

Little Acorns Montessori Ltd

St Peters Hall, Hatchet Lane, Windsor, SL4 2EG

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

26/03/2014

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 arrive happily at the nursery and confidently make their own play choices.
- Children develop positive relationships with each other, their key person and other staff.
- Staff identify children's individual learning needs accurately and take effective steps to ensure children receive the help and support they need.
- Good communication and partnerships are established with parents, which promotes a consistent approach to meeting children's individual needs.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There are missed opportunities for children to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts through daily routines and events.
- Snack times do not consistently promote children's self-care skills.

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

- At the inspection, an additional inspector accompanied the lead inspector.
- A meeting was held with the manager, and discussions took place with staff, children and a small number of parents/carers.
- A joint observation was undertaken with the deputy manager of staff and children's interaction and play activities.
- The inspectors observed children's play and activities indoors and outside.
- The inspectors viewed all areas of the nursery premises.

Inspector

Sheena Bankier

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Acorns Montessori School is a privately owned nursery that originally opened in 1994 and re-registered in 2013 due to a change to a limited company. The nursery is situated in Cranbourne village, near Windsor, Berkshire, where it operates from St Peter's Hall. Children have use of the main hall and two smaller rooms. There is an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery follows the Montessori philosophy of education. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is open term time only from 8.30am to 3pm, with a breakfast club offered from 8.30am to 9am and sessions offered from 9am to 1pm and 12noon to 3pm with an optional lunch club in between. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is in receipt of free early years education funding for children aged two, three and four years old. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery employs a manager with Qualified Teacher Status. Five other staff are employed to work with the children, of these three hold recognised early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently working towards gaining a recognised early years qualification.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance children's awareness of mathematical concepts through using everyday routines and events
- enhance children's self-care skills at snack time, for example, encourage their further involvement in the preparation of the snack.

Inspection judgements

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

Children benefit from a balance of child-initiated and adult led focused activities to support their learning and development securely. For instance, children make their own independent choices from the toys and resources on offer as well as taking part in structured activities with staff, such as the 'letter of the week'. This encourages parents and children to find items beginning with the letter to bring into the nursery. This promotes positive links between home and nursery and provides good opportunities for children to link letter sounds to words. Children enjoy interesting and appealing toys, activities and resources, which staff tailor to their interests. For example, children have developed an interest in pirates and staff bury pebbles in the sand as treasure for children to find. Children develop skills and aptitudes to support their readiness for school

effectively at the nursery, such as confidence, listening and concentration skills. Children benefit from physical activities indoors and outside that support the effective development of their large physical skills. They proudly talk about practising forward and backward rolls on the indoor 'development, movement and play' mats. There are challenging outdoor resources, such as a two-wheeled bike with stabilisers for children to develop their balance and coordination skills. Children use their imaginations and creativity as they create large-scale three-dimensional models with different materials. They use small tools, such as scissors and glue spreaders to support their small physical skills as they create and build these. Children show a growing awareness of the needs of each other as they play and cooperate with each other very well. For example, children play an imaginative game of driving a bus to a theme park and negotiate roles and responsibilities. Staff overall provide good quality teaching and interaction to children. They are involved well in children's play and learning, showing enthusiasm for their work. At times, staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning further. For example, when children choose to use Montessori resources staff provide sound support for their understanding of mathematical concepts. However, they miss opportunities during other play activities and routines to support children's mathematical understanding, such as when cutting up fruit or when children find the 'treasure' buried in the sand. Staff obtain effective information from parents to establish children's individual starting points thoroughly. This includes talking to parents and completing 'all about me' information. Staff make assessments of children's level of development on entry to the nursery, and track children's progress each term. This establishes the progress children make and identifies any gaps in their achievements, enabling staff to identify children's next steps in learning accurately. Staff keep children's records of progress up to date with regular written observations of children's progress along with photographs and examples of children's own work. They work closely with parents and outside agencies where they identify children who require additional support with their learning and development. Individual educational plans effectively target children's progress. In addition, staff use professional support and advice to support children successfully. Staff learn key words in children's home languages to support children on entry to the nursery. Resources and activities reflect the children's individual backgrounds promoting an inclusive environment. This values children as individuals and raises their awareness of their own and each other's backgrounds.

