

# The Little Learners Montessori at Cricklewood

St Vitus Hall, 35 Cricklewood Lane, London, NW2 1HR

<b>Inspection date</b>	14/03/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is outstanding

- Children flourish in this warm and friendly setting where they delight in the highly stimulating environment
- All aspects of the setting are organised to a consistently high standard with the senior management team providing inspirational leadership to the strong, hard-working staff team
- Children develop excellent social and self help skills and are confident to try new activities
- Children's communication and language skills are fully promoted by the motivated staff, as they ask probing questions so children can learn to connect ideas and events.

## 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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities both inside and outside.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents.
- The inspector held a meeting with the Manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including policies and procedures, planning, staff and children's files.

## Inspector

Anahita Aderianwalla

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

The Little Learners Montessori School/Day Nursery at Cricklewood registered in 2012 and is run by Little Learners Montessori Ltd. The provision operates from the grounds of St Agnes centre, within the London Borough of Barnet. The provision has use of a fully self-contained, purpose-built, single-storey nursery building. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The provision is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 48 weeks of the year. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare register. Currently, there are 23 children on roll in the Early years age range. The provision receives support from the local early years advisory team and is a member of the Montessori Society.

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

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

- make use of local areas so children can learn about how environments can vary from one another.

### Inspection judgements

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

Children make exemplary progress in their learning and development through the expertise of staff, and the provision of appropriate facilities and excellent resources. Children develop well because staff know how to engage children's interest, ensuring that activities are attractive, developmentally appropriate and challenging. Staff support children to reach achievable targets, building self esteem and confidence in learning.

Parents provide information to add to staff's baseline assessment of children, at the start of their child's placement. Staff track children's attainments rigorously in line with the principals of Montessori teachings. This is skilfully combined with the use of guidance that underpins the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The staff share these assessment profiles with parents and as a result are able to build on their planning for children's next steps in their learning. Children are enthusiastically involved and make very good progress in all aspects of their learning.

Staff plan the environment thoughtfully so children can choose what they do from a very wide range of interesting resources, natural materials and exciting activities. All children thrive in this highly effective setting and the staff team maintain the high quality provision with enthusiasm and care. Excellent guidance and teaching ensures children learn and

develop to the very best of their ability. The uniqueness of each child is valued and staff work hard to support their different ways of learning.

The nursery benefits from having an exceptionally stimulating outdoor play area which children use throughout the year. It provides exemplary play experiences where children can move around the different areas, climbing, jumping and reading books or making dens. They can plant in large tyres, pour sand and water, or paint the walls with buckets and different sized brushes. An excellent balance of indoor, outdoor, active and quiet play areas, allow children to play freely and excitedly, learn new skills and practise old ones. Staff treat everything that happens as an opportunity for children to learn. They plan activities to stimulate children's thinking and encourage them to question. They structure the day flexibly and make full use of the indoor and outdoor environment to maximise opportunities for children's progress and enjoyment.

Children gain a superb understanding of the world around them and learn to respect each other and their surroundings. For example, staff plan an activity that involves children learning about the continents and the different fruits that are found around the world. Children confidently name the fruits and the continents that they come from. This activity is then extended to snack time, as children cut up fruit independently to taste; talk about the 'sweetness of the mango', the 'sour taste of the kiwi' and how 'hairy and hard' the coconut feels. The activity is further extended as staff take the children outside to crack the coconut and discover the water inside. They drink the water and eat the flesh of the coconut with pleasure and joy at their new discovery.

Children make very good progress in their personal social and emotional development. They follow their interests with persistence and concentration and they have the confidence to try new activities by themselves. Children make their own choices in play and this results in children who are curious and inquisitive learners. For example, children happily play in the real life area and pour water into a glass bottle using a variety of sized funnels.

Children increase their competence in language very well through handling books, hearing stories read, beginning to read and talking with staff. Staff introduce and explain new words. Younger children listen and respond to gestures and language that others use. They begin to make marks on paper and distinguish marks with different meanings. Children are able to communicate in writing for different purposes, such as making labels and lists and they learn to write their names. For example, children choose large pieces of paper, write their name and happily ask staff to display their achievements on the walls of the setting.

