

Little Learners Montessori Nursery House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY293529
Inspection date	05/10/2010
Inspector	Caren Carpenter
Setting address	45 Whitchurch Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6PF
Telephone number	0208 951 0407
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Type of setting	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.

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Description of the setting

Little Learners Montessori Nursery House is privately owned. It was registered in 2004 and operates from one room within a large residential house in the Edgware area, within the London borough of Harrow. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery operates each week day from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 48 weeks of the year. The nursery is registered for a maximum of nine children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 14 children in the early years age group on roll. Children come from the local and wider community. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs three staff including the manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery works within the Montessori framework. The nursery receives support from the Harrow Early Years team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children thrive in this vibrant nursery where the owner and her committed, well-qualified staff put children's needs and interests first in all aspects of their work. All children are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals, because the robust systems for planning and identification of children's individual learning needs are extremely effective. The nursery has an outstanding partnership with parents and carers which positively impacts upon the excellent progress that children make given their age, starting points and ability. Documentations relating to children's individual needs and care routines are in place however, some lack the necessary details. The management team has a clear vision for the continuous development of the nursery and all staff are involved in the ongoing self-evaluation of the nursery and discussions about future progress.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that the medication records include the necessary details.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected because all staff have recently updated their safeguarding training so, they have a secure knowledge of the possible signs of abuse and the

procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. Effective procedures are in place for the recruitment, vetting, induction and training of staff. Robust risk assessments are carried out regularly and daily safety check ensures any potential hazards to children are minimised. This includes when children are taken on outings, ensuring all aspects of the event are carefully considered.

Comprehensive records, policies and procedures are in place and are shared well with parents and reflect current legislation. For example parents provide written consent for medical emergency treatment. Accident records are maintained and all accidents are discussed with parents. However, not all of the medication records are accurately dated which has a potential impact on the children's well-being.

The management team have a well-defined vision for the nursery. They work well together and involve staff, parents and the early years team in the evaluation of the nursery and is continually striving for continuous improvements in all areas. Recommendations set at the last inspection have been met successfully. For example, meals time have been reorganised to promote children's independence by encouraging them to serve their own food and pour their own drinks. In addition, children have excellent opportunities to participate in daily outdoor play using, a broad range of outdoor equipment that challenges and fully promote their physical skills.

Very good use of time, space and resources promote children's safe and eager participation. Children make excellent use of the learning environment, both indoors and outside. The day is carefully planned around meeting children's individual welfare and learning needs. Furniture and Montessori equipment is of high quality and the highly effective deployment of staff ensures that children achieve their planned goals in learning and development rapidly. There is an effective key person system in place to ensure each child received individual and tailored care to meet their needs very well. Staff have non-contact time to ensure they are able to maintain children's learning journeys to a high standard. They support and develop activities which engages children and capture their individual interest so that they are curious and inquisitive. Staff have high regard for children's well-being and they attend relevant training to further develop their childcare practices.

Staff work tremendously well with parents in identifying any additional help required for their children. They seek appropriate support from a wide range of professional agencies such as speech and language therapist, and the Area Special Educational Needs team to develop and monitor individual educational plans to ensure that children individual needs are exceptionally well met. Children receive superb ongoing one to one support from staff that have appropriate experience and skills. Children are encouraged to develop an extremely good sense of community because all staff have a genuine caring approach and help children celebrate their differences and similarities to ensure they feel valued and a sense of belonging. They learn exceptionally well about the wider world through an excellent range of activities. For example, children find out about different countries around the world such as South Africa, Australia and India. They thoroughly enjoy dressing up in cultural costumes during a variety of festival celebrations as well as singing songs and dancing to different music from around

the world. In addition, positive images around the room also give children a great sense of security. The manger has established fantastic links with two schools to ensure continued progression of children's care, learning and development.

