



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Oxford Montessori Schools

January 2023

School's details

School	Oxford Montessori Schools			
DfE number	931/6119			
Address	Oxford Montessori Schools Forest Farm School Elsfield Oxford Oxfordshire OX3 9UW			
Telephone number	01865 352068			
Email address	admin@oxfordmontessori.co.uk			
Principal	Mrs Katie Townsend			
Chair of Proprietors	Mrs Judith Walker			
Proprietors	Mrs Judith Walker and Mr Daniel Ardizzone			
Age range	2 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	129			
	EYFS	44	Primary	38
	Seniors	47		
Date of inspection	11 January 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Oxford Montessori Schools comprises a co-educational school for pupils up to the age of 16 at Forest Farm in the village of Elsfield, which includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting; and a similar EYFS setting at Wolvercote, on the outskirts of Oxford. The school is owned and administered by its two proprietors in a limited company. The school has 59 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 20 have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 23 pupils. The school's previous inspection was an additional inspection in March 2022.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the additional inspection on 11 March 2022. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (publication of safeguarding policy)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school completed a rigorous update of the safeguarding policy and practice in April 2022 and made further, appropriate revisions to fulfil the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) as updated in September 2022. As result the policy safeguarding provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. It now includes all the required content specified in KCSIE, in particular the identification of types and signs of abuse; procedures for responding to reports of child-on-child abuse; and arrangements for the reporting of lower level concerns about staff and other adults working in the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 Scrutiny of records together with discussions with pupils and staff indicate that the school now implements its safeguarding policy effectively. This includes promoting a culture of listening to pupils. Pupils stated confidently that they know how to stay safe, including online. They confirmed that they can talk to staff if they are worried or concerned, will receive a response and that action will be taken when they express concerns. There is effective liaison with external agencies including referral to Child and Adolescent Health Services (CAMHS).
- 2.5 Those with responsibility for the leadership of safeguarding have been trained at an appropriate level. This includes the principal as whole school designated safeguarding lead (DSL) with the deputy DSL. These figures are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. In addition, the school has an extended team of eight DSLs located across its different areas. Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school. Key information is shared regularly between safeguarding, pastoral and healthcare staff, taking into account each individual pupil's physical, emotional, mental health and learning needs and wishes. This information is used to agree appropriate action, including the drawing-up and implementation of individual support plans. Such action includes appropriate steps to deal with any incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. Regular safeguarding training for all staff includes the identification of such behaviours. Discussions with staff demonstrated a full awareness of their training and safeguarding responsibilities. This confirmed that they know how to respond if a situation of child-on child abuse arises. Staff receive suitable training when new to the school, including details of Annex B of KCSIE where relevant. Subsequent update training for all staff about the most recent statutory guidance is regularly provided. Central records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically so that absentees at the time of training can be identified. The proprietors are trained in safeguarding as required.
- 2.6 Staff confirmed in discussion with inspectors the proper procedures for making a referral or allegation against an adult working in the school. They showed appropriate understanding of the importance of low-level reporting and whistleblowing. Senior leaders take appropriate action if any perceived breach of the staff code of conduct occurs. The school seeks advice and refers concerns to the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. They understand their responsibility to make referrals to relevant statutory bodies once investigations by themselves and external agencies are completed. They fulfil this effectively.

- 2.7 The proprietorial lead responsible for safeguarding meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and members of the extended safeguarding team. Proprietors maintain effective oversight of safeguarding policies and their implementation. Senior leaders provide regular reports for the proprietors so that they are well informed. These highlight appropriate details of updates to safeguarding policy and practice, any safeguarding incidents and details of safeguarding training. The proprietorial lead responsible for safeguarding reviews these effectively. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken in line with guidance from the local authority.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.8 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.
- 2.10 Senior leaders and proprietors demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils. They have implemented the action plan required following the previous inspection effectively.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Desmond Dunne

Reporting inspector

Mrs Daphne Cawthorne

Assistant reporting inspector