

Best Start Nurseries@St Marys Montessori

St. Marys Montessori Day Nursery, Coventry Road, LUTTERWORTH, Leicestershire, LE17 4SH

Inspection date	12/05/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	Not Applicable
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

- The exemplary staff team have the utmost aspirations for each and every child. They support children's growing independence extremely well through optimal challenges and motivational learning opportunities. They produce highly confident and self-assured children who are very well prepared to move onto the next stage in their learning.
- The nursery has an exceptionally strong and caring ethos that puts the child at the centre of everything they do. Children are exceedingly well safeguarded through the implementation of robust procedures by the highly knowledgeable staff team, who ensure all children receive the best possible care.
- This highly dedicated, inspirational nursery continually strives to improve their provision and develop the professional knowledge of their staff team, honing teaching skills to enrich children's learning experiences. As a result, they have a very strong capacity to further improve this already outstanding setting.
- There is an exceedingly strong partnership with parents and carers, who are fully involved in their children's learning and are well informed on ways to support learning at home. The management team and senior staff constantly find innovative ways in which to involve parents further.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all of the nursery rooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
The inspector held a meeting and spoke with the provider, operations manager,
■ officer in charge of the provision and staff throughout the inspection when appropriate.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working
■ within the setting, the provider's evidence of self-evaluation and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account the views of children, parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Rachel Howell

Full report

Information about the setting

Best Start Nurseries @ St Marys Montessori is a well-established day nursery which re-opened in 2012 after becoming a limited company. It is one of three settings run by the same private provider. It operates from a converted church hall near the centre of Lutterworth, in the south of Leicestershire, and serves the surrounding communities. Babies are cared for in a separate, ground floor building within the grounds of the premises and they have their own outdoor play area. Toddlers are cared for in two rooms on the first floor and pre-school children in one room on the ground floor. There is an enclosed outdoor area for outside play. The nursery follows the Montessori approach to early years learning and is registered on the Early Years Register. It receives funding to provide early education to three- and four-year-olds. There are currently 92 children on roll, including a small number who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery opens from 7.30am to 6pm from Monday to Friday throughout the year. Children attend a variety of sessions depending on the individual requirements of each family. Including the operations manager, there are 16 regular childcare staff, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications and some hold additional Montessori teaching diplomas. The operations manager and officer in charge have Early Years Professional status and a cook is employed to support the childcare staff. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- exploit the engagement and links with other local providers, particularly for the children who attend more than one setting, to further support children's progress.

Inspection judgements

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

The children in this nursery make excellent progress in all seven areas of learning because they are supported by a dedicated, skilled and motivated staff team who have high expectations of every child. Staff's outstanding knowledge of how superb quality teaching promotes children's progress means the quality of teaching is extremely high in all age groups. There is a language rich environment and very good communication opportunities through sensitive and focused interactions. A shared story time in the Fledglings age group, shows caring and responsive staff skilfully engaging babies to enjoy and interact with a story 'in the night garden'. She holds their attention extremely well and they excitedly turn pages and push buttons with her encouragement. The staff team actively listen to children. They use a variety of communication for children of all ages and abilities including the use of signing for children with additional needs. Within the older Starlings

age group, teaching is truly inspirational and worthy of sharing with other settings. Staff support children to problem solve and use open-ended questioning techniques very effectively to promote creative and critical thinking. Children's independence is very well supported in the responsibility placed on them to lead their own learning. Children are given real china crockery and rice in the Montessori area. This provides realistic materials for children to explore emulating real life situations, embracing responsibility and recognising risk. Inspirational activities focus on observed interests and the needs of children and offer excellent and exciting learning opportunities. For example, in an exciting early writing activity for a group of older Starling boys, they find hidden items in the garden and choose marks to plot their progress on their own map.

Parental partnerships are a key strength. This is a nursery where the staff team are actively listening to children and parents; they value their views and act on what they say. The nursery explores and implements a vast number of ways to ensure parents' views are obtained and that there is regular, consistent and in-depth two way communication in order to capture the views and support all children. The sharing and celebration of children's achievements and the support for the home learning environment is a strong focus for the nursery and they have introduced many innovative and interesting events. For example, flexible parents' consultation evenings are held over a number of days and a 'family breakfast morning' promotes healthy eating. The staff work closely with parents and with other professionals in order to fully support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The required progress check at age two has been completed for all children and shared with all relevant partners. Detailed observations and regular rigorous assessment provides a comprehensive record of children's progress. Additionally, regular input obtained from parents is used in order to build a holistic picture of the child and further support their learning and development. The staff team are fully committed to helping children achieve the targets set for them. They have an excellent understanding of where each child is in their development, which ensures children are provided with relevant stimulating educational experiences that significantly enhance their learning. This is effectively summed up in the comment of one parent 'I can't praise them enough for what they have done; she has really come on in leaps and bounds'. The nursery implements an inspirational amalgamation of teaching approaches and integrates the Montessori ethos with the child-led play focus of the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are combined effectively to offer children excellent provision and opportunities to progress their learning to very high levels. An effective example of this is the use of Montessori teaching materials linking with the Government's Letters and Sounds programme to introduce and support phonics, literacy and numeracy. The nursery focuses strongly on children gaining more independence and they skilfully do this through gradually increasing the autonomy given to each age group. The Robins and Kingfisher toddler age groups work hard on a gradual transition from Fledglings, to grown up Starlings, preparing for school. Extensive strategies and approaches are used in order to support children's independence and foster a positive 'can do attitude' to learning. This is recognised across the whole nursery and is evident in, for example, a baby's perseverance with his exploration of early walking. This highlights how the staff team are committed to developing each and every child to their full potential. Children are focused and their exploration purposeful, behaviour management is excellent and very sensitive to individual children's needs. Children who require additional

support are extremely well supported and all children are observed to become very capable learners. Consequently, children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals as well as preparing for the more formal and independent learning that will be offered to them when they move onto school.

