

York Montessori Nursery Ltd

Oxcarr Lane, Strensall, York, YO32 5TD

Inspection date	17/09/2013
Previous inspection date	26/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Partnerships with parents are excellent because the highest priority is given to the sharing of information and involving parents in their children's learning. As a result, children settle extremely well and parents have complete confidence, faith and trust in the staff who care for them.
- Children have excellent opportunities to play and learn outdoors, which means they benefit fully from lots of fresh air and have freedom to move around on a larger scale. This plays a very significant part in keeping them fit and healthy and fully arouses their sense of exploration.
- Children behave in an exemplary manner because they have very secure boundaries and routines so they understand fully what is expected of them. Consequently, they become extremely confident, responsible and independent individuals who have very high levels of self-esteem.
- Staff are very skilful and enthusiastic practitioners who empower children to learn in different ways. This means children become highly motivated and critical thinkers who delight in discovering new things. Consequently, they make rapid progress in their development.
- Staff give the highest regard to making children's transition into their care a calm and pleasant experience, which means children feel very safe and are confident in being away from their parents.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the premises and observed children playing in the playrooms and outdoor area.
- The inspector met with the manager and owner and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and discussed the provider's improvement plan.
- The inspector looked at children's learning records, planning documents and a selection of policies.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager of an activity involving a group of children measuring pumpkins in the garden.

Inspector

Diane Turner

Full Report

Information about the setting

York Montessori Nursery Limited formerly known as Home to Home Nursery was registered in 2007 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of two nurseries run by a private provider. It is located in the village of Strensall, on the outskirts of York. Children are cared for in three playrooms within a converted bungalow and a purpose-built timber lodge. Enclosed outdoor play areas are available to all children. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It keeps two guinea pigs as pets.

The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one at level 2, one at level 4, two at level 5, one at level 6 and three have Early Years Professional Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays and a week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions and there are currently 76 children on roll. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It receives support from the local authority and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and the Montessori Schools Association.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider enhancing the opportunities for older children to extend their excellent understanding of mathematical concepts, such as shape and measure, even further during practical activities.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

All staff have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the characteristics of effective learning. They are extremely confident in their teaching and their enthusiastic approach is infectious. This means children are very motivated to learn and constantly gain new knowledge. Consequently, they make rapid progress towards the early learning goals and are extremely well prepared to move on to school, when the time comes. Staff skilfully provide activities linked to children's interests, which excites and inspires them to take part. For instance, a number of toddlers show a real interest in babies arising from new siblings being born. Staff seize the opportunity to teach children about growth and change over time to further their understanding of the world. They

skilfully bring the activity to life and make children's learning memorable by helping them to draw around a child in the baby room, their own room and the pre-school room. The resulting outlines are cut out, decorated by the children and displayed with pride of place in order of height on the wall. This is highly effective in enabling children to share experiences, work together and make clear connections in their learning.

Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to learn outdoors and engage with nature. For example, they enable them to plant and nurture pumpkins in the garden and when these come to fruition they extend children's learning even further by focusing on measuring their produce. For instance, a member of staff excitedly asks the children to see if they can find the largest pumpkin. Children delight in lifting the plant's leaves and seeking this out. The member of staff then carefully explains how the pumpkin can be measured using a piece of string by putting it around the middle and cutting it where it joins. She then asks children to find two smaller pumpkins and they become fully immersed as they repeat the measuring process. The member of staff shows children how the three lengths of string differ and suggests using measuring rods so they can calculate the exact lengths. One child shows great surprise as she describes the large piece of string as being 'massive'. She puts this along the rod and counts the corresponding marks with confidence before independently and painstakingly recording the number on a note pad as a record. Inspired by the activity children are keen to use their new knowledge and skills and quickly return outdoors to look for other items to measure before settling on the trunk of a tree. A member of staff skilfully encourages them to think of other ways to measure the piece of string, which results in children using footsteps. This clearly shows that children are empowered to become critical thinkers who do not settle on their first idea but pursue further learning with enthusiasm and vigour. Consideration can be given to extending children's superb mathematical development even further during such activities by raising their awareness of more complex words related to shape and measure, such as 'circumference'.

