

Inspection of The Village Montessori at Wrekenton

Wrekenton Family Centre, 107 Lanchester Avenue, GATESHEAD, Tyne and Wear
NE9 7AN

Inspection date: 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

At times, children's safety is significantly compromised as the provider does not put measures in place to ensure the safety of all children. For example, she does not ensure that all staff, who have sole charge of children away from the nursery, have up-to-date paediatric first-aid certificates. This may impact on the response given by staff, should a child have an accident or become unwell in their care.

Parents are complimentary about the service the nursery provides. They are pleased at the information they receive when picking up and dropping off children. However, the provider is not consistent in contacting parents to discuss children's unexplained absences from the nursery. This can put children at risk of harm.

The quality of education is inconsistent. For example, during adult-led activities, staff discuss the learning that children are getting from the different activities. However, staff are less confident in discussing the ways in which the activities support individual children's learning. They are unsure how some activities build on what children already know and can do. This also means children are not being fully challenged in their play and gaining the skills needed to progress towards the next stages in their learning and development.

Despite significant weaknesses in the quality of education, children are eager to enter the nursery. They respond with smiles to the greetings given by the provider. Babies and younger children happily hold their arms out and leave parents with ease. Older children hurry to begin playing at their chosen activities.

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

- Some staff bring mathematics into children's play. For example, when playing in sand, staff encourage children to count the number of scoops they need to fill a bucket. Staff talk about the buckets being 'full to the top', having 'no sand in' or 'being empty'. However, the teaching of mathematics is inconsistent across the nursery. Overall, staff do not use opportunities as they arise during play and routines to further children's understanding of numbers and counting or size and volume.
- Staff encourage children to be independent. For example, at snack time, older children are supported to pour their own drinks, butter their own crackers and peel their own fruit. However, staff do not consistently use these occasions to further develop children's self-care skills. For example, children are not always reminded to wash their hands before eating. This means children are not developing their understanding of keeping themselves healthy.
- Children engage in activities they have chosen themselves, and play for significant amounts of time on their own, relative to their very young ages.

However, staff do not consistently acknowledge children who play alone, even when children look directly at staff as they move around the nursery. This does not enable children to feel valued or develop their sense of emotional well-being.

- Staff know to talk slowly to children, to get down to children's level to speak to them and give them time to respond. Staff automatically read the books children bring to them. They encourage older children to look at the pictures and talk about the story. Younger children join in, listening intently, as staff animate the stories with different tones of voice and movements. This helps to develop children's communication and language skills, with the introduction of new words, through play and stories, into their vocabulary.
- Staff are nurturing and caring. For example, staff recognise when children need a cuddle. They pick children up and hold them closely. They know when children are tired and need to sleep. They cuddle children and use quiet, comforting tones of voice.
- Children enjoy the opportunities the outdoor environment offers for their large-muscle development. For example, children move planks and other resources around the area to design their own obstacle course. They make sure everything is positioned correctly to enable them to move easily across the different levels.
- Children show confidence when welcoming visitors to the nursery, eagerly inviting them into their play. For example, they show visitors how they mix flour and water together. Children happily ask visitors for help in filling tubes with water.
- The provider and staff work in partnership with parents and other agencies in support of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff attend regular meetings in support of children's development.
- The provider and staff work in partnership with local schools that children will attend on leaving nursery. They invite teachers into the nursery to meet children and discuss development. This helps children to settle into the next phase of their learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff talk confidently about the signs and symptoms of abuse and other safeguarding issues. However, potential risks to children, when away from the nursery, have not been carefully considered. Staff who do not hold paediatric first-aid certificates are left in sole charge of children. The inactivity of the provider and staff in following up on unexplained absences from the nursery in a timely manner, puts children at risk of harm. The provider ensures the suitability of staff and adults who could come into contact with children. Appropriate recruitment procedures are in place.

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
ensure all staff who are in sole charge of children, with particular regard to times away from the nursery, hold a current paediatric first-aid certificate	08/12/2022
improve partnership with parents and ensure there is a two-way flow of information sharing with parents about planned holidays, so unexpected absences do not become a safeguarding concern	08/12/2022
ensure that the educational programme is carefully planned and tailored to individual children's learning needs and that it supports children's progress towards the next stages in their learning and development.	08/12/2022

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

- support staff to develop consistency in supporting children's mathematical development
- help children to deepen their understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, by ensuring handwashing routines are put in place and maintained
- review staff's practice to ensure that all children engage fully in the experiences offered.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY453770
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10235971
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	0 to 10
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	VMNS Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910288
Telephone number	0191 4421419
Date of previous inspection	2 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Village Montessori at Wrekenton registered in 2012 and is situated in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 7. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.45am to 5.45pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Denise Charge

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 provider and inspector carried out a learning walk. This helped the inspector to understand how they organise the early years provision and the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact of this on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with children, parents and staff during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at various policies and documents, including those related to the suitability and qualifications of staff, and records of children's learning.

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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