

Inspection of The Old School House Montessori Nursery

The Old School House, De Montfort Road, LEWES, East Sussex BN7 1SP

Inspection date:

23 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children enjoy their play opportunities in the nursery. However, not all staff have a secure knowledge of how to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. As a result, children do not always consistently benefit from well-planned activities. Some children are not fully prepared for the next stage in their education.

Children behave extremely well. They look after resources and are kind and courteous to their friends. Children develop warm bonds with staff. They smile when staff praise them for persevering during activities. Children demonstrate that they feel happy and safe in the care of the staff. For example, very young children enthusiastically approach staff for a cuddle and positively beam when staff play with them.

Children concentrate during activities. For example, they listen to instructions during a group circle time as staff explain what they need to do next. Children explore the environment with confidence and self-select activities that staff have put out for them. They explore the feel of paint between their fingers and exclaim it is 'squishy and cold'.

Children are very independent. They serve and feed themselves and skilfully pour their own drinks. They return resources to the shelves when they have finished with them and attempt to dress themselves so they are ready to go outside. Young children dry their own hands and older children manage self-care competently.

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

- Children do not fully benefit from a well-sequenced curriculum. This means that, sometimes, the quality of teaching and implementation of what staff want children to learn is not consistent. This has a negative impact on the progress children make.
- Partnerships with parents are sound. Staff share weekly updates on children's progress. They seek information about a child's home life before they start at the nursery. Parents mention that they feel that their children are happy and safe, and that staff are caring toward their children.
- Managers have a clear intent for what they want children to learn. However, weaknesses in the monitoring of staff practice mean that these intentions are sometimes lost, as they are not embedded sufficiently in the staff team's teaching. For example, not all staff have a sufficient understanding of how to plan for children's next steps, which impacts on children's learning.
- Staff manage children's behaviour extremely well. They recognise when young children are tired or hungry and act appropriately. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour, and they are excellent role models. Children are kind.

They share toys, help each other with tasks and are polite.

- Staff support children's developing communication and language effectively. They provide a narrative during activities and encourage children to learn new words. Staff support children's language skills through a range of effective strategies, such as singing songs and chanting rhymes.
- The special educational needs coordinators identify children who have emerging needs. However, on occasion, individual children's needs are not met promptly and effective provision may be delayed.
- Children play with a range of toys and resources that help to promote fine-motor physical development. For example, children use tweezers, nuts and bolts, and food graters to help them to develop their hand muscles. However, children do not consistently have the opportunity to develop their large-muscle strength through cardiovascular activity.
- Staff present information clearly to children. They check children's understanding and promote appropriate discussion about what is being taught. For example, children are encouraged to talk about the vegetables that they might grow or eat at home. As a result, children feel valued as they contribute to the activity.
- Managers and staff have robust procedures in place to help keep children safe in the setting. Staff consider and minimise risk to children when in the inside and outside environments. Staff support children to use real tools, and they safely and competently use them in activities and at lunchtime.
- The managers provide positive support for staff well-being. Staff report that their workloads are manageable and that they feel very well supported in their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff follow secure procedures to keep children safe. They respond to accidents swiftly and record these in an appropriate way. Staff complete rigorous daily checks to make sure that the premises are safe for children and visitors. Staff have a sound safeguarding knowledge and know exactly what to do if they have concerns about children or if an allegation is made about a member of staff. They are able to describe the signs and symptoms of abuse, including the risk of radical views and extreme behaviours.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
--	-----------------

ensure that staff have an understanding how to implement a broad and balanced curriculum that stretches and challenges all children.	24/03/2023
--	------------

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

- develop opportunities for children to take part in more-challenging, active physical play to further support their physical development
- monitor staff practice more effectively to ensure that high-quality education is offered to all children
- strengthen arrangements for tailoring any specific provision to meet children's individual learning needs, to ensure this is consistently in place promptly and without delay.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY241373
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10228321
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	72
Name of registered person	The Old School House Nursery (Lewes) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP527948
Telephone number	01273 480492
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

The Old School House Montessori Nursery registered in 2003. It operates in Lewes, East Sussex. It is open between 8am and 6pm each weekday, all year round. The setting employs 12 staff, of whom three hold early years teacher status, one is qualified at level 4, three at level 3 and one at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tina Lambert

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine 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.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents and considered their views.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022