

Leavesden Montessori House

187 Leavesden Road, WATFORD, WD24 5EL

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

18/09/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 benefit from a varied range of high quality resources and can choose to play indoors or outdoors, so that they can develop their own ideas. This means that they can initiate their own play and ideas and develop good levels of confidence.
- The provider and her staff are very experienced in teaching and caring for children. They are enthusiastic and warmly engage with children and their parents, so that they feel settled and secure.
- There are clear systems in place for staff development and information gained from training is effectively shared with parents, so that they too can benefit from current ideas about children's welfare.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to reflect the different ways children learn by extending the use of props, pictures and photographs, so that younger children and those with English as an additional language are able to make connections in their learning, express their thoughts and make decisions about routines and activities.
- There is scope to further develop the outdoor area, so that it is reflective of the wide range of experiences offered indoors and children can see signs, letters and numbers and use writing and drawing materials easily.

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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities indoors and outdoors. She spoke to the provider, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
The inspector spent time observing practice and interaction between staff and children. She discussed planning and assessment to ascertain children's achievements.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of the outdoor area with the manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and looked at some written policies.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full Report

Information about the setting

Leavesden Montessori House was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of two nurseries operated by the provider. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a converted church in North Watford, Hertfordshire. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 15 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children, who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a level 6 qualification in early years. Two staff members hold a Montessori teaching qualification and three staff members hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the use of props, pictures and photographs showing familiar events, objects and activities, so that younger children and those with English as an additional language can be further supported and express their preferences, thoughts and feelings about the activities and their play opportunities

- enhance the outdoor area, so that it is reflective of the wide range of experiences indoors, to offer rich, varied and imaginative experiences that promotes all areas of learning even further.

Inspection judgements

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

The manager and her staff are very secure in their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are all suitably qualified and experienced resulting in them having a good understanding of how children learn and develop. They spend valuable time getting to know children well when they are settling in and through discussions with

parents. As a result, children's interests and starting points are very well known. Detailed observation and assessment of children's progress enable staff to plan interesting and challenging experiences. These are matched to individual children's learning needs and are displayed for parents to see. Children's next steps in their learning are well known and these are also shown on the displayed plans. This means that all staff are able to contribute effectively to children's ongoing learning. Staff are aware of the need to carry out the progress check at age two as and when the need arises. They share children's progress effectively with parents through daily discussions and regular meetings. Staff are provided with a wide range of information, such as theories and research about children's learning and development. Ideas are often shared about how parents can further support their children's learning at home. In addition, information gained from staff training related to children's welfare and learning is shared with parents.

Children enjoy their time at this welcoming nursery. They are motivated and eager to learn. For example, they independently engage in activities and are constantly busy choosing what they would like to do. They love twirling streamers. The good quality staff interaction, extends this play by introducing new words and ideas to children. This supports children's listening and speaking skills as they repeat what they have heard. Staff use simple sign and language with children, who require additional help in developing their language skills. This includes those with English as an additional language, which helps them to understand conversations. Staff obtain key words children use at home, so that they can understand what children say. However, staff have not fully explored other ways to support some children's understanding, such as, using props, visual aids, pictures and real-life objects, to demonstrate what is being said, so that all children's understanding of language is further enhanced.

Staff are enthusiastic and committed and work well as a team. They are fully involved in children's play and provide good levels of support. Staff are highly skilled in asking the children open-ended questions to get them to think about what they are doing. This helps children make connections in their learning. Children learn how to sort items and place them in appropriate containers and confidently use items, such as scissors. This supports children's self-esteem and provides them with skills for further learning. Children show good levels of concentration as they enthusiastically take part in a baking session. They are given time to see and talk about the ingredients they will be using. Early mathematical language and concepts are introduced through discussions about the amount of ingredients each child needs. They count spoonfuls of oats into their bowls and delight in mixing these with blackberries to make flapjacks.

Children love stories and enjoy using the cosy area. They happily share books with their friends, mirroring staff as they do so. Staff sit on the cushions alongside the children to read stories. They all sit cosily together, laughing and joining in with the story. This supports children's understanding that print carries meaning and promotes their early interest in books. There are good opportunities for children to develop their writing skills. They paint, draw and play with water and sand. The outdoor area is currently under construction. However, during this time good use is made of the entrance area where children can select from a table of resources. They dig in the sand, play ball games and use a magnifying view finder to see insects clearly. This supports children's curiosity about the world around them. However, there is scope to develop the outdoor area further, so

that children have stimulating learning experiences outdoors as well as indoors. For example, opportunities to see print and signs, wind chimes, materials for imaginative play and drawing materials are not yet offered outdoors.

