

Buttercup Montessori Kindergarten

125 Watchouse Road, CHELMSFORD, CM2 8NG

Inspection date	08/01/2014
Previous inspection date	08/05/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Teaching is very good and occasionally excellent, particularly when children are offered super opportunities to develop their communication and language skills. The staff fully encourage children to speak and listen in a range of situations and use language in fun and enjoyable contexts.
- Children and babies thrive in this safe and stimulating nursery because the staff implement very effective key person arrangements, which provide children with close emotional support.
- Very strong relationships with parents ensure they are fully involved in their children's learning, both in the nursery and at home.
- The nursery safeguarding procedures are robust and rigorous, promoting the welfare of all children who attend.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to enhance the daily routines, such as, mealtimes to encourage children to extend their independence skills.
- The opportunities for children to express their originality, develop their design skills and use their own ideas in creative activities are not always fully embraced.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the management, staff and children.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the children's development records.
The inspector saw evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff, self-evaluation, risk assessment, policies and procedures and other documentation in relation to health and safety checks.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from references obtained by the nursery.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full report

Information about the setting

Buttercup Montessori Kindergarten was established in 2001 and moved into the current premises in 2004, it is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is privately run and managed. It operates from a converted residential property in the Galleywood area of Chelmsford, Essex. The nursery serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Opening times are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in five playrooms and have access to an enclosed area for outdoor play.

There are currently 166 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are currently 20 staff working directly with the children. Of these, 18 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or 4 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 2. The nursery also employs bank staff to cover staff absences, a cook and a caretaker. Tutors who teach music and movement and Spanish also come into the nursery to support children's learning. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The staff support children's learning by following the Montessori philosophy and principles alongside traditional teaching methods.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already good care practices by reviewing the organisation of mealtimes to give children more opportunities to develop their independence skills, for example, by laying tables, pouring their own drinks and serving their food
- enhance the opportunities for children to develop their design skills and express their own ideas in the art experiences by extending the resources available to them, particularly in adult-led creative activities.

Inspection judgements

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

The staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and provide a mixture of Montessori and mainstream early years educational approaches. Children have easy access to a wide range of high-quality resources, which they are able to choose freely within most activities. Staff actively show children how to use new resources or play materials so that they can then go on to use them independently in their own time. This means that children are offered an interesting curriculum with a blend of adult-led or child-initiated experiences that cover all areas of learning. The staff are confident in their teaching. They skilfully make the link between observation, assessment and planning, which means children are provided with a range of activities that support their development. Systematic record keeping shows children and babies are making very good strides in their learning, while having fun and gaining the essential skills to prepare them for the transfer to school or their next step in learning. Any concerns in children's development are identified at an early stage. This is because staff complete a progress summative report every term. In addition, the completion of the required progress check for children, between the age of two and three years, ensures that the younger children's development is tracked and early intervention is sought when necessary. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully supported because staff develop individual plans for them that foster learning in all areas.

Children really enjoy their learning in the nursery and join in with the activities with great enthusiasm. Babies and toddlers are particularly alert and also interested in their learning experiences. The staff plan activities around a theme but always make sure they consider children's own interests and enthusiasms. Extremely good attention is paid to promoting young children's development in communication and language. They have regular opportunities to join in with songs and rhymes so they build up their vocabulary through repetition. Staff speak clearly and respectfully to children, asking carefully framed questions to check their understanding. Children thoroughly enjoy looking at books for pleasure and are becoming competent early writers. They demonstrate very good pencil control and form recognisable letters when tracing words for labels or writing their name on the whiteboards. Children are effectively supported to use numbers and recognise numerals in a wide variety of activities. They explore and discuss shapes, measure and capacity using a wide range of Montessori resources. Children and babies are eager to explore a wide range of tactile and messy materials, where there is no desired end result. They investigate and explore using all their senses with materials, such as, flour, oats, baked beans and paint. However, on occasions, children are not fully inspired to use their own ideas and express their originality when taking part in adult-led art and craft activities.

Parents are kept extremely well informed about their children's achievements as there are regular opportunities for consultations with the key persons. A wealth of information is also shared through daily communication in diaries, text messages or on notice boards. A wide range of methods are implemented to make sure that parents are completely involved in their children's care and learning. For example, they are invited to provide detailed information about their children's development prior to them starting and they contribute to the termly reports to support their children's learning. Parents also have access to their children's 'Learning Journey' folders, which give them information about their children's progress and how the staff intend to meet the learning priorities. Each day, parents are given ideas to continue children's learning at home and this is something that

many parents say they particularly appreciate.

