

Inspection of Chiltern Hills Montessori

Faulkner Way, Downley, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP13 5AL

Inspection date: 22 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

There is a highly ambitious curriculum in place. This is informed by the manager's and provider's deep awareness of new research and current thinking on early years education. The nursery follows the principals of the Montessori approach, but staff are flexible and adapt the curriculum to support children to gain a sense of awe and wonder in their learning. This is highly successful. Children show exceptional levels of perseverance and determination in their learning. They make superb progress in their development.

Staff ensure that they gain extensive information about all children and their prior experiences. This supports them to determine what children need to learn next. This is especially helpful for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who do especially well at the nursery. Staff ensure that their focus is not just on areas where children need extra support but on providing a broad set of experiences that expand on what they know and can do.

Children's behaviour is extremely good. Staff provide children with clear messages and expectations. For example, there is a start and end to the activities, and children are encouraged to tidy away and take care of resources. Staff are firm, but fair and kind. The nursery is calm, noise levels are low and children fully focus and concentrate throughout the day.

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

- The provider is an inspirational leader who is dedicated to her role. She leads the long-standing team effectively, sharing her vision and encouraging staff to provide the best possible care and education for children. The provider and manager lead the setting with passion and enthusiasm. Their enthusiasm is infectious and communicated extremely well to the staff team, which matches their energy and passion for supporting children's learning.
- During literacy activities, children develop their own versions of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Staff expertly expand on this and show children photographs of different homes around the world. During the inspection, children used their knowledge to decide whether the homes would be safe from a wolf attack. They explain that a tree house would be safe as wolves cannot climb. However, tigers can, so they need to think about how to safeguard the home from the risk of tigers. This shows children's superb ability to apply logic and build on prior learning. They enthusiastically problem solve, share ideas and work collaboratively together.
- Some children who attend the nursery by far exceed expectations for their young age. For example, some children are confident readers and know their multiplication tables. Staff spend time encouraging them to consolidate their knowledge and find ways to put what they know into action. This ensures that

all children experience a suitably challenging and ambitious curriculum.

- Children take part in forest school activities where they learn to be physically active and take manageable risks. They learn to climb trees and explore the natural world. Equal attention is paid to helping children to develop the smaller muscles in their hands. Children are skilful at drawing and practising writing. They form letters correctly and spell their name by copying their name cards.
- Children approach activities with purpose and enthusiasm. They concentrate until they complete tasks using their excellent knowledge and skills. For example, children put their mathematical knowledge into action when they recreate patterns. They observe shapes and use simple addition, such as counting shapes, knowing that they need two more to make three.
- Staff provide phenomenal opportunities to engage and encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's education. Children and their families go on nursery camping trips and make lanterns to take on a night walk. These activities are hugely beneficial for children, as their families get to know each other, and staff show parents how to maximise children's learning.
- Children talk about their families and their experiences. The manager ensures that the curriculum helps all children to gain a strong sense of their own identity and to learn about others. The nursery has recently sponsored a child living in Africa. Children make connections between their own experiences and those of children around the world.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY417560
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10305584
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	3 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	Roden, Virginia Margaret
Registered person unique reference number	RP514546
Telephone number	01494 531565
Date of previous inspection	27 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Chiltern Hills Montessori re-registered in 2010 and operates from Downley, High Wycombe. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, from 8am until 6pm. The nursery follows the Montessori ethos. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The nursery employs 12 staff, including the owner and manager. The owner holds early years professional status and a Montessori diploma. Of the other staff, five hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Hayley Marshall-Gowen

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 discussed the intent of the curriculum and observed its implementation during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A joint observation was completed and discussed with the provider.
- During the inspection, the inspector held a meeting with the manager and the provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at suitable times throughout the inspection.
- Parents were invited to share their views with the inspector. Several parents discussed their views during the inspection, and the inspector took account of all feedback received.

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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