

Inspection of Burnham Montessori School

Dropmore Parish Hall, Littleworth Road, Burnham, Buckinghamshire SL1 8PF

Inspection date: 8 March 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are eager to learn and develop at this welcoming setting. Leaders and staff create an ambitious and sequenced curriculum that focuses well on preparing children to develop essential life skills. This includes, children learning to manage their self-care, increase their vocabulary and master mathematical concepts. Children behave very well, showing that they understand the rules and boundaries staff teach them. This helps to create a calm and productive learning environment.

Children arrive with confidence, ready to learn and fully aware of what is expected of them. They place their belongings in the cloakroom, wash their hands and quickly get busy choosing pre-prepared trays with various real objects. During this time, children practise and master a variety of skills, such as pouring water from a small teapot to cups. When they finish, they put their trays back on the shelves, without prompting. Leaders and staff are always on hand if children ask for help. Children demonstrate increasing manual dexterity, such as independently using cutters to make play dough shapes.

Leaders and staff offer a wealth of experiences that build on children's interests. Children benefit from regular outings, such as nature walks in the nearby woods. They learn about different animals first-hand. For instance, children use binoculars to spot different birds and impressively remember the names, such as a chaffinch. Staff expand on these valuable learning opportunities. For example, they make bird feeders with children and set up tables with natural items and relevant information books. Children keenly apply the new words they have learned. In this way, children develop a good understanding of the world around them.

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

- Leaders have a thorough knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop. They design a curriculum with a strong emphasis on developing children's conversational skills. On the whole, staff actively listen to children share their thoughts and respond with interest. For example, at snack time, children talk about their small lunch boxes and that they will need larger backpacks for their eventual move to school.
- Leaders and staff help children develop a love of being active outdoors. They develop strong large-muscle skills when running and using their legs and feet to make ride-on cars move in tight spaces. Staff provide interesting and inviting play areas that actively engage children. For example, children follow a recipe in the outdoor role-play area using sand, acorns, twigs and leaves to make pies. They offer their 'pies' to others, explaining that the leaves make these 'extra yummy'.
- Children share their thoughts and ideas with staff as they participate in a variety

of role-play scenarios. This is evident when pretending that their 'car' needs petrol. Staff take this opportunity to ask questions, such as 'do you need diesel or petrol?' Children draw on their prior knowledge of seeing their parents fill up cars with fuel. Leaders and staff cleverly interweave early mathematics during these times. They ask, 'how much petrol will you need?' Children think carefully and say '300', knowing the answer is a number.

- Leaders and staff support children's literacy skills effectively, such as developing children's love for books. Children avidly choose stories for staff to read to them. They listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions staff ask them about the story. Children have ample opportunities to practise and refine their mark-making skills. For example, in the garden, they show increasing control when using writing equipment as they draw objects of their choice. Staff encourage children to find plastic letters in their name. Children jump with excitement when they see their whole name on display.
- Leaders recognise the importance of promoting staff's well-being. This helps to keep staff morale high. Staff report that they feel supported and valued. Leaders clearly identify specific training needs of staff and put together personalised programmes of professional development. However, they do not then fully support staff to put into practice what they have learned. This leads to some inconsistencies remaining in the quality of teaching. For instance, although some staff participate in training to help maximise children's communication and language skills, they do not consistently help children's learning move forward to give more detailed responses.
- Leaders and staff form trusted relationships with parents. They keep parents informed of their children's progress and development. Parents feel that their children are prepared well for school, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Leaders highly value parent's input and opinions about the education and care their children receive and actively encourage parents for feedback.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- focus more precisely on supporting staff in their professional development to raise the quality of their curriculum delivery to a consistently high standard.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY337023
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10317226
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	18
Name of registered person	Grewal, Soniadip Kaur
Registered person unique reference number	RP514388
Telephone number	01753 647557
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

Burnham Montessori School registered in 2006. It is open Monday to Friday, from 9am until 3.30pm, during term time only. The setting is eligible for funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. Of the four members of staff, three hold relevant childcare qualifications from level 6 to level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sonia Panchal

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provision.
- The provider joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 carried out a joint observation of an activity with the provider.
- The inspector spoke to children and several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Leaders provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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