

# Springfield Montessori Nursery

59 Springfield Road, Aughton, ORMSKIRK, Lancashire, L39 6ST

## Inspection date

27/11/2014

Previous inspection date

17/03/2014

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

2

Previous inspection:

3

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

- The quality of teaching is good. Practice is based on a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote children's learning. Staff are interested in children. They share their enthusiasm for learning, which motivates and inspires children.
- Children settle happily at the nursery. They enjoy warm and secure relationships with staff, which helps them to become confident individuals.
- Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how to effectively safeguard children. They plan a safe and enabling play and learning environment that successfully promotes independent learning.
- The provider, managers and staff work effectively together to plan good quality early years experiences for all children. They work together with parents and other agencies to evaluate their service and develop a strong culture of continuous improvement.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Information from parents about what children do at home is not always used to full effect by all staff to support their learning.
- Systems to monitor the progress individual and different groups of children make has not yet been used to analyse key groups of children, such as girls and boys, to enable even more targeted support.

## 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 the nursery playrooms and outdoor areas, including the 'mud kitchen' and the forest area.
- The inspector held meetings with the providers, manager and deputy manager and had discussions with staff.
- The inspector looked at children's work and records and planning documentation.  
The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, including first aid and reviewed the provider's self-evaluation documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and children spoken to on the day and in feedback provided to the nursery.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.

### Inspector

Mary Wignall

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Springfield Montessori Nursery registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register. There has been a Montessori nursery on site since 1985. It operates from a two-storey detached building in Aughton, Ormskirk and is managed by Learning Steps Education Limited. Children have access to five rooms on the ground floor and two rooms on the first floor. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The two company directors are qualified teachers and one is a registered educational psychologist. They both are part of the management team. The nursery employs 31 staff, who work directly with the children. Of whom, 29 hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff has Qualified Teacher Status and one holds Early Years Professional status. Two have a qualification at level 6 and 25 members of staff have a qualification at level 3 or above. The nursery also employs additional staff to cover catering, administration and maintenance. There are currently 161 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 6pm, 51 weeks a year. It provides funded early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

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

- enhance the use of information gained from parents to ensure it is used consistently to support children's learning at home and in the nursery
- extend the use of monitoring systems to analyse the progress of different groups of children, such as boys and girls, in order to be able to identify and address any group falling behind their peers.

## Inspection judgements

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

Teaching across the nursery is strong. Staff have a good understanding of the importance of play and exploration for children's learning and actively encourage their independence and confidence. They plan a wide range of activities covering all areas of learning both indoors and outdoors. Children demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning as they find the activities challenging and interesting and engage in sustained play and thinking. Staff use a range of good teaching techniques across the nursery to promote children's communication skills. For instance, staff caring for babies and young children give good eye contact and talk about what they are doing. Staff caring for older children, ask questions that can be answered in a number of ways. This encourages them to think and express themselves and promotes their communication skills well. Staff are good role

models for children as they show enthusiasm and are calm with children. They nurture children's natural curiosity as they show interest in their ideas and skilfully join in their games to extend their learning and fun.

Staff have a good knowledge of the children, based on regular observations, assessments and discussions with parents. Children's starting points are identified by staff in partnership with parents. Parents are well informed about their child's development. Staff regularly share information about their child's progress and encourage parents to share information about what they do at home. Some information is used well to support children's learning both in the home and in nursery. For example, staff share their knowledge of phonics. They inform parents of the correct sounds to make and direct them to useful websites to help them to continue their child's learning at home. However, some information gained from parents is not always used effectively to support children's learning. The key-person system and the well-established staff team work well together to support children's learning. Planning documentation is on display in each room and used by staff to adapt planned activities for each child. This means that staff have high expectations of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and activities are well matched to their individual needs. Consequently, all children make good progress in their learning given their individual starting points.

