

# Little Elms Montessori Nursery

Elm Court Youth & Community Centre, 363 Mutton Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 3BP

<b>Inspection date</b>	22/01/2013
Previous inspection date	31/10/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Children develop good skills for school as they concentrate well, learn to follow instruction, and have good self-care skills.
- Staff support children's learning and development well. They ask open questions and encourage children to think critically
- Children behave well because staff use a consistent and effective behaviour management approach.
- Management sets itself relevant goals to improve the provision because it has a clear idea of its strengths and areas for development.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Most resources are of a fixed purpose and do not lend themselves to being used and combined in different ways by the children.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interaction with children.
- The inspector had a discussion with the manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector examined planning and assessment records.

## Inspector

Jennifer Beckles

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

The Little Elms Nursery was registered in 2004 on the Early Years Register. It operates from a Community Centre, in Potters Bar, in Hertfordshire and is partnership owned. The setting serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four rooms and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 12 members of staff, including the manager. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one member of staff with Early Years Professional Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 47

children in the early years range on roll. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

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

- provide further open-ended resources so that they can be moved and combined in a variety of ways.

### **Inspection judgements**

#### **How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Staff base plans around the needs of children and areas of learning well. They provide a variety of motivating activities that foster children's good progress. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities that engage children effectively.

Children concentrate well during a range of tasks. For example, they focus well as they transfer water from one container to another using a small sponge and apply good physical coordination skills. They learn to follow instruction as they listen to staff during circle time and take turns to offer comments on stories. Children use technology competently as they operate programmable robots. They turn on headphones independently as they listen to a wide range of recorded stories. The outdoor area presents physical challenge to the children through climbing frames, scooters, ride-on wheeled toys and a variety of large and small equipment.

Children recognise their names as they arrive for self-registration. Older children write their names and some know the initial letter sounds of their names. Children's literacy is supported through use of a range of resources, including a well-equipped writing area. They use giant textured moveable alphabet letters so that they understand how letters are formed. Staff help children to learn about letter sounds by playing games and by saying letter sound as they use alphabet letters. This shows that staff extend children's learning well and ensure that children are ready for school.

Staff use a good variety of teaching methods. As children sit in a group, staff present colourful photographs of animals that live in Africa. They ask children questions to make them think critically, such as why elephants roll around in mud, and what rhinoceros' horns are made of. This helps their understanding of the world around them. Staff give

children time to think and respond so that they give considered answers.

Children enjoy ordering stacking beakers and show good understanding of differences in size. They learn to count securely as they match wooden rods to the correct written numeral. Staff exploit every day opportunities to teach children about numbers, such as counting children in a group. They encourage children to join in with stories by, for example, counting the number of bowls for the three bears in the Goldilocks tale. Children use mathematical language to describe different sizes as they sing familiar nursery songs. Staff foster good communication and language skills by providing themed role play areas that allow children to dress up as different characters. Children talk to each other as they negotiate roles and create imaginary stories. They enjoy exploring different materials as they make collages, paint and use three dimensional modelling materials. However, most resources are of a fixed purpose, such as puzzles and Montessori equipment. This means that there is scope to provide more open-ended resources so that children can use and combine them in different ways. Children enjoy spending time browsing through their favourite stories from a well-stocked book corner. They talk about the pictures and learn that print carries meaning.

Staff use information gained from regular observations to plan activities to meet the needs of individual children well. They keep detailed records of children's progress so that plans link to children's next steps for learning effectively. Staff have all processes in place for progress checks for children aged between two- and three-years-of-age. Parents appreciate daily exchanges with staff to share observations of their child and contribute to their learning. They are kept well-informed of their child's progress because they have regular reviews with staff, receive reports and newsletters.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Children settle happily because they form secure relationships with their key person, who works closely with parents to ensure they are well informed about children's care needs. They learn to adapt to the setting's routines because they are supported through use of a visual timetable. The bright, well-organised and generally well-resourced environment helps children to be independent learners.

Older children display good self-care skills, such as putting on their coats and shoes independently; younger children are assisted by staff. Children are very independent. They help to set tables and serve themselves healthy snacks from communal bowls. Staff cater for any special dietary needs. Older children understand why they need to wash their hands and do so at appropriate times. Staff change children's nappies in private, hygienic conditions. Children take responsibility for looking after their environment by tidying things away and handling books carefully.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise because they practise a range of physical skills in a large private green space. They also have access to a range of large and small equipment in a secure outdoor area. Children are careful to give each other space to move around and use apparatus and equipment appropriately. Staff encourage children to assess risk for themselves by, for example, working out whether a box is too heavy to be

carried.

Children are made ready for school because the setting has good links with local schools. For instance, staff from the local school visit pre-school children so that they become familiar to them. Within the setting, children spend time in new group rooms so that they get used to new staff, routines and the environment before they arrive. This helps children to settle well in new environments.

Staff manage children's behaviour gently and offer explanations of why certain behaviour is unacceptable. They teach children empathy so that they are aware of the effect they have on others. Staff use cheerful songs to support younger children's behaviour. As a result, they follow instruction well and children's behaviour is good.

Children learn about special events and their meaning to different cultures through discussion and creative activities. They learn to accept and value difference as staff provide a good range of multicultural resources, including music from around the world.

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

Staff protect children well. They have been trained in safeguarding and implement this well in their practice. All policies and procedures have been updated to reflect requirements. Children are kept safe because staff perform comprehensive risk assessments each day covering all aspects of the provision, including outings. Staff go through appropriate vetting to assess their suitability for their roles and have a comprehensive job induction. This helps to protect children from harm.

Management are aware of any children or groups of children who underachieve because they have implemented a tracking system. This enables them to make appropriate interventions to close any gaps in achievement. Management ensures consistent high quality of learning and assessment because they review all plans for children and all assessment folders. The setting is also part of the local authority quality assurance scheme. This provides further internal checks and processes to maintain high standards of care and learning.

Staff are supported and any issues of underperformance are readily addressed because management offer supervision. Staff have their training needs identified through appraisals each year and they have attended a range of courses. For instance, they all attended a positive behaviour course which led to greater consistency in behaviour management.

Staff work well with other professionals involved in children's care and learning, such as speech therapists. They visit the setting to offer advice and information to promote good outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Partnership work with parents is effective and enables them to be kept informed of their child's development.

Management reflects on the provision to identify strengths and weaknesses. They make improvement plans and set appropriate goals, such as review of administration and documentation to ensure efficient organisation. Previous recommendations have been met, such as the completion of daily risk assessments for the outdoor area to ensure children's safety. The setting has good capacity to improve future outcomes for children.

### What inspection judgements mean

#### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
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Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
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Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
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Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
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Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
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Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.
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### Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY270613
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	819868
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	47
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Elms Montessori Nursery
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31/10/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	07763 746000

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their

Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.



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