Staff have an outstanding partnership with parents. Parents are fully valued as partners and are confident in the ability of staff to meet the individual needs of their children. The key person is very extremely effective in keeping parents well informed of their children's progress and the informal friendly approach enables parents to verbally share their knowledge of their children with the staff. Written questionnaires are used tremendously well to identify parents' views and staff act upon the feedback received to further improve the service for children and parents. Parents have superb opportunities to become involved in social and fund raising events and effectively contribute to their children's learning. For example, parents are provided with weekly letters asking them to observe their children at home and take photographs of the activities they enjoy doing. They are encouraged to share their observations with the key person which is used successfully to plan the next step in their children's learning. Parents are effectively encouraged to spend time within the nursery to participate in a variety of activities such as talking to children about their job roles. In addition, the nursery successfully provides excellent opportunities for fathers to be involved. For example, during fathers' week they participate in a variety of interactive games and experimental activities with the children, such as making an erupting volcano which they immensely enjoyed. Written comments from parents say they are very happy with the care their children receive and are extremely pleased that all staff show enthusiasm and interest in their children's welfare.

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

Children are motivated, enthusiastic and are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. They lead and direct their own play, make choices and grow in confidence. For example, they instigate their own imaginative play and staff take the lead from children by providing further resources to extend their learning. Children spend excellent time socialising and chatting to their friends whilst playing in the role play area as they pretend to cook their meals. They thoroughly enjoy designing and creating their interesting models using an excellent range of media materials. As a result they are developing their creative thinking and communications skills in highly stimulating environment.

The highly skilled and dedicated staff know the children very well and are able to anticipate their needs. A robust key person system ensures that there are efficient methods for identifying children's starting points and their interest. Activities are adapted exceptionally well and staff clearly understands the next steps in children's learning. Plans are clearly written, detailed and regularly reviewed to ensure an excellent balanced of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Teaching is highly engaging and the staff have an excellent understanding of the children's next steps in learning. As a result they are flexible and build well on the children's interests.

Each child has a learning journey folder that is always accessible to their parents, which is sensitively written in a way which gives complete ownerships to the child. This includes photographic evidence of their work and clearly shows their progression during their time at the nursery.

Children are making excellent progress in their communication, language and literacy development. They thoroughly enjoy looking at books in the cosy and inviting book area and enjoy listening to stories. Children have excellent opportunities to learn French during weekly sessions by a visiting teacher. Their interests are successfully captured as they interact and participate enthusiastically singing songs and identifying a range of sounds in French, developing their listening skills. Children are developing their early writing skills, they have good opportunities to write for different purposes and have excellent access to a range of writing resources which they select independently.

Children have excellent opportunities to make sense of the world and are able to participate in a wide range of activities that encourage their interest and curiosity. For example, they thoroughly enjoy using information and communication technology to support their learning as they develop skills for the future. Children have superb opportunities to learn about how plants grow and take great pleasure in planting and watering their strawberries, peaches, tomatoes, cauliflower and potatoes. In addition, children enjoy preparing and eating their home grown produce.

Children have superb opportunities to develop their problem solving skills using an excellent range of Montessori equipment to compare, sort, weigh and match. They learn about quantities during cooking activities and enjoy measuring equipment during outdoor play.

Staff have established effective systems to help children stay healthy for example, by explaining the importance of hand washing and good personal hygiene. Children are exceptionally well supported to develop a healthy life style through the provision of healthy and nutritious snacks and freshly cooked meals. They thoroughly enjoy helping to prepare their daily snacks such as, cucumber, raisin, bananas and peaches. Older children thoroughly enjoy serving their meals which encourages their independence and self-help skills. All children relish playing out in the fresh air whatever the weather. They use the excellent range of outdoor equipment to develop their physical skills. For example, they run, jump, balance and climb a range of outdoor play equipment. In addition children are provided with excellent opportunities to enjoy regular walks into the local community and trips to the local park further prompting their good health.

Staff have a loving and caring relationship with children, who form strong attachments to adults and other children within the nursery. All staff clearly apply consistent boundaries, so that children develop knowledge of what is expected and display positive behaviour. Children are extremely well behaved as they take turns and contribute to the welfare of others as they help to tidy away at the end of an activity. Staff know individual children extremely well and provide them with an excellent level of sensitive and appropriate support.

Children are encouraged to learn about safety issues and how to keep themselves safe. For example, they encourage the children to develop an awareness of road safety by using the children's traffic club resources, singing songs, using puppets and during role-play activities. In addition, children take part in regular fire drills and are gently reminded about safety issues whilst playing. Overall the children are very well prepared for their next stage in learning in this inclusive nursery.

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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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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