

Inspection of Little Steps Montessori Nursery School

The Ken Hogan Pavilion, Berrydown Sports Ground, London Road, Overton,
BASINGSTOKE, Hampshire RG25 3BT

Inspection date: 21 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The nursery is extremely welcoming and children are very eager to attend. They are exceptionally motivated to learn. Staff teaching is of an outstanding standard. Interactions are purposeful and contribute positively to the progress children make. Staff make secure observations of children's achievements and tailor children's next steps to support their emerging interests and future skills. Staff share these assessments regularly with parents. Children thrive in all aspects of their learning.

Children feel safe and secure. They have extremely warm bonds with staff and make friends easily. They are exceptionally polite, respectful and demonstrate excellent behaviour. Children are mindful of their feelings and those of their friends. They actively promote inclusion. For instance, as a small group of children make a den together, they call to friends to 'come and play with us'.

Children have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They confidently articulate what they already know. This is demonstrated during an activity to determine if items sink or float. Children take it in turns to choose an item from the tray. They are very confident in their abilities and not put off by their friends' guesses. They make independent decisions as they place resources, such as a pen, paper clip, ball, cotton reel, candle, lids and other items, into the water. They warmly tell their friends, 'I was right,' as they work out that an item being heavy may mean it will sink.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager is highly conscientious and has an ambitious vision of how the setting continues to provide an exceptional quality of care. Staff have very high expectations for children. They ensure that all children, including those in receipt of funding and those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are provided with the experiences that help them reach their potential.
- Staff provide children with an abundance of high-quality, exciting and challenging experiences that help them to be active learners. Staff implement the early years foundation stage curriculum alongside Montessori teaching extremely well. Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of what children already know and can do. Their precise, targeted planning means that children are provided with the skills they need to succeed in life.
- The learning curriculum is embedded securely. Children are incredibly willing to find out more and are motivated to take part in the activities. For example, eager and enthusiastic children talk about their project for 'science'. A child explains how they have practised making different shades of a colour. They know if a little black paint is added the colour gets darker, but if white is added it gets lighter. Other children discuss what they have learned about magnets

during their experiments. They know that metals are attracted to magnets but that other things, such as plastic or wood, are not.

- Children demonstrate high levels of concentration and enjoyment in their learning. Staff encourage most-able children in developing their exceptionally good early reading skills. They help younger children understand the importance of finding the edge or straight pieces when completing puzzles so that they can achieve for themselves. Children enthusiastically respond, 'I did it,' taking pride in their achievements.
- Staff successfully help children learn about the world. For instance, children are incredibly interested as they look inside a box with memorabilia of Mexico. Children are in delight as they learn more about cultural dress and food, people and creatures who live there, and look at postcards and maps.
- Children make rapid progress in their language and literacy skills. They are highly enthusiastic during group singing, particularly for favourite songs, which enhances and extends their speech incredibly well. Children are mesmerised and highly attentive during story times. They listen attentively and are confident to comment, for example, to demonstrate they understand the context of the story.
- Staff supervise children extremely well, and encourage their awareness of risk management relative to their ages. This is illustrated in the construction play area, where staff help children practise hammering in nails with tools. Children wear personal protection equipment, such as gloves and face masks. Staff help children to understand the benefits of healthy lifestyles. Children thoroughly enjoy physical play outdoors and take responsibility for hanging up their coats and putting away their boots, when returning back inside. Children are highly independent at mealtimes. They set the tables, pour drinks, socialise with friends by chatting and showing interest to each other, and wash up afterwards.
- Parents are extremely positive about the care children receive. They state that staff are 'amazing'. They add that staff offer ideas about how to adapt activities at home. Parents explain that their children socialise really well and that children love attending.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff use and adhere to the robust risk assessments, policies and procedures that effectively promote children's health, safety and well-being. They are extremely proactive in helping children gain awareness of their own safety. For example, staff teach children the correct ways to hold and use scissors so that they are capable to do this independently. Recruitment procedures are secure. Staff are provided with regular opportunities to refresh their knowledge of how to safeguard children. They confidently demonstrate their understanding of all safeguarding matters and legislation. This includes their understanding of the 'Prevent' duty. Staff are competent in the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child in their care.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY458183
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10128631
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	13
Name of registered person	Sampson, Brenda Anne
Registered person unique reference number	RP513927
Telephone number	07786294574
Date of previous inspection	7 October 2015

Information about this early years setting

Little Steps Montessori Nursery School registered in 2013. The nursery operates from The Ken Hogan Pavilion in Overton, Hampshire. It is open from 8.30am to 4pm each weekday during term time. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The nursery follows the Montessori philosophy approach. There are four staff who work with children. Of these, one is qualified at level 6, two staff are Montessori trained at level 4 and one staff member holds a recognised qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Aileen Finan

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interactions with children indoors and outdoors.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation. They discussed how staff plan for children's learning and how staff are supported in updating their skills and knowledge.
- The inspector sampled relevant documentation during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with children, parents and staff.
- The inspector met with the manager. They spoke about how staff evaluate the quality of the provision and children's learning.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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