

Privett Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Privett Montessori Nursery School was founded in 1988. It opened under new ownership in 2003. The setting is situated on the fringes of the village in a large hall with a secure outdoor area. Children who attend the provision come from a wide area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 26 children in the early years age range, at any one time. There are currently 24 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. There is an enclosed outside play area. The nursery opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:15am until 12:15pm, and 12:30pm until 3:15pm. An Early Bird session runs from 8:45am until 9:15am each morning and a lunch club from the end of the morning session until 1:15pm. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery offers Yoga and French once a week.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. There are four staff who work with the children. The head teacher has a teaching qualification and is attending weekly sessions at another Montessori setting with other Montessori teachers for professional development. Two other members of staff have appropriate childcare qualifications. The nursery is run in accordance with Montessori principles.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's developmental and welfare needs are well met by staff who are enthusiastic and wholly committed to providing the highest level of provision to support children's care and learning. Consequently, children enjoy their time in the group and make excellent progress in their learning. Children play a dynamic role in their learning and wherever possible, offer their ideas and respond to challenges with great enthusiasm. They show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. The partnerships with parents and carers are purposeful and extremely effective in providing continuity of care for the children. Regular self-evaluation by the provider, staff, parents, carers and the children ensure that priorities for development are identified and acted on, resulting in provision that responds well to all user needs. Consequently, the nursery has capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensure the hall used by children is maintained at a temperature which ensures the comfort of the children and staff.
- continue systems of self evaluation within the nursery to identify and maintain continuous improvement

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit from the efficient organisation of the setting and the effective deployment of experienced staff. All necessary records are kept accurately and staff implement a wide range of relevant policies and procedures. A detailed risk assessment is made for the premises and for outings and children are protected by the robust procedures for ensuring that all adults are suitable to work with them. Staff have a very good understanding of child protection issues, which also helps them to safeguard children.

The leadership of the nursery is outstanding, the overall emphasis being via the Montessori principles, thus ensuring that the children are provided with a well planned curriculum covering the six areas of learning that engages them well, and results in them making excellent progress in their learning and development. The premises are organised effectively to provide plenty of clear floor space in the hall. A wide and varied range of resources, including traditional Montessori equipment, are easily accessible to children to allow them to select them independently. There are effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. The staff have a secure knowledge of the Montessori approach and the links with the Early Years Foundation Stage. The staff work exceptionally well as a team, understand their role and responsibilities, know the children well and enjoy good relationships with them. Staff are well supported to attend ongoing training to increase their knowledge and skills.

The setting is prepared before the children arrive and includes a comprehensive range of activities across all the areas of learning. Children follow familiar routines, such as circle time, outdoor play, snack and lunch time. Staff support children to develop at their own individual pace and encourage free choice. Each child has their own individual learning record, regular written informal and formal observations, photographs and pieces of work which parents are welcome to share.

Most of the previous recommendations have been suitably acted upon since the last inspection, improving outcomes for children. However, the inadequate heating in the hall remains an issue as it is very cold in the winter months.

Staff seek feedback from parents and children about the provision. Responses to questionnaires and letters from parents reflect their high regard for the care and education their children receive, and how they value the effective partnerships they have with the staff. Parents receive clear information about the setting and activities the children participate in and parents contribute to their children's achievement records with comments. The staff support children's transition to school by visiting the school in the locality or beyond that children will be attending

to share and discuss their progress. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure the early identification of any special educational needs and/or disabilities children may have. This enables the provision of appropriate support and advice when necessary and develops very effective partnerships with parents and others, to the benefit of the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The setting provides children with a nurturing environment where they gain a sense of belonging by learning in their own individual way, whilst being invited to participate in all areas of the nursery. They have their own space and are encouraged to respect and to be respected. Children are happy to attend this setting and enjoy learning in a safe and caring environment. They are provided with every opportunity to make their own decisions about learning and this enables them to follow their own interests. The setting provides a well organised range of activities covering the six areas of learning, ensuring that it is adaptable for children of different ages, allowing them to develop. With the large space inside the hall children are able to play individually, side by side or in a group. Alongside the wide free choice during the sessions staff also encourage children to explore and develop their own suggestions for play, which staff endeavour to provide resources to enhance their ideas.

