



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Childcare Inspection Report on

Monmouth Montessori Nursery

**Monmouth Montessori Nursery
The Grange To the B4233
Llangattock
Monmouth
NP25 5NG**



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Description of the service

Llangattock School Ltd is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to provide day care at Monmouth Montessori Nursery for up to 19 children under 12 years at any one time. The service offers full or half day sessions for children between two and five years. The group operates within the main school building in the grounds of Llangattock School and provides a large playroom with extensive outdoor play areas. Operational hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3.30pm, term time only.

This is predominately an English language service with some use of Welsh. The Responsible Individual (RI), Rosemary Whaley, has overall responsibility for the service. The service employs a Person in Charge (PiC) on a daily basis. The service is a registered provider of Early Years Education for Monmouthshire County Council.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Overall we found that children receive a suitable standard of care from the staff at Monmouth Montessori Nursery. Children are settled and relaxed in their surroundings and engage well with other children and their carers. They have formed friendships with their peers. Staff provide a good range of free play and focused activities for children which help them to learn. The nursery is supported by the RI and staff had suitable child care qualifications and experience. There is an adequate ratio of staff to children which ensures that children's needs are met. Children have access to the outdoor areas. However, some improvements are required to ensure children's safety.

2. Improvements

The nursery was last inspected in April 2015, as a focused inspection, and no recommendations were raised at the time. The setting has continued to improve their facilities. For example, the nursery children have their meals served in their base room, rather than having to walk to another building within the school site.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We found the Responsible Individual (RI) was not complying with their legal responsibilities in relation to Regulation 24(2)(b) - Health needs of children. This was because the RI had not ensured that an appropriate number of staff held current First Aid. The RI took action to rectify this before the inspection was completed and therefore we have not issued a non compliance notice on this occasion.

We made some recommendations to improve outcomes for children and families which are discussed in the report and summarised at the end.

1. Well-being

Summary

Outcomes for children are good. They enjoy play opportunities and are supported by staff. They are settled and happy and developing friendships with their peers. Relationships between the staff and the children are positive and mutually warm and respectful.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children can make decisions about how they spend their time at the nursery and are able to direct their own play. Throughout the visit we saw children approaching staff to chat or to ask for assistance. We saw children initiating games and asking for support from staff when needed. We observed children and staff engaged in friendly conversations and it was clear that children are listened to and that their views are considered. We saw that children are consulted with and given input into the planning for activities. For example, staff told us that if children have brought items of interest from home and it 'sparks' the children's interest, then staff will follow the topic of conversation. The PiC told us staff would happily adapt the focused activity for that day to suit the needs of the children.

Children's confidence is promoted by expressing their wishes freely and participating in decision making processes.

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children are settled and at ease in their surroundings. There is a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and they enjoy their time playing with other children. We saw children engaged in their play activities and responded well when staff joined in with them. Staff welcomed children into the service in a friendly manner and treated children with respect. We observed children approaching staff and inviting them to help solve problems with puzzles or ask staff to join in their role play activity. Children happily spoke to visitors and wanted to know what we were doing and would we like to join in too.

Children feel safe and happy at this service.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact and co-operate well with their peers and are beginning to understand that their actions can impact on other people's emotions. We saw several children undertaking a variety of tasks, activities and play situations where they were required to negotiate around each others wishes. Staff intervened gently if necessary. Children are considerate of the feelings of others and are developing empathy. They are familiar with the behaviour that is expected at the setting. They often share and use good manners such as please and thank you. Younger children are developing these skills and are supported by the staff to understand the concept of sharing. Children

greeted their friends warmly as they arrived at nursery and fondly said good bye when they were collected.

Children are developing friendships, resilience, confidence and co-operation through the experiences offered to them.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

In general, children have opportunity to follow their own interests and enjoy their time at the nursery. We observed predominately self-directed play whereby children were given the space and time to undertake activities of their choosing. We saw that there were good resources set out including mark making, construction, role play, messy play and a selection of reading material. Children were seen to enjoy playing with the activity boards such as turning handles, knobs and bolts. We observed a small group of children in the messy play area painting red hearts; they told us *"we are making hats for Valentines day. Then we are going to take them home for our mums and dads"*. We noted that some children needed plenty of space to burn off energy and be more physical. Staff were happy to allow this to happen by ensuring that children could use the hard surface area to the front of the school to play or use the back garden area where they generally played with activities such as mark making and reading books whilst sitting under the canopy, or planting flowers and vegetables.

Children are able to experiment and enjoy their play and learning because of the variety and suitability of the resources and activities.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children are developing good skills due to the range of opportunities available to them. Children have consistent relationships with their carers and their friends, and this helps them to gain confidence and overcome challenges. We saw that most children were self assured and that they valued the opportunities to self-direct their time at the nursery. For example, we saw a child finish a planned painting activity but then wanted to continue to do more painting. The child explained this to the member of staff close by and the staff ensured that the child had all the necessary items to continue enjoying the painting. The staff set out more coloured paper, paints and asked they child if they wanted more brushes or did they want to use their fingers. This allowed the child to think about the different ways that they could paint and the child said *"I think I'm going to use my fingers now not brushes"*. The child looked pleased with their decision and continued to enjoy the activity.

