

Pippins Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY282196
Inspection date	29/03/2011
Inspector	Lynn Smith

Setting address	Whites Farm, Bures Road, White Colne, Colchester, Essex, CO6 2QF
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Pippins Montessori was registered in 1992 and has been running under the current ownership since 2004, it is privately owned and run. It operates from converted barns in a rural area of White Colne, near Colchester, Essex. A fully enclosed garden is used for outdoor play and activities. The nursery is open from 8am to 6pm five days a week for 47 weeks of the year.

A maximum of 45 children may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 71 children on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 13 members of staff including three trainees, a cook and a secretary. The remaining eight staff, including the manager, hold appropriate qualifications to at least Level two. One member of staff holds a Foundation degree and one holds a B.A. Honours degree in Childcare and Education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The provision meets children's welfare, learning and development needs to an exceptionally high standard through its exemplary procedures. Staff demonstrate excellent knowledge of all of the children attending and facilitate their learning expertly by following their individual interests. The setting has superb procedures in place for reviewing and evaluating the working practices and provision for children's learning. The setting has strong links with some local settings, schools and childminders, however, these are not so well established with some other settings which children attend.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further opportunities to work in partnership with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure progression and continuity.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well protected through the setting's clear and effective safeguarding procedures. All staff demonstrate secure knowledge of their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children. The setting's well-written policies and procedures enable staff and parents to be fully aware of the procedures to be followed in order to keep children safe and well. Robust systems are in place for ensuring that all adults working with children have been appropriately vetted. Visitors to the setting are monitored and a clear record of their attendance is held on file. The environment is maintained to an exceptionally high standard ensuring that children are safe and secure at all times.

The setting has very high expectations. The leadership embeds ambition and drives improvement by constantly reviewing and evaluating the setting. Staff, parents and children actively participate in this process. Staff are encouraged to pursue their individual strengths and interests and to further develop their professional qualifications through appropriate training.

Resources are superbly presented at the children's height to enable them to self-select equipment and to make firm choices over their play and learning. Staff are on hand at all times to expertly support the children. Their excellent interaction enables children to use the superb range of Montessori equipment in both the traditional ways and also imaginatively. The setting provides an extremely enabling environment whereby children can explore play indoors and outdoors freely.

Parents are extremely complimentary of the setting and the way in which it enhances their children's learning, self-esteem and personal development. Parents comment that it is a very homely setting which encompasses the whole family's needs. The effective and well-established partnership with parents provides excellent means of communication which enhances the children's welfare and learning. Parents are provided with extremely clear and informative information about the setting and how it operates and are able to access additional information through the website or by talking to staff. Parent's views are regularly sought and acted upon through questionnaires as well as verbal discussions. For example, systems for sharing information with parents more effectively were implemented following a parent's comments. The setting has superb partnerships with a number of local schools and childminders who share the care of children attending. However, the setting has established that these links are not so effective for other local provisions and is beginning to discuss ways of further developing these.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their day at the Kindergarten. They are independent and guide their own play and learning. Children spend some of their day exploring and

mastering the Montessori resources on offer to them which they select freely from the low-level storage units displayed around the setting. They also participate in an exciting range of creative and imaginative play opportunities. Children benefit from the many visitors who come in to the setting to share their knowledge and experiences, for example, they learn about reptiles, have opportunities to talk to a Fire Officer, learn about the library service when the mobile library van comes to visit and have opportunities to talk to visiting Police Officers. Children thoroughly enjoy cooking on a regular basis, for example, they make exciting pizzas, preparing the vegetables and cheese and deciding what they are going to place on their pizza. In the autumn they have opportunities to walk through the apple orchards in which the setting is situated and collect fallen apples to use in cooking activities. Children participate in yoga and are encouraged to use Maketon signing as a means of communicating as well as developing their verbal speech. Key persons have excellent systems in place for observing children's development. They use their observations effectively to assess children's progress and to identify their next steps in learning. Weekly planning provides excellent opportunities for children's individual learning to be incorporated.

Staff follow rigorous procedures to ensure that the premises are safe and secure at all times. Extremely effective risk assessments are conducted on a regular basis and daily safety checks are carried out by all staff. Children behave in ways which demonstrate that they feel safe and that they understand good safety rules such as placing chairs back under the table and not running around indoors. Children's understanding of keeping healthy and well is expertly promoted through the setting's clear policies and procedures. They are actively involved in preparing and serving their snacks and meals and demonstrate good knowledge of foods which keep them healthy. Children are very fit and active, they have excellent opportunities to experience outdoor play, fresh air and exercise when they play in the exciting and very well-equipped garden. They also have superb opportunities to go for walks around the farm on which the setting is situated.

Children are extremely settled, content and comfortable within their early years provision. They enter the setting with confidence which stays firmly with them throughout their day, returning to their parents or carers full of excitement and explanations about what they have been doing. Staff expertly promote children's self-esteem by praising and encouraging them at every opportunity. They act as excellent role models, showing children that it is important to speak in kind and gentle voices and to develop consideration for each other. The extensive range of learning materials and planned activities on offer to children enables them to develop excellent skills for the future. They communicate extremely well conversing about both real and imaginary experiences. Their use of numbers and counting in everyday activities demonstrates that they are able problem solve and reason.

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
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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

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met