

Bobtails Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	113380
Inspection date	14/10/2009
Inspector	Daphne Prescott
Setting address	Adversane Hall, Adversane Lane, Adversane, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9JN
Telephone number	01403786176
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Bobtails Montessori Nursery School is privately owned. It opened in 2000 and operates from one room in a community building in Adversane, West Sussex. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 22 children from two to under five years may attend the pre-school at any-one time. The setting is open each weekday from 9.00am to 4.00pm, term time only. There are currently 31 children from two to under five years on roll, children attend different times of the week. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. The pre-school employs 10 staff, of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards an early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The principals and staff team of the setting are extremely skilled in providing a warm and welcoming environment where all children are included and their individual needs are met very effectively. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting. They are extremely happy, settled and eager to join in activities. The principals and staff team build exceptionally strong partnerships with parents/carers. They have a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and create a rich learning environment. Teamwork is very strong and they evaluate the very good service they provide for the children and this enables them to make continuous improvement to promote good quality care for all the children attending.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further promote children's independence at meal times by enabling them to serve themselves
- ensure safety procedures followed by staff for supervising children in the outside area and when visitors are in the setting is detailed fully in the record of risk assessment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has a good knowledge and understanding of the local child protection procedures and therefore, children are safeguarded. Clear and robust employment procedures ensure all staff are suitable to work with the children. The premises are safe and secure and records are kept of all visitors. Children's safety is promoted well through daily safety checks to the premises both inside and out. The emergency escape plan is in place and practised regularly with children contributing to their safety whilst on the premises. The setting routinely completes written risk assessments for all aspects of the setting and diligently supervises the children to keep them safe throughout the day, both in and outside. However, safety procedures for the outside area and visitors to the setting are not fully recorded in the record of risk assessment. Children's welfare is promoted well; staff hold first aid qualifications to ensure that accidents are suitably managed and the procedure for administering medication is in line with current legislation.

Space and resources are organised very effectively to allow all children to move around freely and safely. A lovely range of Montessori and traditional toys, materials and resources are provided to meet the varying needs of the children attending. The staff make excellent use of all resources to provide children with an extensive and stimulating range of activities to help them progress. All equipment is in good condition and easy to access to help children become confident and independent from an early age. There is a wide range of toys and resources which help to promote children's understanding of diversity within our society, for example, dressing up clothes, books, dolls and welcome posters in other languages. Furthermore, diversity is valued through recognising festivals from other countries, such as dressing up for Diwali and eating noodles for Chinese New Year. The atmosphere is very inclusive and this in turn enables the children to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Boys and girls alike achieve consistently well because staff plan for their individual learning whilst taking their interests into account. All children receive the support and attention they need to become part of the group, feel they belong, and feel special.

A strong emphasis on partnerships with parents/carers enables children to settle easily into the supportive atmosphere and make the best possible start. Parents are welcomed into the setting and are at ease talking with the friendly and approachable staff. They make themselves available for daily feedback at drop off and collection, building secure relationships with families and a strong partnership of care. Relevant information regarding the uniqueness of each child is obtained from parents, such as religion, likes, and dislikes. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents and recorded on registration forms including health and dietary needs. Parents are involved in children's learning and development through daily chats and the sharing of observation files. At the inspection, several parents said that they are extremely happy with the nursery school and their children are progressing extremely well. A wealth of information is on display to keep adults up to date with how the setting operates and they welcome suggestions from parents and children on ways to improve the setting and continue to meet everyone's needs. The principals of the setting demonstrate their willingness to establish good

links with other professionals providing the Early Years Foundation Stage framework in order to ensure continuity of care and learning for children if they attend another setting. Children benefit greatly from the setting working closely with other agencies, such as the first visiting team, in order to ensure progress is consistent for all children.