Staff maintain detailed records of children's achievements which are recorded in their learning journals. These records are used to identify next steps in their learning for individual children and are also used effectively to guide planning. The curriculum provided creates an atmosphere of excitement and enthusiasm among the children as they quickly make their choice of activity. An enriched programme of activities encourage children to grow in confidence. Staff are skilled at engaging children in discussion to aid their learning and development through asking questions to challenge their thinking, as was seen in the coloured fish memory game, where a staff member encouraged children to identify healthy foods on a board and children used their memory recall to find a corresponding coloured fish of theirs. Staff are accomplished at knowing when to interact as children are offered lots of questions and supported as and when they need to be. For example, a young child was fascinated how a small magnetic frog could move around on top of a piece of card by moving a magnet underneath. In addition, their ability to adapt practice in order to take account of children with specific needs is good as they are flexible and inclusive, ensuring all children progress at their pace and ability. Planning takes account of their individual needs and as a result, children are developing at their pace, with activities that are fun and that maintain and extend their learning.

Montessori materials are rich in mathematical language, fine and gross motor skills at which children excel. For example, children enjoy building and grading the coloured cylinders, improving the children's concept of size. They use a computer with competence, negotiating programmes which help them to consolidate learning, such as colours and shapes. Children use a toaster to toast their bread and they confidently use knives to butter their toast. Resources are provided

according to children's interests whilst small groups encourage turn taking and social development. Children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and are becoming confident and enthusiastic learners. Children explore and flow comfortably and confidently during the sessions. They are developing good communication skills as they practise saying sounds and chat to their peers and to adults. They show growing confidence as they quickly join in circle time songs and make musical patterns with individual sets of claves. Creativity flourishes as children use a wide variety of media to create from their own imagination, such as three dimensional models and paintings painted with powder paints which the children learn to mix together to make other colours.

The children show they feel safe as they move around confidently, both inside and out. Children are very well-behaved and know what is expected of them because boundaries are consistently and kindly applied by staff. Children really enjoy coming together and listening to a story. They enjoy using a food processor, changing the speed from fast to slow to make muffins, warming them up in a microwave and cutting them open, seeing the chocolate piece inside has melted. Children visit the local bluebell woods and have professionals visit the setting such as the police and fire brigade. They show concern for others and take part in various activities to raise money for charity. Photos show children planting daffodils in their painted marble ink pots in the Autumn, nurturing them through the winter. The children sell their daffodils to raise money for a cancer charity. Children also participate in Red Nose Day, they sell biscuits they have made and sit down to a Red Nose day breakfast consisting of croissants, toast, brioche and hot chocolate drinks.

Children and staff sit in small groups for meal times, creating an atmosphere in which social skills and good manners are very well promoted, such as washing up their own cups and crockery when they have finished with them. Children's physical skills are nurtured. Children dance to volcano music and make volcanoes with bicarbonate of soda and fairy liquid. They draw pictures of a volcano erupting whilst listening to music that they dance to. Children are developing an extremely good appreciation of a healthy lifestyle and enjoy playing in the fresh air. They learn about bones and being healthy. Children enjoy the use of a woodland play area with a view of green fields and trees. Equipment in the garden enables children to exercise and have lots of fun, a lot of equipment is dual purpose and all is age-appropriate. Children enjoy riding on scooters and trikes. They try to scoop up a large amount of snow in a sit and ride digger. Children grow vegetables and plants and staff plan indoor activities to challenge children's physical development. Children have an excellent time at the nursery due to the staff's warm manner and continual positive approach to learning.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met