

Inspection of The Little Learners Montessori Watford

62-68 Merton Road, Watford, Hertfordshire WD18 0WL

Inspection date: 22 July 2024

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

Staff create an environment that is exciting for children. They use children's interests to create a curriculum that ensures every child has a good start to their education. Children spend long periods of time immersed in their learning. Children are happy at the nursery and have developed positive relationships with staff. The youngest children demonstrate this through their close contact with staff as they settle into their day. Babies explore sand while sitting on a staff member's lap, before sliding off to feel the sand with their hands and feet.

In the garden area, staff provide activities that enable children to build on their physical development. The youngest babies crawl through tunnels, using them to pull themselves up to stand, while older children confidently use a larger climbing frame. The garden area allows for all children to explore together regardless of their age. This enables staff to spend time with all children and build relationships with them, which supports children's transitions when they move rooms.

Across the nursery, children behave well and are kind to each other. Staff support children to share resources from a young age and are quick to intervene when disputes occur. Staff talk to children in a calm, kind manner, modelling how to behave and setting a good example for children to follow.

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

- The staff regularly assess children's development and observe their interests. This enables them to create activities that build on the knowledge and skills children already have. Staff are skilled at creating experiences that encourage children to be curious learners and support them well during activities. Sometimes, staff's interactions are not always of the highest quality so that children benefit from really rich experiences that challenge and extend their learning.
- Children make good progress in their communication and language across the nursery. Staff talk to children throughout the day. They ask questions and give children time to reply. This helps children to develop the art of conversation and their thinking skills. In the baby room, staff narrate as children play, exposing them to a wide range of vocabulary.
- Babies thrive in the nurturing environment created by staff. The environment is calm, and children are able to explore at their own pace. Across the nursery, staff teach children the skills they need for the next steps in their learning. For example, toddlers learn to use scoops to decant ingredients between pots and bowls. This helps them to be ready to feed themselves independently in the pre-school room.
- Staff support children's independence from a young age. In the baby room,

children learn to squeeze their nose as they blow and wipe it by themselves. As they get older, children learn to scrape their own plates and put their own rubbish in the bin.

- Staff work closely with feeder schools for those children leaving for school. Staff share information with teachers and encourage them to visit the setting to meet the children. As a result, children transition between settings easily.
- Staff help children to develop their early mathematical skills. From a young age, staff expose children to numbers and colours. For example, staff encourage toddlers to choose the correct colour from a group of coloured scarves. In the pre-school room, children play independently on the floor lining up blocks. They correctly match the right numeral to the right line.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the nursery. They talk of how happy their children are when they arrive at the nursery. Parents of the oldest children discuss the progress their children make in their learning as staff help them to be ready to go to school. Parents talk about the close working partnerships they have with staff at the nursery.
- Staff speak very highly of the manager and leadership team. They feel very well supported in their day-to-day practice. Staff comment on the support they receive to progress in their own qualifications. Supervision meetings are used effectively to build on their practice. The manager and leadership team are highly ambitious for the curriculum and the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to support staff to build on the quality of their interactions so that children benefit from really rich experiences that challenge and extend their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY540707
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10351796
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 at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	90
Number of children on roll	120
Name of registered person	Little Learners Montessori Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP531748
Telephone number	01923 804488
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Little Learners Montessori Watford registered in 2016. The nursery employs 31 members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, 10 hold qualifications at level 3, four hold qualifications at level 4, three hold qualifications at level 6 and one has qualified teacher status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks a year, excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lisa Smith

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 director, deputy manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all the areas of the nursery and discussed their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of a group activities with the director and deputy manager.
- The inspector looked at reviews and spoke to the parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of suitability of the whole staff team.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the director and deputy manager about the leadership and management of the nursery.

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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