The setting is run by experienced and very highly motivated principals. They lead the staff team extremely well through their enthusiasm and motivation and they inspire the staff by acting as very positive role models. Teamwork is excellent due to good communication and yearly appraisals to discuss training and development needs. Staff are well supported to attend ongoing training to increase their knowledge and skills, such as child protection and first aid. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and work very well as a team to promote very good outcomes for children. They demonstrate a strong capacity to continually improve the service and drive improvement through evaluating practices and completing the self-evaluation form in order to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. The previous recommendations have been suitably acted upon, improving outcomes for children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

All of the staff team treat children with great kindness and consideration, and as a result children are very happy and settled. The staff team have a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and provide a rich learning environment. They have a secure knowledge of the Montessori approach and the links with the EYFS. Observations, discussions with staff, plans and photographs show that the children enjoy a wonderful and well balanced range of activities. Children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and are becoming confident and enthusiastic learners. Staff maintain detailed records of children's achievements which are recorded in their learning journals. These records are used to identify next steps in their learning for individual children and are also used effectively to guide planning.

The staff team ensure that there is a good balance between adult-led activities and those the children choose for themselves. Therefore, children's learning is effective because staff intervene when appropriate; to re-focus children's attention or unobtrusively support the next steps in learning. Staff provide many opportunities for children to repeat and consolidate their learning. Staff help children to learn by spending time talking to them and skilfully asking them questions to make them think. For example, they ask 'where is the red circle?' and 'what colour are frogs?' Children are becoming skilful communicators as they learn new vocabulary and use descriptive languages to express their feelings. Through a wonderful range of art and craft materials children develop their imagination and creativity, thus promoting their sense of achievement and enjoyment. For example, they paint at the painting easel or sit at the table painting with fine paint brushes and pallet paints. Children feel pride in their achievements as they enjoy taking home their paintings. They know how to operate simple equipment as they ably click the mouse and press the keyboard on the computer. Children are developing an

extensive understanding of number through activities and equipment which are designed to build on what they know and challenge them to explore further. Their knowledge of mathematical concepts is very good. Children relish problem solving activities using the Montessori equipment. They correctly organise rods into steps of size. Children develop their understanding of quantity as they pour water into buckets and talk about them being full, half empty and heavy and use numbers freely in conversation and play. Children begin to develop an awareness of groups of things changing in quantity as staff say 'you have three pieces left' when completing a puzzle. They develop their senses through exploring a range of different textures, such as shells and wooden objects. Children are learning about living things and to care for animals from first hand experiences. For example, they enjoy watching with great interest chicks and ducklings hatching from eggs in the setting. They are developing good reading and writing skills as they recognise their names and letters displayed in the environment. Children are becoming very aware that print carries meaning as they look at books and enjoy listening to stories. They have a great time laughing and having fun as they energetically join in action songs and enjoy singing with their friends. Children are developing very positive attitudes to their learning and this prepares them well for the future.

Children are developing an extremely good appreciation of a healthy lifestyle; they are offered nutritious snacks and meals such as fresh fruits, chicken or vegetable curry and rice. Water is freely available throughout the day keeping their bodies healthy and hydrated. Children and staff sit in small groups for meal times, creating a lovely homely and social atmosphere in which social skills and good manners are very well promoted. They are encouraged to enjoy their foods and chat with their friends. Children talk about their food likes and dislikes and staff encourage conversations on the benefits of healthy eating. At snack time children are able to help themselves to fresh fruits and pour their own drink. Although children's independence is generally fostered, this is not routinely the case at lunchtime for the older children. They do not regularly have the opportunity to serve themselves with their food. Children enjoy playing in the fresh air as part of the healthy lifestyle staff promote and they benefit greatly from the opportunity to challenge their physical ability. Children love to be outdoors as they run out excitedly to play. They are skilled at negotiating pathways while riding their bikes or build up great speeds as they pedal the exercise bike. Children learn to wash their hands thoroughly to remove germs and use paper towels to help prevent the spread of infection. Children show they feel safe as they move around confidently both inside and out. They are very well-behaved; they know what is expected of them because boundaries are consistently and kindly applied by staff. They are developing lovely friendships and are learning how to take turns and positively interact with each other.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