Children have good opportunities to learn and develop a range of skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Overall, we found that the nursery has an adequate understanding of children's individual needs and plans the week to ensure they have a lot of variety. However, there are recommendations to improve the written records that should be retained. Maintaining these formal records will assist in identifying any areas of concern, help children to develop and keep children safe.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

In the main the nursery has appropriate policies in place to keep children safe and healthy. We examined a sample of the policies including child protection, dealing with accidents and health and safety. Discussions with staff showed that they had a suitable understanding of the policies and actions to be taken if there were any concerns. Observations showed that PiC implements suitable hygiene practices and we saw all the adults wash their hands at appropriate times. However, we noted that accident records do not always include parental signatures and carbonite copies were not given to parents for their reference. This can mean that some parents may not have always been notified that their child received an injury at the nursery and therefore parents may not be aware of keeping close observations of their child for the rest of the day. This can impact on children's safety. We discussed this with the PiC who agreed to monitor and improve the record keeping procedure and monitor that staff are consistent with record keeping. We talked to staff about their understanding of child protection and how referrals are made if required. Overall the staff knowledge was sound and they had completed an online awareness training regarding 'Prevent Duty'. This is a government strategy to help protect children from radicalisation and all child care providers should be familiar with its contents.

Discussion with the PiC and RI showed that an adequate number of staff at the nursery did not have up to date Paediatric First Aid training. We were told that most staff's training had expired in November 2017. The RI told us that they had been unable to book training in their local area as no courses were available. This is a serious matter and the service was not compliant with their legal responsibility. However, we did not issue a non compliance notice on this occasion as certificates showed that the PiC and one other member of staff had completed an appropriate first aid course prior to our second visit and the completion of the inspection. Therefore staff rotas now show that there would always be an adequate number of staff on duty with the children at any one time with first aid training. All staff had current Disclosure and Barring Service certificates (DBS). The nursery had received grade 3 from the Food Standards Agency in to 2017. We were told that this was due to minor repairs being carried out during the inspection which meant that hot water was not available for a few hours during the visit. The RI told us that since the inspection visit the nursery has been fully compliant with Food Safety rules and procedures.

The RI should improve practice to ensure the service remains compliant with the regulations at all times.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff manage interactions with children in a pro-active and positive manner. There is a behaviour management policy in place which staff follow to provide consistent care and guidance to children. We observed positive engagement between staff and children with staff actively joining in activities. We observed that staff acted as positive role models and were respectful, courteous and kind to each other and to children. We heard staff promoting positive behaviour by giving children praise and encouragement and positive feedback.

Staff are responsive and support the development and understanding of socially acceptable behaviour by using positive reinforcement strategies.

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

Staff know the children in their care well. They provide support for children to develop their individual skills. Staff had suitable knowledge of the children in their care and they could describe the children's likes, dislikes, needs and abilities. We saw staff treating children with affection. We noted that staff extending the children's speech and language skills during the day, such as at registration time and at lunch time by asking questions about their play and what they would like to eat. Staff encouraged the children to talk about what they were eating, and if they enjoyed the taste. The children were asked if they wanted second helpings. During play, we noted, that all the children were offered activities which were designed to promote all areas of learning. Planning also incorporated play or activities to reflect different cultural events. We found that although staff tracked and recorded children's developmental progress. However, these records could be improved by including the next steps in their play and learning. We discussed this with the PiC who agreed improvements would enhance better partnership with parents. All children were supported to speak in Welsh during the session. We noted staff used Welsh throughout the session.

Staff plan a suitable range of different play and learning experiences to promote children's development. The developmental progress records and parental involvement could be further improved.

3. Environment

Summary

Overall, we found that children are cared for in a secure and clean environment. However, more could be done to ensure that risks in the environment are identified and eliminated promptly to ensure children's health and safety.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

In general, children are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment. Records examined indicated that fire drills had been carried out regularly in line with regulatory requirements. The building is kept locked at all times and entry is via a key pad system. A visitor's book is in place to monitor who attends the nursery. Risk assessments were in place in order to identify and as far as possible, eliminate any risk to children. However, we noted that these were not always effective as there was a large vessel in the outdoor play area that was full of water. The PiC explained that these resources belonged to the school class which is located on site and that this had been an experiment for older children. We discussed that collective water should be covered and kept out of reach of the children when not in use. We also highlighted that uncovered water could be a risk to all children because the wildlife in the area may have contaminated the water overnight. The PiC agreed to ensure meaningful visual checks are carried out and any identified risks minimised.

In general the environment is clean and secure for children. However, more could be done to ensure that staff take action promptly to eliminate identified safety hazards.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

Staff set up the environment so that children feel at ease and comfortable to explore and engage in the activities and games available. There is sufficient space to meet the needs of the children. Indoors, the premises are well maintained and decorated. Children's work is celebrated and we noted that the walls were decorated with examples of children's work. Children are encouraged to self register at the beginning of each session; this helps children feel pride and ownership of their environment. We noted that base rooms were well lit, spacious, warm and welcoming. We observed children arrive and saw them settle quickly and know where things were stored. Activities and toys were well labelled in both English and Welsh and staff were always at hand to help if required.

