

Maidford Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	219976
Inspection date	09/06/2011
Inspector	Tracey Boland
Setting address	Rectory Farm, Maidford, Towcester, Northamptonshire, NN12 8HG
Telephone number	01327 860666
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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 assesses 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 0300 123 1231, 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.

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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

Maidford Montessori Nursery School opened in 1989. The nursery serves the local area and beyond. The nursery is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play as well as a large woodland area where the children are involved in Forest School activities.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12.30pm Monday to Friday, lunch club until 12.55pm and then sessions start again at 1pm until 3pm Monday to Thursday. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time all of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 23 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of child care staff. Most hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is Outstanding.

Maidford Montessori school is an example of outstanding provision. The exemplary care and the high quality education that children receive ensure that they make excellent progress in their learning and development. The setting is very effective at meeting the needs of all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The excellent assessment procedures that are used to plan interesting work for each individual has married the early year's foundation stage of learning and the Montessori learning excellently. There are outstanding partnerships with parents and others which ensure continuity of care, learning and development. The extremely effective leadership within the setting and the excellent relationships within the team ensure that all work cohesively to provide a safe, stimulating and enjoyable experience for all children. They are focused on making the provision the best it can be and continually evolving through their own self evaluation processes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop further the systems for including parents and children in the self evaluation process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The experienced owner is an outstanding leader who is supported very well by her manager and staff. Robust safeguarding procedures ensure that no adult or visitor is left alone with a child unless they have undergone rigorous checks with regard to their suitability to work with children. Clear, concise written policies and procedures reflect the ethos of care, which is shared with parents. Systems are in place to review policies and keep them up to date with current legislation and practice and staff ensure they are implemented excellently. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and daily visual checks ensure children can play safely. Access to the setting is only via a member of staff and security systems protect children at all times. A record is kept of all visitors and ID is sought.

The setting successfully combines the Montessori approach with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, each child's learning file shows they make excellent progress. Additionally, the detailed Montessori record sheets provide further strong evidence of children's outstanding learning and development. Staff demonstrate a commitment to keep their knowledge and skill base up to date through training and their ongoing personal development. The premises are extremely well organised within three rooms enabling children to continually engage in an excellent variety of exciting, challenging and stimulating activities. The extensive outdoor learning environment provides an opportunity for children to explore nature and engage in activities that develop superb life skills. The setting's self-evaluation process is rigorous although management and staff feel it is important to continually look at ways of developing these further. Staff actively seek the views of parents and use the information to inform their self evaluation. Parents speak highly of the fantastic service they and their children receive, the commitment of the staff to maintaining a high quality service which meets the individual needs of their children. Since the last inspection management and staff have developed documentation relating to attendance registers, information for parents about the early years foundation stage and Montessori teaching methods and the processes for observation and assessments of the children.

Staff consistently provide an inclusive, welcoming environment where equality and diversity is consistently promoted and supported by effective policies and procedures. Children gain an excellent understanding of the countries and continents around the world through a vast range of resources and artefacts that staff or parents have brought into the setting and the open and explorative discussion that take place between staff and children. Excellent partnerships have been formed with other professionals involved in the children's lives which ensure continuity of care and coherence of information. Staffs vast knowledge of the children and their individual needs enables them to effectively meet their needs at all times.

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

Children enter the setting happily and show excellent levels of confidence, independence and concentration. Solid relationships have been formed between children, their peers and staff and children greet chosen friends warmly and settle well into their play. Children show very high levels of understanding of their own and other people's emotions and are kind, courteous and polite. Their manners are excellent as is their behaviour and staff encourage and support children when resolving their own minor squabbles. They respond extremely well to requests made of them and receive plentiful amounts of praise for this.

Staff gain an extensive knowledge of the children, their needs and their learning through detailed discussion with parents and through their own observations and assessments of the children at play. They listen to the children's ideas and interests and incorporate that into their day. For example, through their topic of Africa, when a child talks excitedly about the animals that live there resources are sought to maintain that interest and extend their knowledge and language. By linking the Montessori learning programme to the six areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage staff gain a concise understanding of priorities for each child, therefore enabling them to plan effectively and monitor the ongoing progress of each day. As a result, children are continually engaged, motivated and enthusiastic in their play and learning.

Children's independence skills are consistently encouraged and compounded in their everyday routines. They take responsibility for serving their own snacks, washing their own cups and plates up afterwards and to tidy away after when they have completed an activity. Children gain an excellent awareness of healthy living and are actively involved in planting and growing fruit and vegetables in their garden and have made their own scarecrow, collecting the materials they need such as twigs and small branches and building its body. Then they found clothing suitable for a scarecrow and have dressed it and placed it near their crop to keep the birds away. Children enjoy a tremendous variety of activities in the outdoor learning environment which enhances their life skills, broadens their understanding of nature and develops their awareness of being healthy and the need for exercise and fresh air each day. Children are actively involved in the forest school, weaving fences out of small branches, constructing small camp fires and making their own camps. Their understanding of safety is continually enhanced through the use of small tools and the discussions about fire safety and the use of matches.

Children learn the importance of caring for living things and are eager to feed the ducks, chickens and guinea pig at the setting. They understand the importance of recycling and use foods left from their snack time for the animals taking turns to feed them. They have excellent opportunities to continually develop their physical skills as they climb on equipment, use wheeled toys with control and coordination and take part in the settings sports day celebrations. They thoroughly enjoy music and song time where they join in enthusiastically, clapping the syllables for their names and dancing in time to the music whilst singing.

Children's understanding of cultural diversity and the wider world is continually enhanced through the fantastic resources available to them and staffs skilful use of open ended questions and vocabulary to encourage children's thought processes and language development. They learn of the similarities and differences in

peoples lives, for example, when discussing the pictures of the people of Africa collecting water, the clothes they wear and the animals they keep and why and related that to how they complete the same tasks when at home.

Children are confident and self-assured. They show a good recognition and understanding of letter sound links and identify the initial sounds in words, their names and in written form. Many children are able to recognise a wide range of the alphabet and confidently write their names. Children are confident communicators talking to adults with ease, sharing what they know and are doing and show inquisitiveness, demonstrating trust in adults to show interest and meet their needs. They develop an understanding of ICT through the use of the laptop and cameras enabling them to recall and reflect on the activities they are involved in, sharing this with their parents.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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

