

Ladybird Montessori Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Lynn Reeves

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Ladybird Montessori started in 2001. It operates in the village hall in Bosham, West Sussex and serves the surrounding area. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for 20 children from two years to under eight years. There are currently 31 children on roll. This includes 25 funded three and four year olds at present. The nursery are able to provide support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who have English as an additional language.

The nursery have access to a classroom and a larger hall adjoining the classroom. Children also have use of a community outdoor play area to the rear of the property. The registration includes a holiday play scheme which operates for a few days each year to enable older siblings to attend.

The nursery school operates from 9.00am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday and children can attend various sessions. A lunch club is also offered.

Five staff and the manager work with the children. Three have Montessori qualifications and all staff attend regular training. The nursery school offers Montessori teaching and curriculum and includes French and music. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development as they are provided with experiences and activities that cover all areas of learning and that follow the Montessori principles. The setting strongly recognises the uniqueness of each child and meets their developmental needs in partnership with parents and carers to a very high standard. Children are safe and secure: all aspects of their welfare and learning are fully promoted due to the meticulous organisation and strong commitment from the management and staff. The setting has a very good range of policies and procedures which are implemented very effectively; this ensures children's needs are met across all areas.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further developing the procedure to record evacuations to include any problems encountered and how these were resolved.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted by the high standard of record-keeping and documentation. Policies and procedures clearly set out the ethos, how the provision operates and what safeguards are in place to ensure children's safe well-being. Staff have completed 'safeguarding children' training and there is a robust system in place for ensuring all adults are vetted which is updated and reviewed annually. All staff have a clear understanding of how to respond should they have a concern regarding a child in their care. All the appropriate records and parental consents to promote children's health and welfare are in place. High priority is given to keeping children safe. There is a detailed procedure regarding collection of children by authorised persons through the use of a password system. Comprehensive risk assessments of the setting and local outings mean that children can move around in a safe, secure environment, where hazards have been minimised. Safety and security are given good consideration and children have freedom to explore and use all areas of the setting with hazards minimised. Additionally, staff gently remind children about moving sensibly, whilst thinking about their own and others' safety. For example, not to walk around with the scissors, to sit on chairs properly and the safe use of knives when preparing their own snacks. Children practice regular fire drills which ensure they know how to evacuate the premises safely, however, the procedure to record these drills need some improvement.

The staff are all highly dedicated to providing a very good standard of care and education to all the children. They are all well qualified, having excellent knowledge of the Montessori approach as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Training needs are identified through staff appraisals and staff are encouraged to pursue qualifications and to improve their skills by attending courses whenever possible. Information from courses attended is cascaded so that all staff follow a common approach to ensure continuity and consistency for the children. The staff work very closely as a team, sharing expertise and practice. They were involved with completing the nursery's self-evaluation form and are valued for their input and hardwork.

The manager and staff highly value every child as a unique individual. A very strong feature of the care is the knowledge of each child's stage of development and what they need to do next to make progress. Staff deployment is very effective which ensure the children receive lots of care and attention and where children can invite adults into their chosen play. Observational notes are taken by the staff as the children achieve their goals and this information alongside evidence of the children's work and photographs are transferred in to the children's learning journals so a clear picture can be made of their starting points, their next steps and their continual progress. This information is shared with parents and others with an interest in the children's development, ensuring that all support services are utilised to benefit the children. Children have easy access to the resources, which are displayed on clearly labeled and low level storage units to encourage their own independence.

Staff show awareness and have a good understanding of equality and diversity, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive for all. The setting communicates exceptionally well with all parents, enabling them to work together in partnership. Parents are provided with information displayed on a notice board, through the policies and procedures, consultation, regular newsletters and open evenings. The setting also provides home visits so the staff can see the children in their own home and the children and their parents are encouraged to borrow books from the nursery's library to encourage home learning. The nursery has introduced a system called "ask me about slips" which are completed by the staff so parents can talk about the activities the children have taken part in at home. Additional information displayed on the notice boards and slide shows on the laptop in the foyer are also offered. Links with other professionals, such as speech therapists, hospitals, consultants and learning support teams ensure individual children's needs are met effectively. The staff liaise with the reception teachers of the school, organising visits and sharing information to provide progression and continuation of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which benefit all children strongly. The setting and staff are very reflective and forward looking; they continuously evaluate their practice, and seek out ways to act on identified areas for improvement, ensuring that children benefit from changes.

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

Children make very good progress in their learning and development because the setting is extremely child-centred and conducive to their growing independence and development. The Montessori approach includes a large proportion of self-selected activity for the children. This is promoted by having all resources accessible and presented to allow them to choose what they want to do, and which friends they wish to work alongside. Children are highly motivated and purposeful; showing good levels of concentration as they independently set out, work with and put away the various Montessori activities available to them. Children's requests are noted, for example, during an activity learning about America, a child asked to bring their own Tepee in from home. Several were brought into the nursery and as the other children enjoyed playing with them the nursery managed to fund raise and purchase their own to benefit all the children.

