

Inspection of Oak House Montessori Ltd

77 Wimborne Road, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA SS2 4JR

Inspection date: 12 June 2024

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

The manager and her team are committed to providing children with a welcoming and exciting environment in which to learn. The curriculum is planned around the children's needs and interests. It offers children a wide range of experiences, particularly outdoors in the nursery garden. The broad curriculum also includes the principles of Montessori teaching, such as learning practical life skills. There is also a strong emphasis on developing the skills children need to be independent learners. The team work closely with the parents and they know the children well. They can plan activities that challenge children's development and build on what they already know and can do. Children are excited to attend nursery and are warmly welcomed by happy staff, who are genuinely pleased to see them. They leave their parents with ease and enthusiastically settle at an activity of their choice.

Children enjoy learning opportunities outdoors. For example, older children relish their time in the forest garden. They dig holes and find coins and insects. They ask lots of questions; show curiosity about the treasures they find and have a positive attitude toward learning. Children are taught through the everyday activities how to stay safe. The staff are good role models and have high expectations for children attending. They offer praise, encouragement, and reassurance. Therefore, children's behaviour is good. All children make good progress, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

- The quality of teaching is good. The education programme ensures learning for all participating. This means children, including those with SEND, achieve good outcomes and are prepared for their transition to the next room or school. The nursery special educational needs coordinator is very knowledgeable of her role, she works closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure a consistent approach to providing children with support to achieve the best possible outcome.
- Parents speak highly of the nursery and say they are 'extremely happy' with all aspects of care and learning opportunities their children are offered. Many comment how excited their children are to attend. They say they are 'amazed' as to how quickly they settle and how much they have learned since attending. Parents welcome and value the regular updates they receive on the parents' app and daily conversations on collection of the children.
- Babies are cared for by attentive and nurturing staff. They have established close bonds and are confident and secure in their environment. Babies' individual routines are followed. For example, when they become tired, staff cuddle them as they enjoy their bottle to soothe them and they sleep comfortably with their

soothers. Babies enjoy playing with sensory materials, such as sand they make patterns with the sand on the floor and are keen to use brushes to help sweep it up. Staff speak calmly and reassuringly to the children. They repeat simple words to encourage babies' speech and language development.

- The manager ensures the curriculum is planned and embedded across all areas of learning while promoting the ethos of Montessori, particularly for the older children, and provides an inclusive environment for all. Resources are easily accessible, and children are supported to initiate their own learning and make choices as to where they play.
- Children show an enthusiasm to learn. They concentrate and follow instructions as they participate in water activities. Staff encourage children to predict if objects are going to float or sink. They order the objects in piles and predict why they might sink. For example, children understand that if they fill bottles with water it makes them heavy and sink. Their mathematical development is supported well.
- Opportunities are in place to support staff to continue their own professional development. An online training programme is available to all staff members. Staff say they feel valued, are happy and are supported well. They understand the importance of training, to enhance the education and care that children receive.
- The staff constantly engage children in meaningful conversation during activities. They have a clear comprehension of how children develop their conversation skills. Staff introduce new words and signs to challenge children's ability to communicate and increase their vocabulary. However, on occasions, staff do not ask questions to encourage children to think critically and solve problems.
- Overall, the session runs smoothly, and younger children are engrossed in their play. However, the organisation of mealtimes means staff are sometimes busy with other tasks. Therefore, they are not able to focus on supporting the children to make a smooth transition from group time to mealtime and remain purposefully engaged.

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:

- use effective questioning techniques to extend children's language, help them to think critically, and solve problems independently
- improve the organisation and preparation of mealtimes to ensure that all

children are engaged at these times.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY379463
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10335742
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	119
Number of children on roll	194
Name of registered person	Oak House Montessori Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP528400
Telephone number	01702 611991
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Oak House Montessori Ltd registered in 2003. The nursery employs 32 members of childcare staff, 25 of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 or above. Two members of staff are qualified Montessori teachers. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider has 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 nursery.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what the team want the children to learn.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at the inspection.
- Parents provided the inspector with oral and written feedback.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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