

# Little Fingers Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	108404
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<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Victoria May

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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Little Fingers Montessori School is privately owned and opened in January 1996. It operates from St Stephen's School Rooms in Windsor. An outdoor area is not part of the registered premises, but arrangements have been made with a local school to use their premises for play activities. The school serves the local area and supports the Montessori method of teaching.

The pre-school is registered for 24 children on the Early Years Register from the age of two years and is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 16 children on roll. The pre-school is in receipt of funding. The setting is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am to 1pm on Monday and Thursdays. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays sessions are from 9.15am to 12.20pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

Five staff work with the children, of whom four hold early years qualifications. The manager is a trained Montessori teacher. All members of staff have current first aid certificates. The group receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The dedicated staff help children make good progress as they recognise the uniqueness of every child. Children's ideas and interests are taken into account by staff as they plan a variety of activities and experiences that supports children's welfare, learning and development. Secure trusting relationships are established, which help children develop confidence and a sense of belonging within the pre-school. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring sustained improvement. They are aware of strengths and areas for improvement and work well together to use this awareness to review practice. The commitment to continue to monitor and extend practice supports the development of children's care and learning effectively.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop role play resources and those promoting positive images of culture and diversity to help challenge children's thinking and help them learn to value and develop respect for their own and other people's lives
- review and expand the risk assessments for the premises to ensure it fully identifies and minimises all hazards to keep children safe

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

Children play in a safe, warm and welcoming environment. All staff are very aware of their individual roles and responsibilities and effective staff deployment ensures all children receive high levels of individual care and attention. There are secure systems in place to ensure all staff are checked and suitability qualified. Staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to protecting children from abuse and have full knowledge of local safeguarding procedures and attend safeguarding training on a regular basis to ensure their information remains up-to-date. All children and families are valued and respected; staff are aware that each child is an individual and take time to listen to each child's views, thoughts and ideas.

Staff are vigilant in completing continuous visual risk assessments on a daily basis and a daily checklist is completed by the manager. Risk assessments are in place, however, while these are completed in detail for outings and identify some specific hazards on the premises, such as cooking activities, they do not contain sufficient detail to identify and minimise risks in all areas. All required policies and procedures are in place, have recently been reviewed and are shared with parents. These include a complaints procedure, and sick/ill child policy to help prevent the spread of infection. Staff promote good health and well-being as they take the necessary steps to help children learn about keeping safe and healthy. Parents and carers are provided with good quality information about the early years provision and all required information about the children is obtained from them at initial visits. Documentation and records are up to date and kept in good order. Information on children's learning is shared in daily conversations and the accessibility of the children's learning journals ensures that parents have a clear idea of their children's progress. Good information is displayed on notice boards, both about the provision and general information that parents may find of interest. Staff are very aware of the benefits of establishing links with other providers in order to provide consistency of care and education. They have been pro-active in building links with other childcare practitioners to ensure a smooth transition for children to the local schools and with other carers and professional healthcare workers in order to fully meet the individual needs of the children. Staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and each child is encouraged to recognise their own unique qualities, this ensures that effective, inclusive care is provided for every child. Good support systems are in place for children for whom English is an additional language, and staff have a clear understanding of adapting activities for children who may have special educational needs and/or learning difficulties. All toys and play equipment is accessible for children to self select and meets the developmental needs of the children who attend, however, there is a limited range of role play and resources that promote positive images of culture and diversity to help challenge children's thinking and help them learn to value and develop respect for their own and other people's lives.

The planning for improvement includes effective procedures of self-evaluation, with all staff fully involved in the process. Staff receive good support from Local Authority Early Years Advisers, taking on board their suggestions and putting them

into practice. The regular use of parental questionnaires provides parents with an opportunity to share their views on the pre-school and highlight any concerns or ideas. Children's views are also sought. Staff are motivated to continually improve their knowledge and skills and are working towards gaining further childcare qualifications. This commitment ensures that staff can continually meet the needs of the children and maintain continuous improvement and development of the pre-school.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children are provided with good opportunities to help them make progress across all areas of learning and development. They are confident, inquisitive and eager to learn. The planning for children is flexible as the children's key person responds to their individual needs. There are good systems in place for observation and assessment and these along with information from parents form the basis for identifying children's next steps. The key worker highlights each child's next steps during planning sessions thereby ensuring children are provided with activities and opportunities that will enable them to move their learning forward. Parents are actively involved in their child's learning as the children's learning journals are accessible to the parents on a daily basis, sent home regularly and contributions from parents encouraged. Children enjoy looking at their learning journals and excitedly recall what they have done, for example, how they travelled on a bus. Parents are encouraged to speak to staff at any time to discuss their child's progress.

Children are confident and sociable. They are emotionally secure because relationships are good. They are lively, but behave generally well and are learning to share and take turns. Their independence is promoted as they have easy access to resources and can address their personal hygiene needs independently. Manipulative skills are practised daily as children benefit from having access to writing materials, malleable materials such as play dough, small toys and tools. They make marks as, for example, they copy their name, colour-in and practise pencil control with accessible writing materials. Older children are proud of being able to copy their name. The book corner is an area that has been highlighted for improvement and staff are in the process of turning this into a cosy area where children can self select books and enjoy listening to stories. Children's early communication skills are further encouraged by the use of open-ended questions by staff such as 'what is this' and staff are very patient and take time to try to understand and help the children when they are trying to say new words. Staff encourage and challenge the children, for example, asking them what they need to do next when they are building a tower.

Children use mathematical language as they play, begin to calculate as they count the numbers of cups required at snack time and learn about size and volume as they use different sized jugs to pour their juice into their beakers. Children gain an awareness of adding and taking away as they count the animals in small world play and sing a variety of songs. For example, five little speckled frogs. Examples of children's work in their learning journals and from photos demonstrate that they have opportunities to experiment with a range of media and materials.

Children's good health and well-being is promoted by staff, and children are learning how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example, a member of staff calls over children whose play has become a little boisterous and asks them why it isn't a good idea for them to run around. Children use their own powers of reasoning as they begin to understand the possible consequences of their actions and respond to her question, recognizing that there are a lot of toys around, they might bump into them, fall over and possibly hurt themselves or others. Although there is no registered outdoor area, children are active and understand the benefits of physical activity. An area of the hall is clear for action songs and children enjoy themselves immensely as they move around, using different parts of their bodies as they shake their arms and legs. To find out about local community and the area in which they live children enjoy nature walks to the river, trips to the park and have access to a range of equipment at a local school they regularly use for their outside activities.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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