

Inspection of Wickham Montessori School

Park Place Pastoral Centre, Winchester Road, Wickham, FAREHAM, Hampshire
PO17 5HA

Inspection date: 24 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are warmly greeted by their key person as they arrive. They have a sense of belonging as they eagerly locate their pegs and take off their shoes and coats. Children quickly become engrossed in a variety of activities. They show enthusiasm, confidence, and independence. Children benefit from an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum that builds on what they can already do, and provides them with enriched and varied experiences. For instance, older children explore sprigs of rosemary in the outdoor area. They work together with friends, exploring their senses of smell and touch. They recall the taste of rosemary as they share past experiences of 'eating yummy roast potatoes'.

Children have very good attachments to staff, who have a calm and nurturing approach. Babies enjoy warmly offered cuddles, and older children delight in sharing their achievements with staff who excitedly celebrate with them. Children share, take turns and are thoughtful to one another. They can work together to solve problems. For example, children pause and ponder ideas when trying to work out how to transfer water from a flat tray into a jug. They persevere until they work together to carefully lift the tray and slowly tilt it, so the water runs from the corner and fills their jug. Staff skilfully allow children the time to think, and work through their own ideas until they achieve.

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

- Leaders plan a meaningful curriculum that is well sequenced so children accumulate skills they need in readiness for their futures. Staff implement the curriculum well and know how to build on what children already know. They use this knowledge to plan challenging activities that have children's interests interwoven throughout. Subsequently, children are actively involved in experiences and sustain interest in their play. This supports children to make good progress in their learning.
- Staff place a strong focus on supporting children's independence from an early age. Babies self-select activities and recognise their own belongings. Older children use tongs to self-serve their own snack and jugs to pour their own water. Children choose bowls and cups from low-level shelves and relish in the responsibility to set up the snack table. Children's growing independence contributes to them becoming ready for school.
- Staff supervise children while they are eating to ensure their safety. They encourage the youngest children to try new foods and to feed themselves. However, the arrangement of mealtimes means older children sometimes experience long periods of waiting, which leads them to become restless. This time is not always effectively supported by staff. For example, while children wait to receive their pudding, staff do not use this time to increase children's

exposure to high-quality interactions.

- Leaders have effective staff supervision in place. Staff well-being is of high importance to them. They ensure regular discussions take place with staff and provide opportunities for them to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement. This enables ongoing professional development with targeted training, which continually improves the quality of teaching
- Staff understand the importance of developing children's communication and language skills. Children delight in back-and-forth conversation where they share ideas, listen, and respond to each other. Staff narrate children's play effectively and add new words to their existing vocabulary such as 'delicate' and 'sprig'. This enables children to enhance their language skills and grow their confidence when talking.
- Staff thoughtfully promote children's physical development. Younger children develop their small muscle skills as they use chalks to make marks and thread hoops on to pieces of spaghetti to increase their dexterity. Outside, children run, climb, and use wooden planks and tyres to create various balancing opportunities. As a result, children make good progress in their physical development.
- Staff make good use of effective assessment to help identify and close any possible gaps in children's learning quickly. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points.
- Partnership with parents is a high priority. Consequently, parents feel well supported and enjoy a personalised conversation at the end of each day. Parents report their children are happy and value how staff 'invest time' to ensure their children make secure attachments to them. Parents report their children make good progress and 'love' how children's independence is promoted.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders effectively monitor staff's knowledge of safeguarding and ensure regular training updates are completed. All staff demonstrate a clear understanding of what to do if they are concerned about a child. They also know how to report concerns to local safeguarding partners. Staff are aware of the procedure to take in the event of an allegation against a staff member. This ensures children's safety. Children are well supervised. Leaders and staff work together to effectively identify and minimise risks to ensure children's safety. Staff provide children with the knowledge to help them understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation of mealtimes, so that the needs of all children are considered and the length of time children spend waiting is reduced.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY477379
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10279167
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	76
Name of registered person	Wickham Montessori School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910242
Telephone number	01329 609061
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

Wickham Montessori School registered in 2014. It operates from Park Place Pastoral Centre in the village of Wickham, Hampshire. The provision follows the Montessori ethos. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The school is open 51 weeks of the year, from 8am to 6pm on Monday to Friday. There are 15 members of staff. Of these, two hold qualified teacher status, two hold a qualification at level 5, one holds a qualification at level 4, and seven hold a qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Natalie Moir

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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager carried out a joint observation of snack time with the inspector.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- Parents shared their views of the provision with the inspector.

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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