Children demonstrate very high levels of independence, even the youngest follow routines such as washing and drying their hands, using cutlery and serving themselves at snack time, with very little adult help required. They attempt to put on their own coats and aprons and clearly know the routine of putting any rubbish into the appropriate bins including the re-cycle bin. Children are developing very good self-care skills as they play in the shoe shop, they sit on the small chairs trying on the different shoes and slippers, using the measuring guide and praising each other as to how they nice they look. Staff plan activities to help the children make individual progress, recording their achievements by meticulous observations which are carefully evaluated to see what the child needs to do next. These in turn contribute to a report which is prepared termly for parents, keeping them well

informed about their child's progress and milestones. Children with additional needs, or who have English as an additional language are identified and well supported both within the nursery and by calling upon external professional help.

Children build very positive attitudes to learning, by enthusiastically engaging with the equipment and resources which they use imaginatively and experimentally. For example, in the post office role-play area, they laugh with excitement as they wrap up parcels using the coloured paper, sticky tape and string, they attempt to label them and put on stickers before weighing them and posting them in the box ready to go to the post office. Children develop a real sense of achievement as they manage to work how to make the train track go in a different direction by fixing the pieces in a different way. They manage to work how the magnetic trains all fit together and watch with delight as they steer them through the tunnels. Some children enjoy playing with the farm and zoo animals and recall events of when they visited the zoo, talking about the differences in the animals of those that have stripes or spots. Others chat to the staff about their experiences at home, their pets or their holidays. The Montessori activities enable children to measure and begin to make the links between numerals and their corresponding value. There are lots of opportunities for children to recognise and form letters, making marks and writing their name on their pictures.

Children's language and vocabulary is developed as they interact with staff and one another. All the adults speak very respectfully to the children, explaining clearly and carefully what is required of them, and encouraging politeness and good manners in return. Children learn to link sounds and letters, beginning simple word building when they show readiness and interest. They thoroughly enjoy story time, as a volunteer child sits on the chair holding up the book so the other children can see the pictures as they all listen to the 'listening story tape'. They watch in awe as the pages are turned and try and act out some of the actions to what might happen next. Others snuggle in to a teacher while she reads to them, while some just like to sit quietly on the bean bags and look at pictures in books by themselves. The children are able to borrow books to take home and share with parents and siblings, giving them a sense of responsibility to care for the books.

Children enjoy themselves in the garden pushing around the prams and wheeled toys. They develop their large muscles riding around the forecourt on their bikes, whilst others love playing in the wooden boxes, whilst others cover them up with the dried leaves. Children's small muscle skills are being developed alongside their eye-to-hand co-ordination when using small tools, such as, tweezers, pipettes, basters and tongs, and pouring to and from various containers. Major festivals, both traditional and world wide, are celebrated with food, music, dressing up and artwork. They benefit greatly from trips out of the nursery, for example, walking to the local post office or going on nature walks where they are developing their understanding of their own local community as well as seeing a range of visitors, such as the police, firefighters, doctors, nurses and the dentists. The celebrate festivals and enjoy playing resources that reflect diversity, for example, ethnic figures, dressing up clothes, maps, globes and puzzles and looking at books. Technology is used effectively, such as the digital camera and programmable toys to support their learning.

Children are aided in keeping themselves safe and healthy. They know that they must wear protective clothing when it is wet or cold outside and put on their aprons during messy play activities. Children have some time out of doors each day, though this is optional and they can stay inside if they wish to. They also have the benefit of using a larger hall on some sessions where they enjoy dancing to tapes, marching with instruments and playing games such as 'cheeky monkeys' when they can jump, hop and run around in safety. Children understand the need to wash their hands after messy play or using the toilet. They take and use a tissue when needed and happily discuss with adults why it is important to wash the germs away before eating their snacks and lunch. Children bring in their own favourite water bottles, which they can access at any time and have a snack of milk, water and fruit or vegetables each day. They serve themselves, skillfully pouring a drink and enjoying a sociable time sitting with a couple of friends at the snack table. Mealtimes are also relaxed and enjoyable where the staff sit with the children, being very good role models eating healthy lunches themselves so the children learn from an early age what foods are good for them.

Children enjoy their time at nursery, building warm and friendly relationships with one another as well as the adults around them. They are confident and articulate, able to express their needs and feelings and ask questions. The children behave exceptionally well; they follow instructions meticulously and share the resources well with one another. The children need little prompt to help tidy things away and develop a feel sense of belonging as they receive lots of praise and encouragement. They enjoy having a cuddle by the staff when needed and speak to visitors with confidence and enthusiasm. Children are able to direct their own learning, experimenting and solving problems as they use the resources and interact with their surroundings.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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