

Inspection of The Little House

The Cobbles, Lower Peover WA16 9PZ

Inspection date: 21 January 2020

| Overall effectiveness | Outstanding |
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| 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 children are exceptionally independent and confident. They have beautiful manners. They greet the staff with a handshake on arrival and always remember to thank their friends for their help throughout the day. The children are very happy and relish the opportunities they are provided with. They concentrate and work cooperatively in small groups and by themselves for considerable periods of time. Conversations between staff and children are respectful and full of purpose.

The Montessori ethos of the nursery runs through everything the staff and children do. The staff use a very clear curriculum, which is designed to carefully build on what children know and can do. Staff understand how their teaching and children's learning is clearly sequenced so it builds on children's prior knowledge and consolidates their understanding. They use a range of Montessori activities which teach concepts. For example, number rods support children to develop a concrete understanding of numbers and quantity. Children move on to link this to the numerals that represent numbers.

The way the classroom is organised and staff's style of teaching instils in children a sense of order and respect for each other. This helps children remain safe while developing their independence. Children understand that equipment should be returned to where it is kept and left ready for the next person.

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

- The owner, who also manages the setting, is passionate about her work. She has a very experienced and well-qualified team of staff who have worked with her for a long time and share the same philosophy. One staff member told the inspector, 'It's not a job; it's a vocation'. They aim to send children on to the next stage in their education as independent, confident individuals who are kind and caring to those around them.
- Staff have an expectation that very young children can do things for themselves and they are very capable. Children carefully use pottery mugs and cut their own fruit for snack time. They understand that they need to be careful, and staff teach them how to keep themselves and others safe. Children push the chairs under the tables, so others do not trip, and turn away and cover their mouth when they cough. They use their reading skills to recognise their own name found in their identical coats. Older children help their younger friends by reading their names for them.
- The well-resourced classroom has activities which are designed to support particular aspects of children's learning. These are attractively organised on open shelves and accessible cupboards which allow children to select activities for themselves. When they have finished their activity or 'their work', they

carefully put the equipment away, sometimes with the help of a friend when the equipment is larger. They treat the equipment and each other with respect. The atmosphere is extremely calm.

- Staff know the children well and use clear assessments to ensure they identify what children need to learn next in the Montessori curriculum. Children are very articulate, and they have meaningful conversations with their friends and the staff members. Staff introduce children to new words and make sure they have a secure understanding of what the words mean. For example, activities introduce children to the parts of a bird or the names of parts of a house. More complex information is introduced to the more able children. Children demonstrate an excellent recall of the information they have recently learned. For example, they recognise and name a wide range of birds and remember facts about them.
- A large number of parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector. They strongly and compellingly explained why this setting is, in their view, outstanding and has been a wonderful place for their children to start their education. They believe the nursery has been key in the strong development of their child's independence, manners and confidence. They describe their children as flourishing academically in this 'magical place'. Their children are eager to learn with the 'incredibly knowledgeable, professional and caring staff team'.
- Children are introduced to a rich set of experiences. The staff draw on the skills of parents and past, now adult, pupils to develop children's understanding of cultures and professions. For example, children learn about Santa Lucia from a Swedish parent, and explore traditional Ethiopian dress with another. Staff reinforce the importance of British cultural events and make strong links with the local community. They grow their own vegetables and talk with a local farmer about his bigger harvest.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety and well-being are given the highest priority. Staff are exceptionally vigilant and deploy themselves well, to make sure every child is properly supervised. They teach children how to manage small risks for themselves as part of developing their independence. Staff have a good awareness and a thorough understanding of child protection procedures through relevant training and links to child protection charities. They have a secure understanding of the risks of radicalisation and how to make a referral if they are concerned about a child.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 305376 |
| Local authority | Cheshire East |
| Inspection number | 10129240 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 14 |
| Number of children on roll | 31 |
| Name of registered person | Lake, Susan Elizabeth |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP512842 |
| Telephone number | 01565 722917 |
| Date of previous inspection | 17 March 2016 |

Information about this early years setting

The Little House registered in 1993. It follows the Montessori educational philosophy. It opens term time only from 9.30am to 4pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. On Wednesday and Friday, it opens 9.30am to 12.30pm. A summer school operates for eight days during the main holidays, for children aged up to eight years. There are four members of staff, including the manager working directly with children. Of these, two have qualified teacher status and two hold a qualification at level 3. Three of these staff hold a formal Montessori qualification as well.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Rhodes

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outside. She assessed the impact these activities had on children's learning.
- Staff and children were spoken to by the inspector during the inspection.
- The nursery manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an adult-led learning activity. They discussed how the teaching observed extended children's understanding of the world and their vocabulary.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- A number of parents and grandparents spoke to the inspector both individually and in small groups during the inspection. Written feedback from a large number of parents, not present on the day, was also read by the inspector. She took account of all their views.

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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