Staff make the best use of the space available to offer children variety.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

The quality of the furniture, equipment, toys and materials that children have access to are good. Resources were seen to be clean and we were told that they were checked to ensure they remain in good working order.

Management provide toys and resources that are of a good standard.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Overall, leaders have a vision and a sense of purpose which sustains improvements and good outcomes for children and this is shared with staff and parents. However there is a need to review and update all documentation for the nursery to ensure that it meets the regulatory requirements.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Appropriate records are generally maintained although some record keeping needs to be more accurate. The PiC told us that she reviews the policies and procedures on an annual basis. However, the policies seen during the inspection were not clearly dated to show when the next review was planned. Since the last inspection the nursery's Statement of Purpose (SoP) had been updated and included sufficient information. We also looked at the nursery's daily registers and noted the records were not accurate. On the first day of the inspection we noted that the register was not fully completed in a timely manner. We were told that children had arrived from the start of the session but the register did not reflect accurate numbers of children to include late comers. This can impact on children's safety, for example, in case an emergency evacuation is required. The PiC agreed to improve this matter.

Overall, the management delivers a consistent service to parents and children although improvements are required to improve record keeping.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The PiC has developed effective procedures to plan for service improvements. We saw that information was sought from parents, children and staff about what they think about the service and that feedback is encouraged. The quality of care and Self Assessment Service Statement SASS report have been completed and submitted online to CIW by its allotted timescale. Feedback from parents, children's views and external agencies' recommendations are being actioned and included in the plan for improvement. There is a complaints policy in place. The service had not received any complaints.

There are effective systems in place to support service improvements.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

We found that the RI and PiC both follow safe, robust recruitment procedures and ensure that there are sufficiently qualified staff available to care for the children. They demonstrated that they had checked the suitability and experience of their staff during the recruitment process. We noted that management have implemented an induction process which covered the service's policies and health and safety procedures. Staff

were given clear roles and responsibilities, which they understood. Attendance registers showed that staffing ratios were maintained. Both the RI and PiC said that staff absences for illness or training were covered using a part time staff pool. Staff had undergone a range of training on subjects including language and play and healthy lifestyles. We were told that staff supervision is carried out by the PiC, but these have not been formalised. We discussed this with management, who agreed to make the improvements. We viewed the files of newly recruited staff and noted correct process were being followed. The PiC told us that she monitors the staff through their induction programme and will only sign off the process once she is satisfied that the staff are confident in following the procedures of the nursery. Staff told us they are treated with respect and enjoy working for their employer, children and families alike.

Leadership and management of staff is effective and formalising the monitoring of staff will further enhance the service.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The service works well with parents to develop trust and clear communication. Systems are in place to identify the individual needs and preferences of children. They provide parents and carers with relevant information to make choices about the care of their child. They keep them informed about aspects of their work and encourage parents to be active partners in their children's well-being, development and learning. Staff contact parents throughout the day, as appropriate, and parents told us that they value this contact. Regular newsletters provide parents with updates about service developments and any celebrations planned. The PiC described the positive relationships which exists with external partners such as the educational psychologists and Estyn.

Valuable partnerships are maintained to maximise benefits to children.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection?

First Aid Qualifications – Regulation 24(2)(b), Health needs of children. The Responsible Individual (RI) has not ensured that an adequate number of staff had up to date first aid qualification in order to ensure children's safety.

This matter was addressed by our second visit and before the inspection was completed. Therefore we have not issued a non compliance notice on this occasion.

5.3 Recommendations

In order to develop the service and improve outcomes for children we discussed the following matters with the RI and PiC:

- Ensure that daily registers are accurate throughout the day;
- children's developmental records should consistently include the next steps in their learning and that these are made available to their parents;
- date all policies and procedures to evidence when they will be reviewed again;
- carry out daily visual checks of the premises to identify any risks to children. With particular regard to vessels filled with water left overnight;
- ensure that staff supervision is recorded and
- ensure that all parents sign the accident records and carbonite copies are given to them on collecting their child from the nursery.

6. How we undertook this inspection

We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We looked at what we already knew about the service, including notifications and changes since the service was last inspected in July 2015;
- the Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) completed by the provision in July 2017;
- the inspection was carried out by one inspector and took place over two visits;
- we observed activities and interactions between the staff and children;
- we sampled documentation and records, which included the Statement of Purpose, policies and procedures, records of accidents, incidents and complaints;
- we viewed operational plans, records of attendance and records of medication administered;
- we viewed all parts of the premises, looked at maintenance records, risk assessments and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place.

Our findings were fed back to the management at the end of the inspection and all recommendations discussed in full.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website www.cssiw.org.uk

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Rosemary Whaley
Person in charge	Myra Hughes
Registered maximum number of places	19
Age range of children	Two to four years old
Opening hours	Monday to Friday 9am to 3.30pm, term time only
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	23 April 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	6 and 12 February 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early year's education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people/children who use the service. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area. However, we recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just words' strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information: None	