

# Albany Montessori School

Sea Cadet Hall, Westminster Lodge, Holywell Hill, ST. ALBANS, Hertfordshire, AL1 2DJ



<b>Inspection date</b>	7 February 2017
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is outstanding

- Staff have built exceptionally strong partnerships with parents. They value parents' roles in their children's learning. Staff regularly consult with them and they are always kept fully informed about their children's progress. They provide ideas for parents to use at home to help support their children's progress.
- Children have built very close bonds with their key person. They thrive in the staff's care and greet them with enthusiasm on arrival. Children are very happy and feel safe at the school. Staff give comfort to children when they need reassurance. They help children to grow in confidence and develop their self-esteem.
- Managers at the school are very passionate about their work with children and motivate the staff towards excellence. Staff work closely in a team to implement any ongoing quality improvements that are identified during evaluation of their practice. The important views of parents and children are actively sought and their ideas are valued and taken into account.
- Staff provide a wide range of activities that is highly challenging. Children learn about the world and eagerly share their knowledge. They talk about the atmosphere, air and oxygen. Children have extensive knowledge of the planets in our solar system and enjoy answering questions about what they know.
- Staff build on their excellent knowledge and combine their expertise with the Montessori method of education. Children fully engage in their choice of activities. Staff take account of their individual needs, building successfully on their knowledge.
- Children have excellent opportunities for exercise and fresh air. They eagerly participate in an exceptional range of games and activities outside. Children count the number of times they skilfully manage to hit a ball with a bat. They spontaneously ask to water the plants and they talk about what plants need in order to grow.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to enhance the arrangements for comparing the progress children make, in order to make sure that all groups of children continue to receive the highly tailored support needed to maintain their excellent progress.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

### Inspector

Michelle Baldock

## Inspection findings

### **Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The manager and the dedicated staff team have an excellent knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff know who to contact in their local authority to pass on any such concerns. Management places safeguarding at the heart of the school's practice. They have regular meetings to discuss any concerns and staff update their training each year. The manager has embedded a highly effective system of observation and supervision for all staff. Together they identify training that enhances their skills and knowledge even further. Excellent practice is shared between the staff and they frequently evaluate the overall quality of teaching. Assessments of children's learning and development are regularly reviewed. This ensures any gaps in learning are rapidly identified and targeted support is implemented. The management team recognises the importance of continuing to build on the arrangements for comparing the progress made by groups of children, in order to maintain the excellent progress they already make.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding**

Staff have very high expectations of what children can achieve. They encourage children to extend their early writing skills. For example, they use wooden letters to spell out the names of animals. Staff support children to blend the sounds that letters represent to help them form words. Detailed and precise observations of children, along with assessments of progress, enable staff to monitor, clearly identify and plan for their next steps in learning. Children concentrate hard when completing highly challenging puzzles. Staff explain why it is helpful to find all the edge pieces first and support children to do this. Children enjoy singing their favourite songs, when they count backwards from five to one.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding**

Children behave exceptionally well. They have successfully learnt the skills of negotiating and sharing toys between themselves. Children learn about each other's similarities and differences in a very positive way because of the school's inclusive practice. They take part in Mandarin and French lessons each week and listen to music from around the world. Children are extremely confident and happily talk about what they are doing. They rapidly learn independence skills and delight in putting on their own slippers and finding their own name on the magnetic whiteboard to register themselves on arrival. When music indicates it's tidy up time, children put away the toys without being prompted by staff. Children treat each other with respect and during circle time they patiently wait their turn and listen carefully to their friend's views.

### **Outcomes for children are outstanding**

Children are very eager to learn. They make rapid progress from their individual starting points. Children are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage in learning and for their move on to school. They enjoy creating their own shaped train track and work out where to place each piece to ensure it connects together. Children enjoy searching outside for bugs and insects. They delight when they find them, ticking them off on their sheet and skilfully writing the name of each one.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY490518
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	1017778
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	34
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	48
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Good Way To Spend The Day Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP534681
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	07432 669751

Albany Montessori School was registered in 2015. The school employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including one with qualified teacher status. The school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3.15pm, apart from on Thursday when sessions are from 8.30am until 12.15pm. The school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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