Children's physical skills, including those needed for developing their writing skills, are taught well. Babies and young children are encouraged to develop their coordination and control in exciting and enjoyable activities. Babies and young children play with a range of malleable resources, such as conditioning cream, sand, water and dough. Children play busily in the new 'mud kitchens' as they add water to soil from the tap or move soil with spoons and ladles to make imaginary cakes. Staff skilfully extend young children's play as they ask questions, such as 'How are we going to bake it?' Children relish the fun and demonstrate a good understanding of technology as they push buttons on the outdoor play microwave to 'bake' their 'mud cake'. Older children have good opportunities to practise their writing skills. They show motivation as they choose to sit and draw using a wide range of pencils and paper. They spend time rolling and pressing cutters into dough. They demonstrate good dexterity and concentration as they take care to position gingerbread men cutters into the dough that they have just rolled out. Children's communication and literacy skills are taught effectively throughout the nursery. All children enjoy rhymes and songs as staff adapt activities to their interests. For instance, in a small group story and singing session, staff notice that children's interest begins to wane. They ask if the children would like to listen to the story later. They skilfully adapt the activity to a more active action song where children sing rhymes and pretend to be sleeping lions. This effectively engages the children. They are eager to listen and show how they can be like a lion. Older children learn about words and sounds as staff describe the rhyming words in stories. They learn to recognise different sounds and patterns as they sing in a high or low voice and clap out the rhythm on their knees. Games, such as the 'fish game', encourages children to describe what they can see. Staff listen carefully and repeat words that children have found more difficult to say. They sensitively extend the description to extend children's understanding and vocabulary. Staff use a range of good quality resources, including specialist Montessori resources and teaching techniques. Children learn to count, recognise numerals and similarities and differences as they play games with staff. Staff teach children good counting techniques as they count small

figures or toys. They use a number line to help to children recognise different numerals and to show how they can count up or down in simple calculations. The calm and effective teaching engages children and motivates them to want to repeat the game as they enjoy the challenge and sense of achievement as they play. Children enjoy their play and learning and are well prepared for their next stage of learning, both in the nursery and for school.

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

Children enjoy warm relationships with other children and adults in the nursery. Staff work hard to create a friendly, homely environment in which children feel secure and safe. Children readily go to staff for help. For instance, when playing imaginatively in the role play, they tell staff that they cannot find the telephone. Staff support them to find it and play continues with renewed vigour. Children demonstrate a good understanding of responsibility as they know, understand and follow the nursery's routines. For instance, older children readily use the coloured bands to show that they are playing with the specialist Montessori resources or in the role-play area. They confidently explain why they need to wear them, demonstrating a good understanding of the need for rules and boundaries. The key-person system ensures that staff work well with parents to understand children's individual needs. Close team working ensures that all staff follow consistent teaching techniques to support children's developing understanding of appropriate behaviour. For instance, staff use simple gestures and phrases to remind children of acceptable behaviour. Generally, children behave well and are able to resolve any minor disputes over toys. Staff remind children where other resources are placed and that there are more than enough for all of them. Children respond positively as they happily find other resources to play with.

Children have good opportunities to practise their self-care skills. Staff give time for children to dress themselves as they put on coats, waterproofs and boots to play outside. They are calm and empowering as they show children how they can help to push their arm in their coats or hold them steady as they lift their leg to go inside their boots. Children are successfully encouraged to cooperate with their care needs as staff explain what they are doing as they take them to be changed. All children benefit greatly from the well-planned and well-used outdoors play areas. Older children are enjoying using the new forest area. They play actively using binoculars or carrying baskets as they see what leaves they can find. Children demonstrate an awareness of safety and their bodily needs as they play. For instance, a child explains that they are tired before sitting on a tree trunk stool in the enticing den made from twigs and branches. They enjoy the cosy and peaceful atmosphere in the den before going off to explore again. Children are learning to take safe risks in play as they are well supported by staff. Staff stay close by children as they climb slides or forge a way through the soft bushes. They praise children's efforts and encourage them to have a sense of pride in their achievements.

