

Inspection of Leavesden Montessori House

187 Leavesden Road, WATFORD WD24 5EL

Inspection date: 1 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy the time they spend in this calm, nurturing environment. They are greeted warmly by staff who swiftly engage them in meaningful conversations. For example, some children have returned from holidays abroad. Staff encourage them to talk about their experiences of different countries. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. They form close bonds with staff, rushing into their arms when they arrive, and cuddling up to them for stories during the day.

Children demonstrate high levels of confidence. They show great determination when exploring the challenging activities, which staff skilfully organise. For example, children choose to arrange flowers into vases. They demonstrate great skill when using scissors to cut the stems, and when pouring water from crockery jugs into glass vases. Children are highly sociable. They engage well with visitors, welcoming them into their play and conversations.

Children of all ages are highly independent. Young children are confident at putting on their coats and shoes. They clear away their own cutlery and crockery after meals and snacks. Older children lay the table at mealtimes and demonstrate great skill in using cutlery correctly. Children leave the setting well prepared for the routines of school.

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

- Children are considerate and keen to take on age-appropriate responsibilities. For example, they are eager to help staff sweep up after meals and snacks. Children demonstrate great kindness and are swift to identify when others need help. For example, when their friend drops a pot of pencils, children rush to help in picking them up.
- Children's transitions through the nursery are well supported. They spend increasingly longer periods in their new environment. For example, initially children join their older friends for lunch. Staff encourage them to engage in conversations and to get to know their new friends. This supports children in their new routines before they move permanently.
- Children behave well in the nursery. Staff explain behaviour expectations before activities. They encourage children to explore the impact their behaviour may have on others. For example, children are making firework pictures. Staff remind children that they must share the paints so that everyone can have a chance to use their favourite colours.
- Parents speak highly of the manager and staff. They value the calm and nurturing environment they provide, and comment on how this supports children to settle well at the nursery. Parents greatly appreciate the social events the

nursery plans, such as picnics in the local park. They comment on how these opportunities help to create a close and supportive community among families.

- Children's communication skills are well supported throughout the nursery. Staff engage children in high-quality discussions during one-to-one learning sessions and group activities. They model new vocabulary and introduce descriptive language at every opportunity.
- Staff provide exciting learning opportunities based on children's interests and past learning experiences. For example, children have been reading the story 'Handa's Surprise'. They have previously discussed the various fruits in the story and are curious to learn more about watermelons. Staff are swift to embrace children's curiosity. They purchase a watermelon and encourage children to explore the colours, textures and taste.
- The manager works hard to establish effective methods of communication with families. Parents attend regular consultation meetings to gather information about children's progress. Details about children's daily routines are shared via an online system. During the COVID-19 lockdown, the manager and staff maintained close contact with families. Staff provided ideas on how to continue children's learning at home, and took part in regular online story sessions.
- Staff have good knowledge of children's abilities. They complete robust assessments against both the Montessori curriculum and the early years foundation stage. However, when staff identify that children may require additional support, the manager does not always act swiftly on these concerns. Opportunities to maximise children's learning are occasionally missed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have robust knowledge of the signs and symptoms that may indicate children are at risk of harm. They have a good understanding of how to report concerns to the relevant authority, and the need to do so in a timely manner. The manager has clear procedures in place to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff complete regular safeguarding and first-aid training in line with local authority guidelines. This ensures their knowledge remains up to date with changes in legislation.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure the manager acts swiftly when addressing concerns about children's development, to allow all children the opportunity to achieve the best possible learning outcomes.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY458830
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10236085
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 at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Greenacres Montessori Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903811
Telephone number	01923801331
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

Leavesden Montessori House registered in 2013. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm, during term time. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to several during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and manager completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of several children.

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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