

Holly Corner Montessori Kindergarten

104 Shrub End Road, COLCHESTER, Essex, CO3 4RX

Inspection date	05/01/2015
Previous inspection date	21/01/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	1
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

- Children are extremely well-protected from harm, because designated persons and practitioners are highly knowledgeable about their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding procedures. They regularly update their safeguarding knowledge through appropriate training course and in-house discussions.
- The quality of teaching is exceptional. Practitioners use their expert knowledge of how children learn to plan a wide range of challenging and stimulating learning experiences indoors and outdoors.
- Children's progress and achievements are superbly tracked through the kindergarten's effective and comprehensive assessment procedures. Effective use of observations enable key persons to follow each child's development and to identify any gaps in their learning.
- Children are extremely settled, content and comfortable in the kindergarten environment. Parents contribute to the kindergarten's settling-in procedures by providing key persons with clear and comprehensive information about their children. Consequently, children's early experiences of kindergarten life are positive and enjoyable.
- Partnerships with parents and others are extremely strong. Practitioners and managers place great emphasis on developing effective partnerships to enable them to support every child and their family.

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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 observed activities in all areas of the kindergarten and the garden.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, the deputy, practitioners and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector held a joint observation with the manager of the kindergarten.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager to review and discuss a range of records, documentation and policies.
- The inspector looked at evidence to confirm that all adults working with children have been appropriately vetted and proof of the checks used to assess their suitability are available for inspection. She also viewed a range of practitioner's qualification certificates, including first aid.
- The inspector took account the views of parents spoken to at the time of the inspection.

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Inspector

Lynn Hughes

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Full report**Information about the setting**

Holly Corner Montessori Kindergarten was registered in 1998, and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted house in the Colchester area of Essex, and is managed by a private company. The nursery serves the local area and the ground floor is accessible to all children. It operates from three playrooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, 4 and 6, including the manager with Early Years Professional status. The kindergarten opens from Monday to Friday for 45 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 68 children attending, all of whom are in the early years age group. The kindergarten provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The kindergarten follows the Montessori method of teaching.

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 excellent celebration of children's achievements by providing a holding bay for their work to show parents.

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

Children excel in their learning because practitioners use their extensive knowledge of how children learn and develop effectively. Practitioners use skilful observations of the children in their key-person groups, to establish a robust understanding of their learning needs, capabilities and next steps. Planning is proficiently tailored to meet each child's next steps in learning and to provide further opportunities for a wide range of adult-led and challenging activities. Children are keen, active and motivated to learn. The kindergarten's effective assessment procedures enable key persons to monitor the progress and development of each child in their care. They use this information effectively to identify any gaps in children's learning and to seek appropriate interventions to help to close these gaps. Parents are encouraged to play an extremely active role in their children's development. They regularly review their children's progress records, which are presented in exciting learning stories. Parents also share 'wow' moments from home enabling key persons to celebrate these achievements with the children in the setting and to plan further activities based on these moments of interest or achievement. However, there are

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opportunities to further extend the superb provision to celebrate children's achievements. For example, by providing a special place or 'holding bay' where children can place models they have made during the day or things that have interested them to share with their parents.

Practitioners expertly follow children's interests and ideas. For example, just before the kindergarten broke up for the Christmas holiday, the children began exploring and talking about pirates in one of the room for three- to five-year-olds. Practitioners are using this idea to inform their planning and role play over the coming weeks, beginning by burying shiny treasure in the sand tray. Children forage for the treasure and excitedly discuss what they have found. Practitioners in the other room for three- to five-year-olds, recently followed children's interests based around fire engines and people who help the community. They created a fire engine from card in the role-play area, provided a wide range of dressing-up clothes, talked about fire safety and organised the local fire engine to come to the kindergarten.

Younger children within the kindergarten are provided with a superb range of activities and resources, which enable them to become secure in the three prime areas of learning. For example, practitioners expertly promote younger children's emergent speech by speaking to them clearly, responding to their first words and introducing new and appropriate vocabulary. Children throughout the kindergarten have excellent opportunities to develop physical skills both indoors and outdoors. For example, the extensive range of resources and equipment in the garden, enables children to dig, run, climb and use a wide range of natural materials. Older children have excellent access to an exciting range of learning experiences, which enable them to make superb progress across all areas of learning. By the time children leave the kindergarten to go to school, many display early reading and writing skills and all children are extremely independent.

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

Children are confident and relaxed in the kindergarten environment. They enter the setting with ease and part from their parents and carers with few tears. Children quickly become actively engaged in play and settle well into their kindergarten day. Children's early experiences of the kindergarten are superbly managed by the key person liaising effectively with parents to establish good knowledge about each of the children in their group. Parents complete clear and informative all about me documents, which key persons use to identify children's routines, interests and starting points. The key-person system within the setting is extremely effective and provides every child with a special person with whom to bond. Practitioners value children's individual personalities and plan effectively to enable each child to shine and to develop at their own pace. Children's emotional well-being is superbly promoted by practitioners using extremely positive language and constantly reminding them how clever they are. Practitioners superbly recognise the importance of developing strong and independent young people and provide excellent opportunities for children to express their feelings through a range of planned and freely chosen learning experiences. Children have exceptional opportunities to guide their own play and learning by accessing resources from the low-level shelving, suggesting activities

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and sharing their thoughts and ideas with adults. The practitioners swiftly act on these suggestions, tailoring the planning to include children's changing moods and interests.