Children learn about healthy living as they experience good quality, locally sourced food in their meals. Meals are seasonal and linked to cultural events, such as thanksgiving, to extend children's understanding of the world. Staff use activities, such as playing in the forest area, to explain what can be eaten or not. For instance, children enjoy looking at a

toadstool with great interest. Effective teaching means that they know not to touch it and that they cannot eat it. Children demonstrate confidence and independence as they happily move resources to where they want to use them. For instance, on finishing reading a book with staff, a child runs to an adjacent room to bring back the book that they want to read next. Staff plan activities for children to visit and meet children in other parts of the nursery. This helps children to feel secure and creates a positive community environment within the nursery. Children's transitions in the nursery and to school are carefully planned to help ensure that they and their parents are prepared and understand the move.

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

The provision, managers and staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. High priority is given to safeguarding training throughout the nursery. Staff have a good safeguarding knowledge and know what to do if they had any concerns about a child's welfare. Policies, including a flow chart of the nursery's safeguarding procedures are readily available for staff to refer to in each room. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust. Clear information is held about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting procedures are completed, including a Disclosure and Barring Service check. Staffing ratios are exceeded and the majority of staff have current first-aid training. This helps to ensure that children are cared for effectively at all times. Comprehensive risk assessments are conducted and reviewed. For instance, safety in the recently reorganised outdoor areas, has been carefully considered. Staff use two-way radios to ensure that they can easily communicate with other staff to further increase safety. The provider monitors the numbers of children attending the nursery and maintains clear and easily accessible records for the safety of children and staff. Staff ensure that daily registers of children's attendance are maintained and used to manage their safety both in the nursery and on outings.

The provider has a good overview of the progress children are making through use of a unique tracking and monitoring system, which they have developed. The system allows for the progress of individual and some different groups of children to be closely monitored. The system analyses children's progress in different areas of learning. It is also used to monitor the accuracy of staff assessment of children's progress. It is also used to identify any emerging gaps in children's learning. This enables staff to plan targeted support to help ensure that any gaps in children's learning are quickly analysed and addressed. The system is currently being used to analyse the progress of individual and groups of children on each day of the week that they attend. This is used effectively by managers and staff to reflect on their practice and adapt plans according to their findings for each day of the week. The system is yet to be used to analyse different groups of children, such as girls and boys, to enable an even closer analysis and more targeted support for other key groups of children. The provider monitors staff performance through regular supervision and appraisals and encourages staff to share and try new ideas. They have a clear commitment to the continuing professional development of staff and have a carefully considered plan of training to further develop quality. For instance, all staff have recently attended safeguarding training. Also, key groups of staff have had further training on

either Montessori teaching techniques or good practice in the care of babies. Staff share their expertise to maximise their impact on children's learning. For instance, the use of the new forest area is being developed by staff with specific training in this type of play and learning.

The provider's vision for high quality and continual improvement is evident in the many changes that they have made since their registration. For instance, the improvements to the outdoor area have greatly enhanced children's use of the space. Plans for further development are well targeted and recorded in their development plan. Actions and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been effectively addressed.

Partnership with parents and others are valued. Parents' views are sought in a variety of ways, including the increased use of electronic communication systems as well as ongoing verbal and written daily feedback. The provision actively seeks partnerships with local and national agencies to help evaluate their practice. The nursery is currently working with the local authority to achieve their quality award. They have successfully completed stage 1 and 2 and are currently completing stage 3. They liaise closely with parents and relevant agencies to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully supported. This enables them to make the most of their learning opportunities. As a result, children benefit from a consistent approach that meets their unique needs. Local partnerships have a positive impact on children's outcomes. For instance, the locally sourced food builds connections with local farms and shops and the nursery play is held in the village hall. Also, positive links with local nursing homes means that children meet local residents as they visit them, so they can read stories to them. This builds on the homely atmosphere and creates a community focus in the nursery, which contributes to the good progress children are making.

## 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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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>	EY466054
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	973440
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	97
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	161
<b>Name of provider</b>	Learning Steps Education Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17/03/2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01695 423367

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

