

Inspection of Little Seeds Montessori

Baptist Church, High Street, Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead HP3 0HG

Inspection date:

25 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are happy and highly engaged in this calm and enticing pre-school. They benefit from exceptional quality interactions with staff. Children show that they feel safe and secure as they immerse themselves in activities. For example, children show high levels of fascination and intrigue as they learn about the solar system. Staff ask them thought-provoking questions to develop children's thinking skills, such as, 'What would happen if you lived on the sun?' Children have a wide range of resources to choose from. They show high levels of respect and care for their pre-school and the resources they use. Staff expertly break down instructions so that children have a level of challenge that is matched precisely to their stage of development. For example, children learn to find a cleaning cloth and spray bottle to wipe away their mess. They then dry the table after it is clean. Older children show how well they have learned these routines as they carry out these tasks independently.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are beautifully guided by the kind and caring staff who help children regulate their behaviour, share and take turns. Children act with integrity. For example, without being asked, children pick up other's water bottles that fall off the table and return them to their owners. Children automatically say 'thank you' in response.

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

- The manager implements a sequential curriculum, tailored to children's individual needs and development. Staff understand and implement the Montessori approach well. The activities and resources complement and support the early years foundation stage, providing experiences and learning through all areas of learning. Staff have in-depth knowledge and understanding of the children they care for. As a result, children make outstanding progress with this progressive curriculum.
- Parents recognise the impact this pre-school has on their children's developmental progress. They say their children's 'gross motor skills have come on leaps and bounds' and they now have 'huge confidence' when using challenging equipment at the park. The key-worker system is highly effective in ensuring that parents are kept informed of their children's learning, developmental next steps and daily routines.
- Partnerships are effective in ensuring children's progress is monitored holistically. Staff share regular assessments of children's development with parents. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has formed positive working relationships with external agencies and the local authority SENCo. As a result, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make continued positive progress.

- Children are confident to express themselves and use their wide vocabulary to do so. Staff constantly expose children to new words as they play and explore books. For example, as they turn the pages of a book about the human body, staff explain that 'lungs fill up when you breathe' and 'blood travels around the body'. Children develop a love for books, which they independently access and share with friends. When children are tired, they snuggle into comfy chairs in the 'peace corner' and look through books.
- Mathematics is taught in an exemplary way. Staff explain that children learn simple mathematical concepts through concrete experiences, such as making models. Children are then supported to learn abstract concepts, such as large quantities. For example, children demonstrate excellent number knowledge as they talk about the number of tens, hundreds and thousands they have as they role play 'banks' with staff.
- Children have regular opportunities to learn and practise physical skills. For example, when hungry, children use knives to skilfully chop up fruit and vegetables to eat. Once finished, they wash up their plates and cutlery. Outdoors, they engage in play that supports their gross motor skills, such as weaving between obstacles when riding on bikes and scooters. Children enjoy mark making as they use chalks and paints to draw large pictures. As a result, children develop excellent physical control and coordination.
- The manager's passion for providing high-quality care and education is infectious. Her calm and gentle nature is reflected through the staff's practice. This creates a highly effective team, where staff report positive well-being and satisfaction in their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff attend training to keep themselves up to date with procedures to protect children. They have secure knowledge on how to identify and report any safeguarding concerns they may. This includes wider safeguarding issues such as child exploitation. Staff consistently promote rules that keep children safe. As a result, children show visible understanding of how to use equipment safely. These experiences teach children about measuring and managing risk. Staff complete regular training to ensure they remain suitable for their roles such as first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene training. Staff are vigilant to ensure the premises and spaces children access are risk assessed and checked daily to remain safe and secure.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2617561
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10285484
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	De Mink, Angie
Registered person unique reference number	2617562
Telephone number	07955691721
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Seeds Montessori registered in 2021. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, five of which hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two who have early years qualifications at level 6. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 8am until 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachael Small

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provision.
- The manager, who is also the provider, took the inspector on a learning walk to discuss all areas of the provision and explained their early years curriculum.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a mathematical activity with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings as appropriate with the manager and staff. She spoke with children during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of their views of the provision.
- Examples of relevant documents were sampled and reviewed by the inspector. She checked evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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