Children take part in an interesting range of outings to enhance their learning about the community in which they live. For example, they visit the nearby shops to buy fruit and vegetables and they enjoy frequent visits to the park. Babies and toddlers are well supported because experienced staff are very attentive to their needs. As a result, they happily explore the environment and the exceptionally good quality resources. They have their own separate play space, so that they can play safely. There are plans in place to develop more cosy areas for the babies and older children, so that they can sit, learn and talk with their friends and staff. Overall, children are developing a range of skills to aid their readiness for the next stage in their learning, such as starting nursery or school.

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

Children are happy and secure because valuable time is taken during the settling-in process to establish positive and trusting relationships with parents and children. As a result, children form close bonds with the observant staff. An effective key person system is in place and all staff are very aware of children's individual needs. Staff place a firm emphasis on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills. This is evident in the flexible and thoughtful settling-in process. For example, parents stay with their children during this time. They share information about their children's care routines, likes and dislikes. Staff mirror these and use interests very well to help children settle. Children are given time to get to know the staff and become familiar with their surroundings. They give space and time to each child's needs, so that they build confidence to happily explore. Babies smile broadly when adults talk to them, showing that they feel secure. Toddlers and older children demonstrate that they have close attachments with adults. For example, they happily show them their work and freely ask questions during their play.

Staff offer a great deal of praise and encouragement during all tasks. This promotes children's self-esteem. Staff work well together and are good role models. They are very calm in all situations and adopt a consistent approach to children's behaviour. Staff use effective distraction techniques to resolve issues. This further promotes good levels of self-esteem and helps children learn how to treat each other with respect. This contributes effectively to preparing children for the next stage in their learning, such as mixing with others when they start nursery or school.

Children manage their personal care very well. They show good levels of independence as they select aprons before painting, change their shoes and older children can manage to put on their own coats. Transitions between the baby area and the older children's play area are well managed because all staff are familiar with the children. Currently, children are cared for in one large room, which is well organised to meet the needs of younger and older children.

The nursery is very clean, food preparation and mealtimes foster good hygiene procedures. Staff know children's preferences and dietary needs and they continually work

with parents to ensure healthy meals and snacks are provided. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion with staff sitting alongside the children. They all enjoy chatting about what they have been doing. Staff encourage good eating habits, such as trying different foods. Skills for the future are encouraged, such as correctly using knives and forks, so that children can manage their own meals.

Children's understanding of road safety is supported through related songs and rhymes. This is reinforced during outings to the shops and the park. Children benefit from fresh air and daily exercise. They enjoy playing outdoors in the enclosed areas. They learn about the importance of physical activity when they take part in music and movement activities and during the regular visits to the park.

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

This is the nursery's first inspection since registration. Leadership and management are strong. The provider has a good understanding of the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and monitors the children's learning very well. She is passionate about offering high quality care and learning for children. She is enthusiastic and a good role model when interacting with children and their parents. The manager and staff are well qualified and use their skills and understanding to support children's learning and development. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and well-being. They receive detailed information about the services provided, including policies and procedures. In addition, they receive informative newsletters, which provide them with details of planned activities and the day-to-day operations of the nursery.

High regard is given to safeguarding and as a result, children are kept safe. All staff attend safeguarding training and first aid training, so that they know what to do in an emergency. Staff are fully aware the importance of safeguarding children and the procedure to follow in the event of a child protection concern, including notifying outside agencies. Children's safety is paramount. Effective steps are taken to ensure children cannot access the other parts of the building, which are being renovated. Risk assessments of all areas on the premises are thorough and any potential hazards are removed, so children are protected from harm. In addition, the use of a video recording security system monitors the safety of both children and staff.

Procedures for vetting, recruitment and induction are robust and ensure that all staff are well qualified and suitable to work with children. Clear supervision and regular appraisals means that training needs are discussed and supported. Self-reflection books for each member of staff have been introduced. This has a positive impact on the identification of individual achievements and training needs to support children's learning and development. There are no children attending, who attend other provisions. However, the provider values partnership working and the benefits this can bring to the children's welfare and learning.

Monitoring of the nursery is an ongoing process. Views of staff are regularly shared

through informal discussions and regular meetings. Parents and children can contribute their views and these are very welcomed. Plans for progression are well known. For example, further training is always welcome, so that new ideas and theories are explored. The staff team are booked onto relevant training related to how boys learn and positive behaviour management. This shows that there is a commitment to continually improve the service provided.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary 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

Unique reference number	EY458830
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	911081
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	15
Name of provider	Greenacres Montessori Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01923801331

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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, 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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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