The nursery environment is superbly enhanced by practitioners making excellent use of the space and light available, to create exciting and vibrant places for children to learn. Children begin their kindergarten life in the room for two- to three-year-old children. Here practitioners spend valuable time getting to know their individual personalities, providing opportunities for them to grow and develop their interests and supporting their personal and emotional requirements. Practitioners proficiently attend to children's personal needs, such as nappy changing, by making eye contact with children, speaking to them throughout the process and singing rhymes and songs to reassure them. When children are developmentally ready they move into one of the two rooms for three- to five-year-old children. Key persons support children proficiently as they move from one room to another. Toys, resources and play equipment are of an extremely high standard and maintained well to ensure that children always have access to good quality resources.

Practitioners use praise and encouragement effectively to ensure that children feel valued and respected and know that their feelings are important. Consequently, children behave extremely well and show kindness and consideration for each other's feelings. Adults act as superb role models, speaking to each other and to the children in calm voices. Children's health and well-being is superbly promoted throughout the kindergarten as practitioners rigorously follow clear policies on keeping children healthy. Children are actively encouraged to manage their own self-care, such as ensuring that they wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day to prevent the spread of infection. Parents provide their children's packed lunch and children and practitioners sit together over the lunchtime period, using the time to chat quietly and share discussions about their interests and experiences from home. Children have excellent opportunities to develop skills for keeping themselves safe, for example, they know to hold onto the hand rail when they walk up and down the stairs. Children learn how to use kitchen utensils safely when they butter their own crackers and cut up some fruit and vegetables. Practitioners make use of the local environment to enhance children's outdoor experiences and to prepare them for their next stages of learning. For example, they go for regular walks in the community and have opportunities to meet new people and enjoy new environments.

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

Managers and practitioners are extremely knowledgeable about their responsibilities with regard to protecting children. They demonstrate secure understanding about the signs and symptoms of suspected abuse and proficiently follow the kindergarten's robust procedures for safeguarding children. All adults working with children are expected to update their safeguarding knowledge through appropriate training courses and regularly do this. All visitors to the kindergarten are rigorously monitored and never left unaccompanied with children. Managers follow the kindergarten's effective procedures for safer recruitment to ensure that all new practitioners and support staff have been thoroughly vetted prior to commencing work within the setting. Clear evidence is available to show that all adults

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working with children have had their suitability checked through appropriate procedures. Practitioners and managers conduct robust risk assessments and daily safety checks to ensure that children always play and learn in an extremely safe, secure and well-organised environment indoors and outdoors.

The kindergarten is one of a small chain of early years provisions owned and managed by the same company. The registered providers are very active members of the management team and oversee the administrative and procedural tasks for each of the settings. The kindergarten is led and managed by a competent and inspirational manager and deputy manager who superbly support their team of practitioners. This results in a highly motivated and dedicated team of early years professionals, who are committed to providing exceptional care and education for children across the kindergarten. The manager and kindergarten teacher meticulously monitor all aspects of the educational provision, focusing on planning and assessment. Consequently, evidence is available to show that every key person plans effectively for the children in their key-person groups. The manager and teacher collate data on individual children's progress as well as the progress of groups of children, which clearly shows that all children across the kindergarten make excellent or exceptional progress in relation to their starting points. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Managers develop highly professional systems for supervision and appraisal, which enable them to meet with and support each practitioner on a regular basis. This forum is used to identify any training needs or requirements, to review the practitioners' quality of teaching and to provide a two-way-flow of information sharing in a secure and confidential space. Practitioners and managers use reflective practice extensively to review and evaluate every aspects of the kindergarten. Parents are actively encouraged to play a role in the setting's self-evaluation process, which includes completing a leavers' questionnaire when their children leave the kindergarten.

Partnerships with parents and others are extremely robust. Parents are provided with extensive information about the kindergarten and how it operates. Key persons build in time to talk to parents each day, enabling them to share information about how the day has gone, what their children have enjoyed and what activities they have participated in. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection are extremely complimentary of the kindergarten. Many parents comment on their children's exceptional learning and comment that this has been enhanced through the kindergarten's excellent educational programme and effective systems for assessment. Parents with children who have recently left the setting state that their children's entry level on starting school was much higher than expected. They state that Reception class teachers in a number of different schools have commented on how proficient, independent and imaginative children are when they have attended this provision. Partnerships with outside professionals are robust, enabling key persons and managers to work effectively in partnership with others to secure appropriate interventions and support for all families. Links with local schools, which children move on to at the end of their kindergarten life are extremely strong.

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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**

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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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

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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	402169
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	847897
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	54
Number of children on roll	68
Name of provider	Holly Corner Kindergarten Limited
Date of previous inspection	21/01/2011
Telephone number	01206 764801

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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

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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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