

# Tree Tops Montessori Nursery

1-3 Chesham Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1JS

<b>Inspection date</b>	30/05/2014
Previous inspection date	03/06/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	1
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 make good progress in the nursery because all staff have a deep understanding of the learning needs of children in each age group. They skilfully identify and support the next steps in children's learning and provide a broad range of good adult- and child-led activities, which engage the children.
- Staff create a calm welcoming learning environment where children settle in well, developing good relationships with adults and with each other. As a result, children feel safe, secure and ready to learn.
- All staff have a thorough understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Children are safe and secure because their welfare is given priority by all staff.
- The leadership and management team have developed strong working relationships with parents, schools and other agencies. This contributes to children's good progress across all areas of learning and ensures that children are prepared for their transition to school.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally staff do not always use open-ended questioning to encourage children's problem-solving skills.
- There is scope to develop the current methods of monitoring and evaluation to provide feedback on the impact of teaching on children's thinking skills and levels of creativity in order to raise them to the highest levels.

## 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 held discussions with both owners/managers, the deputy manager and staff, and interacted with children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector toured the premises and observed activities throughout the setting, in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation, with the deputy manager, of planned activities for various groups of children.
- The inspector examined a sample of documentation including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures, the self-evaluation plan and plans for improvement.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents met on the day.

## Inspector

Deirdre Lyddy

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Tree Tops Montessori Nursery opened in 2005 and is privately owned by a limited company. The nursery is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. It operates from two specifically converted buildings on the site and there is an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves the immediate locality and the surrounding areas. It opens five days a week, from 8am until 6pm all year round, except on bank holidays and for a week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are 106 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English is an additional language. The nursery employs 23 childcare staff. Of these, one holds Qualified Teacher Status, one holds a qualification at level 5, two hold qualifications at level 4, 15 hold appropriate qualifications at level 3, two hold qualifications at level 2 and two are unqualified.

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

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

- make even further use of open-ended questioning and 'thinking aloud' to encourage children to solve problems in a range of activities
  
- enhance the already good strategies for monitoring teaching and learning, so that staff receive feedback on the impact of their teaching, in order to raise children's thinking and creative skills to the highest level.

## Inspection judgements

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

The well qualified staff have an excellent knowledge of how young children learn and develop because of the frequent training and mentoring they receive within the nursery. They gather detailed information about the child's interests and needs, from parents and carers, when children are first enrolled. Staff use this information to plan a wide range of activities, which engage the children, using the specific Montessori equipment in place in the nursery, as well as additional materials. A key feature of the nursery is the calm welcoming environment, which encourages all children to become quickly engaged in their play and learning each day. Staff members remain physically close to babies, who are quickly settled into familiar routines, surrounded by their favourite soft toys in comfortable rooms. Toddlers and older children are closely supervised when they move around freely within the areas set out for them indoors and outdoors. They know where to find the materials they need and know to return them to the same place on the shelf so that the

next child will also find them.

Staff use Montessori teaching methods effectively, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress across all seven areas of learning, and their readiness for school is well enhanced as a result. Staff talk to babies about what they are doing, saying, for example, 'I am walking' when supporting a baby who is learning to walk or saying 'pat, pat' when showing a baby how to flatten down sand with a trowel. In this way, babies link the words with their actions, helping to develop their vocabulary. Staff respond well and extend the speaking skills of toddlers, who are making 'sausage pancakes' from play dough by encouraging them to describe how they might cook the 'sausage pancakes.' Children are enthusiastic when listening to stories read by staff, who ask good questions, such as 'what do you think will happen next?' so that children learn to predict different possible endings. Occasionally staff miss opportunities to 'think aloud' with children in order to enhance their creative and problem-solving skills; for example, by wondering out loud whether there is another way, other than using a measuring tape, to measure their own height or the width of a table. For children who speak English as an additional language, staff monitor and record in detail what they say to precisely identify the next steps in their learning. This means their communication skills are developing very well. Babies enjoy the sensations of making marks with their hands or brushes covered in paint on a table covered over with cling film. Older children are helped to develop their fine motor skills by cutting out paper and writing an invitation card. Staff know the right time to intervene to assist with learning, allowing children to complete activities, such as cutting a shape with scissors by themselves. They enjoy counting the number of children in laminated photographs and matching the total in each to a digit between one and nine. They understand the basics of team work, helping their peers who do not recognise the number five and showing them how to match this number to the appropriate photograph. Toddlers physical skills are developing as they confidently practise throwing a ball to one another. Older children master an obstacle course set up in their enclosed play area. They walk across a wooden beam balanced on low blocks, learning to take risks as they move confidently and tackle challenges.

Staff in the nursery work hard to include all children and they value each child as an individual. Parents are centrally involved in their children's learning. Brief conversations between parents and staff occur when children are dropped off and picked up. However, staff make sure that parents know they can contact them at any time either by telephone or in person. Because of the strong relationships between parents and staff, parents can continue the learning at home and contribute to planning next steps. As a result, children are gaining the skills and attitudes which prepare them well for their next stage of learning, such as moving on to school.

