

Inspection of Chalfont St Peter Montessori School

Tithe Barn Youth Centre, Sandy Rise, Chalfont St. Peter, GERRARDS CROSS,
Buckinghamshire SL9 9TR

Inspection date: 7 July 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Leaders and staff are proactive in making children and their families feel welcome. They prioritise children's personal, social and emotional development and recognise it as a foundation for future success. For example, children graciously introduce themselves to new visitors and delight in showing them their unique creations. They readily gift their drawings to friends out of kindness and a desire to make others feel special. As a result, children continue to thrive at this inclusive setting.

Leaders create an aspirational curriculum for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They thoughtfully weave themes, inspired by children's interests, such as a love for nature, and use the changing seasons as a basis for learning. In addition, leaders and staff aim to nurture a sense of responsibility and environmental awareness. For instance, children visit their allotment with staff and learn to grow their own fruits to make different recipes. Parents share how well their children remember what they have learnt and proudly call themselves 'eco warriors'. They remind family members to use sustainable habits at home, such as switching off lights to conserve energy.

Well-established routines give children a sense of security and help them understand what is expected of them. Staff consistently model positive behaviour which children readily mirror, such as good manners, respect and cooperation. Older children happily help others, for example, by reading food labels during their kitchen role-play. This helps children to value one another's strengths and grow as independent, confident learners, ready for their eventual move to school.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Leaders work closely with parents to gain a clear insight into the challenges some children face when starting pre-school. They promptly identify those who may need extra support to benefit from the learning experiences available. Leaders work collaboratively with families and other professionals to ensure a coordinated approach. Strategies, such as visual prompts, sign language and real-life objects help strengthen communication, especially for younger children and those with additional needs. Consequently, children with SEND, are fully included in all daily routines and activities and make sustained progress.
- Staff skilfully support children's communication and language skills by engaging at their level, narrating in real-time and modelling clear language. Story sessions delivered with enthusiasm and energy, capture children's attention and imagination. Children take every opportunity to explore books and share them with friends. They recall familiar phrases and imitate staff by asking simple questions, such as 'what is this?' This shows children's genuine passion for books and storytelling.

- The outdoor provision is a distinctive strength, offering rich and varied experiences that enhance children's physical development. Staff make excellent use of the surroundings. For example, children benefit from a wide range of extra curricular activities, including sessions with football and dance coaches. They impressively manoeuvre around cones when dribbling a ball and express themselves creatively through movement in dance. Regular access to outdoor learning boosts children's coordination, stamina and self-expression.
- Key persons get to know their key children well. They assess their development accurately. However, during children's spontaneous play, some staff do not always use this information effectively enough to build on children's knowledge and skills. At times, some staff do not capture the best moments to intervene, to either address misconceptions, offer guidance or provide appropriate challenge. While leaders have identified areas for improvement in individual staff practice, their coaching and mentoring systems are not yet robust. This impacts on children's learning and their progress to reach their full potential.
- Leaders recognise the importance of celebrating children's cultures through different festivals. For example, they invite parents in to share their experiences, such as showcasing traditional costumes at Diwali time. This helps children gain an understanding of diversity and the wider world.
- Strong, effective and trusting relationships are built with parents from the outset. Parents greatly appreciate the open and detailed communication from leaders and staff. This includes through newsletters, an online platform and daily interactions. Parents express gratitude for the dedicated and knowledgeable staff team and regularly use ideas and suggestions from the setting, at home. This partnership further supports children's continuity in their development.
- Leaders and staff fully understand their safeguarding duties. They are clear about how to act to prevent and protect children from potential harm. This helps to ensure children's safety.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the individual support, coaching and mentoring of staff to further improve their practice and ensure consistently high-quality teaching

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY451075
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10398205
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Chalfont St Peter Montessori Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP911157
Telephone number	07973 165 821
Date of previous inspection	8 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Chalfont St Peter Montessori School registered in 2004. It operates from the Tithe Barn Youth Centre in the village of Chalfont St Peter in Buckinghamshire. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 4pm, term time only. It follows a balance between the Montessori philosophy and the EYFS. Eight staff work with the children, seven of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications, from level 3 to level 6. The setting is eligible to receive funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sonia Panchal

Inspection activities

- The deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector and the deputy manager carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- Parents shared their verbal and written views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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