

Inspection of ME Montessori Play School

Bedgrove Community Centre, Ambleside, Aylesbury HP21 9TT

Inspection date:

24 October 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Although the provider has good plans in place for providing a flexible curriculum, this is not communicated well enough to the newly recruited staff team. Some staff are unsure exactly what children need to learn, meaning teaching is inconsistent. Staff do not always encourage children to be independent, even though this is part of the intent of the curriculum. Despite this, children are content and enjoy attending the inclusive playschool. They engage in a range of activities. For example, young children spend time filling pots with sawdust and play musical instruments. Children enjoy creative activities, such as arranging flowers. The playschool room is divided so younger babies have their own safe space to crawl and explore. However, there are weaknesses in practice that compromise children's safety and well-being. For example, the provider has ineffective arrangements in place for managing children's food allergies. This places children at risk. Not all suitability checks have been carried out for staff, such as when they have spent time living abroad.

Children behave well and are developing in confidence. Staff use group times well to help children to get to know each other, concentrate for short periods and increase their communication and language skills effectively. Children learn new songs that they sing with enthusiasm. Children who learn English as an additional language make swift progress and begin to express themselves and their needs well.

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

- The provider has a clear ethos for the playschool and is articulate about how they intend to focus the curriculum on supporting children to manage their feelings and emotions and to become independent. However, the provider does not ensure that staff have a cohesive understanding about their planned curriculum. Staff engage well with children and are caring, but the lack of curriculum focus means that their interactions are not always successful in helping to build on children's existing skills.
- The provider does not ensure that children's food allergies are managed correctly at the playschool. Staff are unsure which children have allergies, what they are allergic to or what action they must take to reduce the risk of children eating allergens. This places children with food allergies at risk of significant harm.
- Staff do not consistently encourage children to develop successful independence skills. For example, when children come indoors from playing, they take off their coats and shoes and leave them on the floor. This is because they cannot reach the coat hooks and staff do not show them how to look after their belongings. At snack times, older children try to serve themselves fruit from a large bowl using

a spoon. When they find this difficult, they scoop the food up with their hands. They also eat food that other children have already started eating. This is unhygienic and does not promote their good health.

- Overall, there are suitable procedures for the recruitment and induction of new staff. This includes obtaining references and carrying out some checks. However, the provider has not ensured that staff's full history is checked when they have lived overseas. As a result, this weakens the safe recruitment process.
- The key-person arrangements are successful, and children form close relationships with staff who care for them. Staff know children well. They are affectionate and give babies and young children comforting hugs and cuddles. This helps children to grow in confidence, and they settle quickly. Babies fall sleep soundly, and staff are attentive to meeting their needs.
- The provider has a secure understanding of how to recognise when children might be at risk of harm. Staff show equally good awareness. Staff understand what action they need to take if they have a concern about children's welfare and know how to pass information on to the relevant local safeguarding partners.
- The provider does not follow the complaints procedure and ensure that complaints are accurately logged along with a record of any outcomes. Some information and records were not available during the inspection as required.
- Staff form professional relationships with parents and carers. They welcome parents into the playschool each morning and spend time talking with them about their children. Staff share information electronically. This helps parents to find out about their children's learning and helps them to know how to support children at home.

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 meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
support staff to understand the curriculum intent so they know what children need to learn and how they can support them and their progress	14/11/2024

implement robust procedures to safeguard children with allergies at snack and mealtimes, ensuring that all staff can identify children with allergies and know what they are allergic to	31/10/2024
complete additional criminal record checks to help confirm the suitability of staff when they have worked and lived abroad	31/10/2024
keep a log of any complaints and record the outcome of any investigation into the complaint	31/10/2024
make all information and records easily available to those who need to see them, including inspectors during an Ofsted inspection.	31/10/2024

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

- develop opportunities for children to practise and improve their independence skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2756910
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10357413
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	0 to 3
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Antonazzo, Kellie
Registered person unique reference number	2756908
Telephone number	07754055317
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

ME Montessori Play School registered in 2024 and operates from Bedgrove Community Centre in Aylesbury. The playschool broadly follows the Montessori approach. The playschool employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The playschool is open all year round, on Monday and Tuesday, from 8.15am until 3.15pm. The playschool opens on the last three Wednesdays of the month, from 8.15 until 3.15pm. On Thursday and Friday, the playschool closes at 12.15pm. The playschool offers government funded places for children aged nine months to four years and children in receipt of funding for disadvantage.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Hayley Marshall-Gowen

Inspection activities

- 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 manager, who is also the provider.
- During the inspection, the inspector held a meeting with the provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playschool.
- 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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