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

The key worker system is very well organised and ensures that all children receive full emotional support throughout the nursery. A key strength of the nursery is the quality of care and of the respect given to all children who attend. For example, members of staff ask children's permission before wiping their noses. Babies' routines are established and

planned in conjunction with parents. Babies and toddlers are given opportunities to sleep and rest, as well as to play and explore new activities indoors and outdoors. Children form close bonds with members of staff and with each other. Staff learn some words of their home language, ensuring children feel safe, and that they and their family's needs are known and understood. Because of the thorough planning by staff, there is a calm atmosphere in the classrooms. The daily routine is well established and children become involved quickly in their favourite activities, depending on the time of day at which they arrive. Children adapt easily when moving as a group, for example, from individual free play to whole group work and when moving on to have lunch together. Children grow in confidence and learn to express their own interests and preferences because staff support them very well as they move from home to the nursery.

Parents provide their own food for their babies. The food is labelled and stored safely, ready to be given to the child in line with their individual routines. Older children are encouraged to bring fruit for snacks to share with their friends. This simple daily routine helps children to learn that snacks can be healthy, food can be shared and to understand that one item can be divided into a number of pieces. Children are invited to set the table for lunch, this practice effectively reinforces their counting skills as they take on small tasks. There is a strong emphasis on the development of good table manners. Children sing a song, which reminds them to say 'please' and 'thank you' before eating. Older children are well mannered and their behaviour is good as the staff have clear expectations and set good examples. Children are supported in keeping themselves and others healthy, by learning to independently tend to their personal needs. They are supervised in the safe use of toilets, encouraged to wash and dry their hands, dress themselves and hang coats on their own pegs.

Older children can discuss the need to eat healthy food and to exercise. They say that blood comes from the heart and that it is important to keep the heart healthy. They also know that it is important to warm up before exercising. Children show their understanding of the need for safety when tackling new challenges outdoors, such as the obstacle course. In addition, they practise the fire drill so they know what to do in an emergency.

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

A significant feature of the organisation of the nursery is that the individual responsibilities of each staff member are clearly understood by all. The nursery runs smoothly and as a result, staff turnover is low and there are very good working relationships between members of staff. One of the owner/managers takes responsibility for office administration and is also involved in staff training. The other and the deputy manager work in collaboration to oversee and deliver the educational programmes each day. Due to the training they have attended, both managers and the deputy manager have a thorough knowledge of their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Keeping children safe and secure is a high priority for them. An electronic intercom system is in operation and visitors, whose identity is checked, must pass through an outer and an inner gate to access the premises. Visitors are informed of the nursery's fire safety, mobile phone and camera policy. Individual

members of staff demonstrate an excellent awareness and understanding of potential harm to children, and are confident in dealing with any potential safeguarding issues or causes for concern. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. The indoor and outdoor areas of the nursery are inspected daily, before the children arrive, and risk assessments are carried out monthly and revised as necessary. This ensures children are well protected and kept safe from harm.

Leaders and managers have very good professional knowledge of the stages of learning and development of young children. They understand very well how to ensure the Montessori approach to planning for the areas of learning, and assessment meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, staff in the nursery use detailed, comprehensive observations of children and records of children's activities to identify the next steps in their learning. The day-to-day manager regularly scrutinises the records staff keep, to identify any gaps in the educational programmes or in the children's learning and fully supports staff in addressing these. The managers and deputy manager oversee the planning of educational programmes through their involvement in weekly planning meetings. New staff are mentored and receive induction training in all of the nursery's policies. The managers and deputy manager deliver weekly in-house training, which includes training on the use of the Montessori-based equipment. Key persons reflect on and record the impact of activities on children's learning, and staff evaluate the success of their approaches together. Staff are encouraged to continue their professional development and several members of the already well qualified staff continue to pursue their own learning. The knowledge gained has resulted in an increased focus on outdoor activities for the younger children. The deputy manager observes teaching and learning activities regularly, providing feedback on the quality and impact of the teacher's actions on children's learning. However, the methods used do not always include observations on the extent to which children find new ways to solve problems. As a result, the monitoring and evaluation is not fully effective in ensuring that staff receive feedback on impact of their teaching methods, on encouraging children's creativity and critical thinking skills.

Partnerships between parents and the nursery are excellent. Parents receive a written summary of the progress check for children aged between two and three years, as well as termly reports. Parents receive a termly newsletter and respond to this through a questionnaire. They comment freely on their high regard for the nursery staff. Their views are used to inform self-evaluation and to make improvements in the nursery, to ensure that children's experiences are of good quality. Relationships with other agencies, such as health professionals and the wider community are well established. This has ensured that appropriate interventions support the learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to ensure their individual needs met. Partnerships with follow-on schools are good and teachers from these schools visit the nursery. These strong links mean that children are supported in their learning now and in the move to follow-on schools in the future.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY309169
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	848976
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	69
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	106
<b>Name of provider</b>	Treetops Montessori Nursery Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	03/06/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01926 888050

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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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