Staff caring for very young children provide excellent opportunities for them to learn through exploration and use their senses to help them understand their world. For example, a baby becomes fully immersed and concentrates for a very good amount of time during a painting activity. A member of staff shows the child how to dip his brush in paint and make marks on paper. The child carefully copies the action and the member of staff shows respect for the child's efforts by responding with 'oh good boy, are you copying me?'. This means children feel extremely safe to take a risk with a new idea. Staff pay excellent attention to supporting children's development in communication and language. For instance, they read stories with great expression, which captures and maintains children's interest and helps them to develop very good listening skills. As babies babble staff respond with delight and imitate their sounds, which fully acknowledges their attempts to communicate, giving them confidence in their abilities. As staff engage with children they model speech and describe their actions, so children quickly learn to make connections. For example, as a member of staff writes a baby's name on his finished painting she spells this out and reiterates what it says. The child watches and listens intently as she does so, which very subtly lays the early foundations for learning letter sounds and decoding words.

Staff know children very well, which is clearly reflected in the very detailed observations

they make of their play and learning. They meticulously use this information to keep a detailed record of progress for each one, including the required 'progress check at age two'. Staff continually consult with parents to find out what children have learnt at home and parents are very keen to share this information. This means staff have a full picture of children's development and can plan very sharply and precisely for the next steps in their learning. Parents are provided with very good opportunities to be involved in their child's learning in the nursery. For example, older children can borrow books to share at home and stay and play sessions are provided. These include activities, such as 'den making with dads' and messy play.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The nursery has a very strong caring ethos. Staff recognise and fully understand that if children are not settled and happy in their environment they will not learn successfully. Consequently, high priority is given to making children's transitions into the nursery and between rooms a pleasant experience. Staff value parents highly as their children's primary carers and obtain highly detailed information about children's individual needs from them on entry. A comprehensive transitions booklet is completed each time a child transfers to the next room. This means staff's knowledge of individual children is second to none, which enables them to provide very good security and stability for them. Parents are given a 'key person bag' to take home that contains information and items relating to their child's designated key person and their interests. This means parents and children are fully informed about who will be taking a special interest in the family. Consequently, children settle quickly and are very happy and content to spend time away from their parents.

Children have superb opportunities to take part in visits and outings, which enables them to discover the world outside their normal nursery environment and further prepares them for school. Both children and staff delight in the added dimension these experiences bring to their learning. For example, a photographic record of a visit to the beach includes comments from children, such as 'I'm standing in the big water' and 'all the children crowded round when I caught a crab', from staff.

Children have an excellent understanding of keeping themselves safe because staff involve them fully in assessing risks. This gives children the foundations for responsibility and trust. For example, they know how high to build crates, so they can climb on these according to their own confidence and abilities and they use knives with great care as they prepare food. Children behave in an exemplary manner because staff are excellent role models for them to follow. They provide secure boundaries and routines and empower children to become independent and assume responsibility from a young age. For example, toddlers prepare the snack for babies by buttering crackers for them. Older children very confidently serve their own food at meal times, helping themselves fairly to portions of pasta bake. They scrape any left overs into the bin and wash up their own crockery and cutlery at the end of the meal. This shows children develop great confidence in their own abilities and make a very positive contribution to the life of the nursery.

Excellent attention is paid to promoting children's good health and all staff have a first aid