Children make excellent progress in their understanding of shape and space, by measuring and comparing items. They develop skills to problem solve by using numbers and reasoning. For example, as children talk about the different fruits, staff ask them to compare the size and shapes of each one and use mathematical words, such as big, small, medium, round, oval and sphere. They learn about arranging an array of different shades of 'pink' blocks and grouping them in order of dark to light shades. As a result, children are making exceptional progress in mathematical development.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of the world around them. They investigate and explore objects and materials, talk about present and past events and find out about their environment. They use tools and work with a good range of interesting materials with increasing control as they design, paint, and make things. Children are developing excellent skills in using technology. This includes the use of computers and capturing special moments with their friends, as they take pictures with digital cameras. All staff work very hard to create a highly stimulating and welcoming environment, which engages and captures the interests of the children.

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

Behaviour is exemplary because children are busy and interested in everything that is going on. All staff are highly skilled and sensitive in helping children form secure emotional attachments, which provide a good base for developing their independence. Having a high staff ratio means children receive lots of individual attention, and any additional needs are extremely well catered for.

Through excellent routines, such as, regular fire drills, plus visits from fire officers and the police, children learn how to keep themselves safe. Children show an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and the factors that contribute towards maintaining their health. They thoroughly enjoy playing in the outdoor area, where they can run and move around in a stimulating environment and where they experiment with different ways of moving their bodies. For example, they have yoga sessions, music and movement and ballet sessions, where they practise 'Walking on the line' which helps them develop balance and control.

The provision plan exciting activities that allow children to learn about the world around them and celebrate differences between themselves and others. For example, family and visitors are frequently invited to the setting. Festivals and cultures from around the world are fully embraced in the planning, so children can learn positive attitudes and question differences. However, staff have not planned visits for the children to fully explore and learn about how environments may vary from one another. The manager and staff team are currently planning future visits so children can become familiar with their local community. Rigorous hygiene routines prevent any spread of infection and accidents or illnesses are managed appropriately. Children are provided with exceptionally healthy and nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day.

Highly motivated and dedicated key persons use their expert knowledge to promote learning opportunities. They provide secure attachments and plan lots of fun and excitement for every child attending the setting. Independence is encouraged from an early age. Children learn to help themselves to all the equipment and resources provided, serve their own food portions and pour water into drinking glasses. As a result children are very well prepared for their move onto other settings and school.

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

## provision

Highly effective and comprehensive policies are in place to keep children extremely safe and secure within the setting. All staff are familiar with the safeguarding policy and are aware of the correct procedures should there be any concerns. Senior staff have attended relevant training and ensure all details are cascaded to the rest of the staff team. Rigorous recruitment procedures are in place and thorough checks carried out to ensure the safety and well-being of children and their families. Staff ensure children are collected by adults who are known to them and a password system is used. Highly effective risk assessments, safety checks and staff vigilance, ensure children are cared for in a safe, secure and clean environment. The owner, her well-qualified and experienced manager and a team of qualified, enthusiastic and committed staff, work extremely well together in catering for individual needs and particular requirements.

Staff feel valued and empowered through individual and staff meetings where their ideas, skills and areas for development are addressed. They have high expectations and set high standards which are embedded across all areas of practice. Rigorous and extensive monitoring, analysis and self-challenge, enable the setting to devise exceptionally well targeted plans. Children are fully involved in this process, as they are able to contribute to the monitoring of the educational programme. For example, children tell staff if they enjoy an activity and use stickers with happy or sad faces to denote their preference. This allows staff to understand where their planning for individual children may need to be improved. Management and staff are constantly evaluating practice in order to improve and optimise the outcomes for children in every way possible.

Partnership with parents is extremely well established from the start, with an induction programme of visits appropriate to each child's needs. Parents benefit from lots of useful information about the nursery, both verbally and in writing. Information about the Montessori Education programme and the Early Years Foundation Stage framework is readily available and parents can discuss their child's progress with their key person at any time. They have a good understanding of what their children are learning and how they can help them at home. Newsletters, displays and slips allow parents to record any home observations that are then used to inform planning within the setting. Each child's learning journey profile is easily accessible and parents invited to meet their key person to discuss how things are going. Seeking the views of parents and carers enables the nursery to continuously improve and ensure the provision of an excellent and highly appropriate service.

Excellent and supportive working relationships are established with local schools and early years professionals to ensure continuity of approach and the best possible support for all the children. The team's excellent relationship with children and their families inspires and promotes an environment of confidence, self-esteem and positive attitudes to learning.

## The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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.
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.
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.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. 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.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## 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>	EY449566
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	880278
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	23
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Learners Montessori Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	07508057765

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted’s website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## 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, which are usually the childminder's 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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

