

The Montessori Place

The Montessori Place Limited

Easons Green, Lewes Road, Framfield, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5RE

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

The Montessori Place is an independent day school for 165 girls and boys aged between one and 18 years, which adopts the Montessori principles and practice. The school operates from two sites, one in the town of Hove and the other near the town of Uckfield. The Uckfield site has flexible, termly boarding from Monday to Friday for up to 50 students. Girls and boys are accommodated in two separate boarding wings. At the weekends, overseas students stay in lodgings provided by the teaching staff.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 18 to 20 July 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The boarding school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Date of last inspection: 17 September 2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make exceptional progress because they are looked after by a stable team of nurturing staff who know them extremely well. All children have secure relationships with trusted staff members.

Children thrive because staff expand their interests and show them that diversity is celebrated. The staff team's deep level of understanding about the importance of a culture of acceptance is impressive. Children learn how to live together harmoniously because they are supported to express themselves in a way which promotes relationships based on trust and respect.

When children are being introduced to the boarding provision, plans are individualised, and introductions are thoughtful and well managed. Plans are adapted for children's individual needs and circumstances. When children leave the school, staff promote positive endings. Children appreciate the support that they receive from staff and recognise that it improves their life chances.

Children are supported to live healthy lifestyles. They are provided with help and guidance about their health when required. Communication with children's parents is exceptional, particularly if children have specific health needs which may require emergency intervention, such as severe allergies.

When children require specialist intervention to meet their needs, this is made available without delay. Highly effective multi-agency working and excellent teamwork have enabled one child to make particularly significant progress from their starting point. The child has learned how to become independent with their personal care. Additionally, the child's emotional well-being has improved because the kindness shown by other children means that the child's social communication difficulties do not affect their ability to be fully involved in daily activities.

Staff understand the importance of predictable routines for children. Children receive sensitive, individualised support to make the most of all learning opportunities. Children's attendance and progress are extremely well supported as a result of staying in the boarding provision and achievements are celebrated.

Staff encourage children to explore and enjoy the natural environment. Children are unanimous in the view that the school grounds are a happy and joyful place to be.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

There is a highly effective culture of safeguarding that is deeply embedded in all areas of practice. Children say that they feel safe and secure. They love spending

time with the houseparent, who is unfailingly nurturing and kind. She is also extremely knowledgeable and passionate in her efforts to ensure the safety of the children.

A sensible approach to risk management enables children to enjoy taking increasing responsibility with appropriate supervision from staff. This approach teaches children how to keep themselves safe and contributes to their protection and sense of security.

Children have age-appropriate freedom and choice. Staff attend regular safeguarding training, which ensures that they stay alert to signs that children may be at risk of harm. Records of discussions between children and staff are excellent and demonstrate that children's safety and well-being are priorities for staff and managers.

Children know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy about any aspect of their care. Complaints are taken seriously, investigated and acted on. Children are aware that they can escalate their concerns to external agencies if they are unhappy about the outcome of their complaint.

Safer recruitment practices are understood and implemented effectively. All necessary checks are carried out to reduce the risk of unsuitable people working in the school.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

School leaders are ambitious and have high aspirations for children. They are deeply committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for them.

Leaders are accessible and are fully involved in children's school lives. As a result, the environment has a welcoming, family feel that provides reassuring stability for children.

Staff say that they are proud to work at the school. They feel included in decisions and appreciated by leaders. They report feeling valued, respected and inspired to provide high-quality care to children.

Leaders' oversight and scrutiny of the boarding provision are meticulous. Consequently, they have an exceptionally well-rounded view of the experiences of the children and the impact that the care is having on their outcomes. Development plans demonstrate a commitment to ensuring continuous improvement.

Leaders model a culture of excellence. The statement of principles and practice clearly sets out the ethos and objectives of the school. This is fully embedded into practice and respected by children and staff.

All national minimum standards are met.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Boarding school details

Social care unique reference number: 1264592

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Robert Gueterbock

Type of school: Boarding school

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Inspectors

Jill Sephton-Wright, Social Care Inspector

Ashley Edwards, Social Care Inspector

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