qualification, which further enhances safety measures in place. They are provided with highly nutritious and balanced meals that are freshly prepared on site, with children contributing fully to the process. For example, they gather green beans they have grown in the garden and take these to the chef to cook for lunch. As a result, children have an in-depth knowledge of food sourcing and are keen to taste what they grow, which promotes a very positive attitude towards healthy eating. This in turn successfully keeps up their energy levels throughout the day. Children of all ages spend very good amounts of time outdoors each day and the area quickly becomes a hive of activity. This means they benefit from lots of fresh air and have excellent opportunities to develop very good physical skills as they use a wide range of resources. For example, older children show excellent coordination and control of their bodies as they use large spades to dig in soil, which they transfer to a wheelbarrow and confidently transport to other areas. They competently negotiate wheeled toys and delight in pouring water down guttering, showing awe and wonder as the water disappears as it soaks into the ground. Children delight in initiating their own imaginative play. For instance, one child becomes deeply involved in mixing soil and water to make 'pancakes' in the mud kitchen, while other children search intently for 'glue monsters' in different areas. They show high levels of energy and competently think of new ideas to reach their goal. For instance, one child independently makes a 'telescope' by rolling up a piece of paper and securing it with tape, to aid him in his quest. Staff are very mindful that some children may not always want to join in with more boisterous activities outdoors and sensitively enable them to pursue quieter activities they can enjoy in the area. For instance, a group of children pretend they are at 'Grandma's house', as they sit under the climbing frame, while another child sits and draws a picture of a spider he has observed.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is led and managed to a very high standard. The owner is passionate about providing the best care and education for all children and her commitment, drive and enthusiasm inspires the manager and staff team to implement her vision. The manager plays a strategic role in making sure the nursery runs safely and efficiently and acts very competently as a leader, motivator and mentor for staff. Staff work extremely well together and are dedicated to their role in caring for children and empowering them to learn. The arrangements for safeguarding children are given the highest priority. The recruitment and vetting of staff is robust, as is their induction, to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Through attending training staff are extremely confident about the procedures to follow, should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. They meticulously carry out daily safety checks and key pad locks are in place to ensure there is no unauthorised access to the premises. Staffing levels are high and established arrangements are in place to cover any absences. This means children are well supervised at all times and that the required adult to child ratios are meticulously maintained. All rooms are organised very effectively and the numbers of children that can be accommodated in each room carefully calculated, recorded and adhered to at all times. This means children's safety and well-being is superbly promoted.

Both the management and staff team are driven to continually improving the nursery and

the outcomes for children's learning. Each child's development and progression towards the early learning goals is meticulously monitored by their key person. The management team regularly scrutinise the learning records staff keep, to identify any gaps in the educational programmes or children's learning and fully support staff in addressing these. Self-evaluation is used continuously to critically identify the nursery's strengths and areas for development. This plays a crucial part in helping the management team to draw up a sharply focused development plan. Staff, parents and children all play a full and active part in the process. For instance, a parent forum meets every two months, which enables them to challenge the nursery's practice and put forward their points of view regarding any improvement. Children complete simple evaluation sheets of the activities and resources provided by adding a 'smiley' or 'sad' face against pictorial examples. Any 'sad' faces are explored further and addressed where possible.

Meticulous attention is given to the performance management and constant development of all staff, which enables them to hone their teaching skills and enrich children's experiences further. For example, informal personal development meetings take place on a regular basis and annual appraisals are used in a highly effective manner. This enables staff to reflective on, analyse their practice and identify where their particular skills can be used to best effect. The owner steadfastly believes in ongoing training for all staff and leads by example, having undertaken and achieved a qualification at degree level herself. Consequently, the opportunities for staff to develop professionally are excellent and this results in a highly qualified and knowledgeable work force.

Partnerships with parents are superb. Information they receive is excellent and includes a personalised welcome pack, which includes information about the educational ethos the nursery follows. A wealth of displays, a website, individual diaries and regular newsletters means they are left in no doubt about their child's care and learning on an ongoing basis. Meticulous attention is given to meeting parents' individual care needs. For example, a pick-up service is operated for those with transport difficulties. Parents are unanimous in their praise for the nursery. For example, they describe how their children 'adore the staff' and that they are 'allowed to flourish as individuals'. Staff pay very good attention to working in partnership with other early years settings, such as schools children will move on to. For instance, a designated staff member liaises with the local school. As a result, children are invited to attend events at the school and teachers visit the nursery to meet children in a familiar environment. This means their transitions are seamless as they encounter the next stage in their learning. Staff work very closely with parents and other professionals, to ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive highly effective tailored support, to promote inclusion.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY364170
Local authority	York
Inspection number	933226
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	76
Name of provider	York Montessori Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	26/05/2011
Telephone number	01904 490339

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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