

Inspection of Maria Montessori Nursery School

All Saints Church, Church Road, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1ED

Inspection date: 12 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children come into the setting with enthusiasm and pleasure. They joyfully greet their friends and adults, waving goodbye to their parents. Children feel safe and secure in this nurturing setting. They are confident and happy to engage with visitors to the setting. Children understand and follow established routines, hanging their bags on named pegs and putting their sun cream in the designated box. Children participate in a variety of activities to support them in learning how to share and turn take. For example, they share the tools at the modelling dough table. Children behave well, and where there are mild disagreements, staff support children, emphasising the use of kind hands and words.

Children are encouraged to be independent in readiness for the next stage of their education, including school. They manage their own personal care but also learn to cut their fruit at snack time and pour their own drinks. The nursery provides a healthy snack, and children bring in their own packed lunches. Staff give guidance to parents to help ensure children have healthy lunches. During yoga sessions, children learn to recognise the impact of exercise on their heart rate. Children understand how to keep safe, such as using sun cream and drinking plenty of water during the hot weather.

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

- Parents are delighted with the service the nursery provides. Communication is frequent and informative. Parents know the next steps in their child's development and receive advice about how to help them at home. Parents recognise the improvements the current leaders have made, notably to the outside area.
- Staff know the children well. They observe children at play and listen to their conversations. Staff use this information to plan activities based on children's interests. Children are engaged in their learning and make good progress. Occasionally, planned activities lack specific intent related to children's next steps, which limits the progress of a few children.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support. Where necessary, they are referred to external professionals for assessment. Staff follow the advice provided by specialists, and this helps children make good progress. Additional funding, such as early years pupil premium funding, is used wisely to support the needs of the children.
- Staff provide a wide range of mark-making activities to help children develop early writing skills. Children enjoy painting, using modelling dough, drawing and colouring. Older children particularly enjoy finding out about the letter 'm,' saying the sound and writing the letter in flour, using correct formation.
- Staff talk to children, helping them to pronounce words correctly. Some staff are

skilled at questioning children, promoting interesting discussions. For example, children identify that 'ant' begins with the letter 'a', and this prompts a lively debate about what they, and other creatures, eat. They eventually decide that worms would be 'disgusting.' However, not all staff use open-ended questions to extend children's vocabulary and conversational skills.

- The activities provided help children develop their mathematical skills. Children voluntarily sort a range of items into different colours, putting them into the matching coloured dish. Others begin to understand capacity as they pour water from one container to another. Some children count how many jugs or spoons of water they are adding, while others point to numbers and correctly identify the number.
- Leaders are reflective about their practice and about the setting. All staff benefit from regular meetings with the manager to discuss how to improve their practice and identify training needs. In addition to mandatory training, staff have participated in other training, which benefits the setting. For example, a member of staff has been part of a project to enhance provision for two-year olds. She has created a cosy corner for these children, with age-appropriate books and toys.
- Leaders have strong links with schools and other providers. Information relating to children's care, education and welfare is shared to provide consistent provision.
- Staff provide a range of activities to support children in developing their physical skills. Children ride age-appropriate bicycles and scooters, negotiating the space as they turn corners. Others create balance beams using planks of wood, while others climb on the climbing frame.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe at all times. They complete regular safeguarding training to help keep their knowledge up to date. Staff know the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child's safety or welfare. They are aware of the signs that might suggest involvement in county lines activities or any other form of abuse. Leaders ensure that they follow safe recruitment procedures. Staff conduct regular fire evacuation drills with the children to ensure they are familiar with the procedure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- focus the planning of activities on children's identified next steps in learning to support even better progress
- support staff in using open-ended questions to support children's deeper

thinking and conversational skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2634795
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10281180
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	49
Name of registered person	Maria Montessori Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535161
Telephone number	07947247728
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Maria Montessori nursery is situated in Crowborough, East Sussex. They operate from 8am to 5pm, five days per week during term time only. They employ nine members of staff of whom seven have appropriate qualifications at level three or above. The nursery offers funded places for children aged two, three and four years of age.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jill Thewlis

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 took the inspector on a learning walk of the premises. They discussed the activities available and how they supported children's next steps in learning.
- The inspector held discussions with the owner, with staff, parents and children and took their views into consideration.
- The manager and the inspector observed adults interacting with children and discussed the learning that had taken place.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their understanding of safeguarding responsibilities. She viewed documents relating to suitability and safeguarding.

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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