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

Children and babies flourish in this warm and welcoming nursery and there is a real sense of belonging, security and happiness. All key persons demonstrate a caring and patient manner, which means children develop close bonds with them. Children also form very good relationships and develop a caring attitude towards others because they have good opportunities to think about the feelings of their friends and discuss their own emotions. Practitioners are very positive role models, prompting children to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Through routines and group activities, children are learning to negotiate, share and help each other. Children talk about their own safety and the safety of others as they play. They comment that other children need to be careful outside on the climbing equipment in case they slip. In addition, they are involved in routine activities which develop their understanding of safety, for example, as they tidy the toys away so that others don't trip or take part in the fire drill, which is practised regularly to ensure all children and staff know how to swiftly exit the premises in an emergency.

Children's transitions into the nursery are managed very well. For example, parents join with the key person for an admissions meeting before their child or baby starts attending. This means information about children's individual needs and how these can be met is shared effectively. Gradual settling-in visits are arranged and tailored to children's individual needs. This means that children confidently become familiar with the environment and the new adults caring for them. Children are supported well by all staff as they move to other rooms in the nursery. The key person eases the handover by making sure all the essential information is passed on. The nursery has excellent partnerships in place with the local schools. Early years teachers visit the nursery to introduce themselves to children who are moving on. This means children have a familiar adult when the time comes for them to enter school.

There are robust procedures to protect the health of children. These are regularly reviewed to prevent the risk of cross-infection and to ensure that medication is safely administered. Very high standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the nursery. Nappy changing and toilet training is hygienically and sensitively undertaken to ensure that children and babies can preserve their dignity. Children have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They have very healthy appetites as they eat wholesome freshly cooked meals and snacks. They effectively protect their teeth by brushing after eating. Meals are cooked in a kitchen, which has been awarded five stars for food hygiene and the nursery regularly achieves healthy eating awards from the local authority. Staff are well aware of any allergies or special dietary requirements to meet individual children's needs. However, the meals and snacks are usually prepared and served by staff. This means that older children are not consistently supported to become independent as they are not always encouraged to independently pour their drinks or prepare for mealtimes and serve their food. Effective personal hygiene routines are adopted and children and babies are full of energy. They know exercise is good for them and relish the opportunity to play outdoors

at allotted times during the day.

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

Management and staff have a good understanding of their responsibility to ensure that the nursery meets the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All documentation is professionally presented, accurately completed and stored confidentially to protect children's identity. Staff have a secure knowledge of child protection issues and children's safety is given high priority. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities for ensuring children are kept safe at all times. Entry to the nursery is controlled and security measures are strictly adhered to. Detailed records of visitors are maintained and registers of children's attendance, including when they arrive and leave, is in place. Daily checks ensure the environment is safe and suitable for children and detailed risk assessments are in place. Any minor accidents are managed effectively. The first aiders keep clear accident records and parents sign to acknowledge the entry. The required staffing ratios are always met to ensure that children are closely supervised. The manager supports parents' understanding of the nursery's practice by ensuring they are fully informed about changes to the policies and procedures so they are clear about the service provided.

The diligent and motivated manager works tirelessly with her professional staff team to meet each child's individual needs. The educational programme is continually evaluated and each child's development is closely monitored and tracked to ensure there are no gaps in learning. Since the last inspection, the staff have enhanced the use of information they gain to demonstrate more effectively the children's progress and achievements. The nursery is committed to driving improvement and staff and parents are involved in the evaluation of the provision. The management take any parents' views seriously and swiftly act if any concerns are raised. The nursery is also taking part in a recognised quality improvements programme through the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The management maintains a high presence in the rooms and in supporting staff are good mentors. Annual appraisal and regular staff meetings ensure that the training needs of staff are known. The staff try to attend as many courses as they can and early years professionals are invited into the nursery to deliver in-house training on issues, such as behaviour management.

The successful partnerships with parents enable staff to provide a consistent approach to supporting children's individual needs. The website offers access to information about the ethos of the nursery, as well as information about the Montessori approach. This is complemented by regular newsletters and noticeboards displaying relevant and interesting information about events in the nursery. Parents spoken to during the inspection are keen to express how happy they are with the nursery. They say they value 'the staffs' genuine love of the children' and appreciate the high quality communication they receive. The manager and staff understand the importance of working with other agencies and early years providers to help support children's ongoing learning and development. Parents are

signposted for additional support, as and when necessary, to ensure children receive the help they need. The staff are proactive in linking with local schools to ensure that children seamlessly move on to full-time education.

The Childcare Register

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

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY434861
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	949340
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	166
Name of provider	Buttercup Montessori Kindergarten Ltd
Date of previous inspection	08/05/2012
Telephone number	01245 474 280

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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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