate checks on all adults at the school, including volunteers. Volunteers are required to complete appropriate safeguarding training before they take up their roles.
- Staff have undertaken appropriate training to keep pupils safe at school. This includes for physical intervention if ever required. Staff have completed a range of online and face-to-face safeguarding updates commensurate with their levels of responsibility.
- The school's two designated safeguarding leads have attended appropriate training and update staff on relevant local or national issues linked to safeguarding pupils when required. Safeguarding records contain appropriate detail. This includes records of physical interventions (which are rare) and appropriate follow-up actions.

Paragraph 16–16(b)

- An appropriate risk assessment policy is fully in place. It contains adequate information to help staff reduce risk. Leaders are also aware of the need to complete risk assessments on visitors and volunteers if required, depending on individual circumstances.
- Previously unmet requirements in this part are now met.

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

Paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii)

- At the last standard inspection, not all the required checks were being made on staff at the school.
- The single central record contains all the relevant checks required for staff, including those staff in leadership and management positions, as well as governors. This includes checks under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- Previously unmet requirements in this part are now met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(f)–33(j)(ii)

- At the last standard inspection, the school's complaints policy needed to be reviewed in order for it to fully meet the requirements of part 7.
- The school has a revised complaints policy which complies with the requirements of part 7. The policy is available on the school's website and in hard copy on request.
- Leaders understand the need to keep accurate records of complaints. Documentation reviewed during the inspection shows that the policy is being implemented effectively.
- Previously unmet requirements in this part are now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- At the last inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that all the independent school standards were met. Some aspects of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' were also found not to be met. Safeguarding was judged not to be effective.
- Leaders have ensured that the action plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in April 2022 has been implemented in full. New policies have been put in place. Leaders and staff have been undertaken additional training linked to the unmet standards identified at the last standard inspection.
- Leaders are working more closely and proactively as a group to ensure that the school is a safe place to be, and all the independent school standards are met. This is a small school. In many ways, most members of staff are leaders. Communication between leaders appears to be stronger. Members of staff who lead on safeguarding, for instance, are aware of their responsibilities and carry out their duties diligently.
- Leaders, including those in positions of governance, understand the need to evaluate the school's performance against the independent school standards constantly. They have made provision for ongoing external, independent advice to ensure that the qualitative aspects identified as weaknesses at the last standard inspection improve. This is particularly the case with the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage that were found not to be met at the last standard inspection.
- Previously unmet requirements in this part are now met.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- At the last standard inspection not all the learning and development requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' were met. The required Reception baseline assessment was not in place. This has now been addressed. Paragraphs 2.7 and 2.8 are now met.
- At the last standard inspection, not all the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' were met. This has now been addressed. The correct checks are now carried out on all staff at the school. Staff have received appropriate safeguarding training and are receiving ongoing updates. They understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Staff are aware of the school's policies and procedures regarding safeguarding. They know what to do if they have concerns. Paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
 - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
 - 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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

- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
 - 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;
 - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;
 - 33(h) allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish;
 - 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is-
 - 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
 - 33(i)(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;
 - 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and-
 - 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
 - 33(j)(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage

Assessment at the start of the reception year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

- 2.7. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

- 2.8. The statutory guidance for the administration of the RBA is set out in Annex B. The guidance covers all intakes in reception within an academic year including during autumn, spring and summer terms.

Child protection

- 3.6. Providers must train all staff to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training made available by the provider must enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:
 - significant changes in children's behaviour
 - deterioration in children's general well-being
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
 - children's comments which give cause for concern
 - any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation and/or
 - inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children, for example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- 3.7. Providers must have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'. All schools are required to have regard to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance, and other childcare providers may also find it helpful to refer to this guidance. If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police.

School details

Unique reference number	133348
DfE registration number	846/6023
Inspection number	10250749

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Montessori school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Daisy Cockburn
Headteacher	Daisy Cockburn
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,709
Telephone number	01273 702 485
Website	www.brighton-montessori.org.uk
Email address	info@brighton-montessori.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	19 to 21 October 2021

Information about this school

- This is a Montessori mixed day school for pupils between two-and-a-half and 12 years of age. They are split into two groups: the Children's House for children up to age six and the Elementary Group for pupils of ages six to 12.
- There are currently 23 pupils on roll.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The headteacher is also the sole proprietor of the school.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in October 2021 when it was judged to be inadequate. Arrangements for safeguarding were not effective and not all relevant independent school standards were met.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to be inadequate with unmet independent school standards at its last standard inspection in October 2021. As a result, the school was required to produce a statutory action plan by the DfE in March 2022. The plan was assessed by Ofsted in April 2022. The action plan was approved by the DfE in August 2022.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is the school's sole proprietor. He also met with a range of other leaders, including the school's designated safeguarding leads, and with the chair of governors.
- The inspector toured the school site, talking to pupils and staff. He also accompanied the elementary class on a visit to a local park. During this visit he met with a small group of older pupils to gain their views on the school.
- The inspector briefly met with a volunteer.
- The inspector considered a range of policies and documentation linked to safeguarding and the requirements of the independent school standards. He also reviewed the school's single central record.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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