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

Effective settling-in procedures support parents and children in gaining confidence and developing positive relationships with the staff. Settling-in arrangements are flexible and allow children and parents to visit prior to starting. Thorough information about children's individual needs means that key persons develop an in-depth knowledge and understanding of each child. Children form warm, caring and positive relationships with staff. They enter the nursery confidently and happily settle to play with activities of their choice on arrival. Staff provide a good role model to children along with warm praise and encouragement to raise children's self-esteem and confidence. As a result, children develop positive behaviours. Children develop their effective understanding of safe practices, such as using the indoor 'development, movement and play' area safely. For example, they are developing a secure understanding of the number of children who can

play in this area for safety. Children play in an inviting and well-considered environment. They benefit from different areas for play and activities, including a dedicated room with resources aimed at the younger children and another room for creative play activities, such as sand, water and painting. Children independently select resources from low level storage units that have name and picture labels. This enables children to identify what they wish to play with and make independent choices. In addition, the written labels raise their awareness of the print, supporting their early reading skills. Children develop a positive sense of belonging as they have named pegs and trays for their belongings. Toys and resources are of a good quality and the indoor and outside environments reflect all areas of learning. This provides opportunities for children's continued learning wherever they are playing. Children enjoy healthy snacks of fruit with water or milk to drink. Effective consideration of resources enables even the youngest children to learn to pour their own drinks with small sized jugs. Children demonstrate they understand why they need to wash their hands before eating and are aware that germs are not good for them. Social snack times value what children have to say and staff introduce new vocabulary as they discuss how it tastes, such as 'sharp' 'sour' and 'sweet'. However, although children develop their independent skills and fetch their own plate and cups, they are not always involved in the preparation of the snack, such as peeling or cutting up the fruit. As a result, there are missed opportunities to promote children's self-care skills further. Children spend time outside each day, which enables them to experience the different weathers and enjoy fresh air. Children benefit from taking appropriate risks and challenges outdoors. For example, children enjoy riding the wheeled toys down the slope where they can experience the fun of going faster!

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

The manager and staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff promote children's safety at the premises well, such as keeping the door locked and the outdoor gates closed. Risk assessments are completed daily prior to children's arrival. As a result, there is a good approach to maintaining children's well-being and safety. For example, the risk assessments identify the fridge is not maintaining the correct temperature. As a result, staff add ice packs to keep the milk at an appropriate temperature and the problem is reported promptly to the hall committee. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They carry the local children's safeguarding board procedures and contact numbers on their person. This enables them to directly access information to support them in the event of concerns arising about children's welfare or other staff practice. Recruitment procedures are robust with clear induction procedures for new staff, which include undertaking relevant suitability checks. The staff work closely together as a team. They benefit from regular and ongoing formal and informal meetings to discuss working practices. This enables staff to support each other in their work securely. The manager provides an effective role model to the staff team in her interactions and support for children's learning and development. This helps staff develop their practice with the children by following her example. Staff are encouraged to attend available training and to work towards

recognised qualifications. As a result, they steadily develop their professional practice. Staff carry out required checks to establish children's progress between the ages of two and three-years of age. Staff share these checks with parents and identify the progress children are making and any areas where they require further support. The manager monitors the overall progress all children make, taking into account different groups of children, such as boys and girls. This identifies whether all children are making progress or if particular groups of children are not making sufficient progress in their learning. As a result, this helps to close gaps in children's achievements. Partnerships and communication with parents is effective. Staff encourage parents to view their children's progress records at any time. Each term the children's key person and their parents meet to discuss their progress and next steps in learning. This along with daily feedback and discussions with parents keep them well informed about their children's time at the nursery. Parents' speak highly of the nursery and staff and they comment positively about their children's care and learning experiences. Partnerships with other professionals and early years providers are valued. Staff take positive steps to make links with them and to encourage the sharing of information to support children consistently. Staff, children and parents all contribute to the self-evaluation process. For example, staff take account of children's ideas and interests and include these in their planning of activities and play experiences. There are clear lines of communication for staff and parents to feedback their views and opinions. The manager demonstrates a good understanding of the strengths of the nursery provision. She identifies improvements based on her accurate knowledge of the practice and the feedback she receives. Recent improvements to the premises promote children's play and learning experiences further. For example, the nursery paid for alterations at the premises so that two rooms now interconnect. This supports children's flow of play and promotes the safeguarding of them. The staff and manager demonstrate a good capacity to sustain ongoing continuous improvement in the future.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY469583
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	937521
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	36
Name of provider	Little Acorns Montessori Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01344882942

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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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