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

The nursery has an exceptionally strong and caring ethos that puts the child at the centre of everything they do. Staff are constantly thinking of children's well-being and act as very caring and positive role models for children. Staff show genuine interest in and pleasure at being with the children. They make a point of saying 'hello' to children that have come in to nursery while they have been on lunch and engage them in conversation clearly pleased to see them. This close and genuine environment is evident to all and parents' comments reflect this and include statements, such as 'There is such a lovely atmosphere here' and 'Staff are so caring, friendly and professional'. The staff team all have an exemplary understanding of how strong relationships promote children's wellbeing and implement an outstanding key person system. Flexible and sensitive arrangements are made to ensure children settle well into the nursery. This very effectively supports them to build close and supportive bonds with their key person and all of the close adults within their age group. This ensures that children develop strong, secure attachments early in their care which results in the children becoming confident and self-assured.

Children learn personal hygiene through practical routines and this helps them to be independent in their self-care when they move on to school. Children's safety is given high priority without restricting their independent exploration, because staff are vigilant at all times, ensuring children are well supervised and kept safe. Through first class teaching, children are encouraged to risk assess for themselves and consider the needs of others. They develop their understanding of equality and diversity through a range of resources, activities and positive images within their environment. The nursery works closely with parents, to reinforce boundaries for children who demonstrate unwanted behaviour, and this means children receive clear and consistent messages. They are developing a thorough understanding of right and wrong and, as a result, behaviour in the nursery is excellent.

Physical development and healthy lifestyles are promoted at every opportunity and the staff team ensures that children have as much access as possible to the outdoor environment. The area has been well designed with interesting sensory paving, wooden structures and a hill with a large tunnel running through it. A large gardening area is the highlight for many children and they have independent access to a range of tools. Adult supported gardening gains many rewards and they children enjoyed making good use of raspberries they had grown to make raspberry and white chocolate muffins. These experiences offer children excellent first hand opportunities to learn about our world with trips out into the local community, to the park, library and the regular market in town. The nursery cook is very much part of the close and nurturing team in this nursery and she provides an excellent range of healthy meals and snacks. She also supplements the teaching and learning opportunities with further support of children's knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles. She provides inspirational extensions of learning

through topical meals and cultural dishes. She ignites and stimulates children's interest in food through exciting dishes, such as a picture of a flag made out of red and white foods for St George's Day.

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

All of the age groups are exceptionally well safeguarded through very thorough and robust policies and procedures. These are implemented by the highly knowledgeable and nurturing staff team, who regularly go above and beyond requirements to ensure all children receive the best possible care. They have all have attended safeguarding training and senior practitioners have completed advanced safeguarding training, to develop their knowledge of how to keep children safe. Security is stringent, there is an electronic security entry system and closed circuit television cameras relay images to the office from around the nursery. All visitors are asked to acknowledge that they will comply with the safeguarding requirements of the nursery and asked to read a statement upon arrival that summarises what they must do. Many of the staff are first aid trained and there are securely embedded procedures monitor the health of all the children, to administer medicines and to deal with and report accidents. Detailed risk assessments are in place to ensure children are kept safe both on the premises and during trips. Stemming from the nursery's previous inspection prior to re-opening, rigorous daily checks are now recorded on wipe clean boards outlining and any observed risks. Any maintenance issues are also detailed on a maintenance form and given to the office. This shows meticulous implementation to ensure that the information is quickly actioned and used to make a safer environment for the children.

Inspirational management by a strong, cohesive and highly skilled management team consisting of the provider, operations manager, officer in charge and senior staff very closely support, encourage and monitor the whole team extremely well. They produce a very effective and professional staff team. They have rigorous induction, performance management procedures that are extremely well implemented and closely monitor the quality of provision. There is a highly qualified senior staff team, with a wealth of qualifications between them including Early Years Professional Status and Montessori Diplomas. They use their knowledge to lead and role model excellent teaching practice to the rest of the team. They value and support the ongoing professional development by many of the staff and appreciate the new knowledge and good practice ideas that they bring into the nursery. They have recently had a member of the team qualify to lead 'forest school' and they have staff working towards a Montessori Diploma, Early Childhood Studies Degree and other early years qualifications. This continual cycle of professional development is reflected in inspirational teaching and extremely positive outcomes for all children.

There are very good relationships with the specialist professionals involved with children that attend the nursery and they have strong links with the local schools that the children move onto. Links with other early years providers though are proving more difficult for them to maintain. Contact is mostly indirectly via parents. The management team have already outlined this as an area of improvement and have detailed within their self-

evaluation action plan that they will explore contacts via email. They recognise that it is necessary to adapt and change and embrace this completely. They are in the process of opening a twitter account. They undertake visits to other outstanding settings in order to share good practice and are currently implementing the use of a new program via tablet computers to more efficiently and effectively record children's learning and development. The management team show that they are completely committed to improvement by continually striving for excellence. They review and evaluate their provision regularly and make sure that they take the views of all involved with the nursery. They undertake a fully inclusive approach with the staff team and have comprehensive arrangements to gather views through questionnaires from parents and age appropriate ones from the older children within the Starlings group. They intend to enhance this further through 'Hear by Rights' training that their operations manager has recently attended that leads development in the participation by all those involved with children and young people. They ensure that their evaluations are used productively and outline sharply focused targets in half yearly action plans. They lead this exceptionally well and customise their approach selecting a considerable range of very effective and suitable tools to support them. They have created an inspirational process that is worthy of being disseminated to other settings to support good practice.

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	EY437136
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	803558
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	92
Name of provider	Best Start Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01455554034

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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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