



Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board

School Accreditation

This report is prepared following two accreditation visits made on behalf of the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board. It considers how far the school follows the criteria set out in “The Guide to the EYFS in Montessori Settings” (2008) and subsequent 2012 revisions. The second visit sought to assess the progress made on the recommendations set out in the report from the first visit.

The report does not address the standards and quality issues which are the responsibility of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) which reports separately. Also the report does not provide any assessment of financial aspects of the school.

Tigglets Montessori

Cron dall Scout Centre, Pankridge Street, Cron dall, Farnham, Surrey GU10 5RQ

Date of first re-accreditation visit: 10 May 2012

Date of second re-accreditation visit: 25 January 2013

Date of previous MEAB accreditation: 2 April 2009

This accreditation report relates to the provision for children aged 2 to 5 years old.

Description of the school

Tigglets Montessori Nursery School is privately owned. It is situated in a rural setting with access to the countryside. It opened in 2001, and operates from a large scout centre. The nursery uses two large rooms; there is also a small kitchen and toilet facilities. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time.

There are currently 44 on roll; 21 children were present on the day of the second accreditation visit. Children may attend for mornings or afternoon sessions or for the full day. The nursery is open five days a week from 09.15 to 15.30 Monday to Thursday and Friday 09.15 to 12.30 during term time. An optional lunch club is available Monday to Thursday. Those attending bring in packed lunches. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area and a large field adjacent to the school.

The setting supports children with educational special needs and English as an additional language.

Six members of the team hold an International Montessori Early Childhood Diploma, and one is currently studying for this qualification.



Summary and conclusion

The well qualified team at Tigglets Montessori is committed to delivering care and education in line with Montessori practices and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They work in close partnership with parents/carers and other agencies. The enabling indoor and outdoor environments provide the children with plenty of opportunities to explore independently in all areas of learning. The head is committed to continued professional development. This inclusive setting welcomes families and their children from the local community, irrespective of their needs. The parents interviewed welcome the opportunity to be partners in their child's education. The children display high levels of confidence, independence and self-esteem. Good progress has been made by the team in addressing the recommendations made during the first accreditation visit.

The school provides an education which follows the principles of the Montessori approach and environment. The school has successfully addressed the points for action recommended on the first visit, and this merits accreditation by the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board. Consideration should be given to the following points for further development:

- Further consideration should be given to evaluation of observations
- Introduce peer observation by the staff
- Ensure greater consistency of approach amongst the team when supporting children's independence during the work cycle

Philosophy:

The owner and her team aspire to deliver care and education in line with Montessori philosophy and the EYFS to all children irrespective of their needs. This aim is defined in writing in the prospectus and on an informative website.

The setting offers a continuous work cycle of over two and half hours during which period staff encourage all children to access learning resources independently both in and outdoors. The two and half hour work cycle is also offered in the afternoon.

Strong partnership with parents and other agencies ensures that all children have opportunities to fulfill their inner needs, develop high self-esteem, concentration and independence. Consistency of approach amongst the team varies when supporting children's independence through the work cycle

Consideration has been given to the assessment of children's learning since the first accreditation visit. A new record of progress has been implemented to accommodate changes in the EYFS. Trust and respect for all is embedded in daily practices. The adults act as positive role models. They share in the children's play and activities, use positive language and respect the parents as partners in their child's education.



Learning and Development:

This setting offers good opportunities for the children to access learning independently in all the areas of learning. The favourable Montessori environment and the team's understanding of the EYFS ensure that children make good progress in relation to their starting points. The whole team is involved with planning and in supporting the children's learning through the Montessori learning materials and the EYFS.

Each child has a 'Learning Journey' – a record of progress – and a 'scrap' book. These are regularly updated by the key person and shared with parents. Photographic evidence, parents' contributions, observations and work samples are used to document children's learning. The parents welcome access to their child's records as they give them a good insight into their life at the setting.

Progression through the Montessori materials is first recorded on tick lists relevant to the area of learning. The key person regularly gathers information as well as observations from each area and uses these as evidence to update the EYFS record of progress. This system is effective as all staff contribute to the records and carry out observations on all children. However, observations continue to be largely descriptive. It is recommended that further consideration be given to this aspect of their practice.

The outdoor classroom is much enjoyed by all children. They relish the opportunity to access this environment, in all weathers. The range of resources available is good and covers all the areas of learning.

Prepared Environment: resources and materials

The favourable environment at Tigglets is in line with Montessori practices and the EYFS. The Montessori materials and other learning resources are of fairly good quality and are organized in areas of learning. There are sufficient materials for the number of children attending and these are appropriate for their ages and stages of development. They are displayed on low shelves and accessible at all times. The adults work as a team to ensure that the learning environment is kept clean and that activities are complete. The large classroom provides the children with ample space to work individually, in pairs and small groups. Wide ranges of examples of this good practice were observed during the accreditation visits. Two children shared and took turns at the art table, one boy eagerly explored the Montessori sensorial materials whilst outside four others moved snow from one location to another. There were high levels of engagement with the activities.

Large outdoor classroom is well planned and provides for all areas of learning. The children access this secure area freely throughout the work cycle.

Montessori practice: independence, including independence at home, freedom, respect

Children are trusted to access the resources of their choice independently, to work/play alone or with their peers and to repeat activities for as long as necessary to satisfy their needs and



interests. Adults are always nearby to give support and guidance as required. Water and a healthy snack are available throughout the extended work cycle. The children are encouraged to help in its preparation. This good practice provides them with opportunities to apply life skills acquired in the practical life area.

The owner and her team work in close partnership with the parents to promote the Montessori ethos. Workshops are held at least once a year, to give parents of children attending the setting an insight into the purpose of the Montessori materials and the importance of independence both in the setting and at home. The informative website, prospectus and newsletters complement these good practices. This close partnership is beneficial for consistency of approach and predictability of routines.

Trust and respect for all are embedded in daily life of the setting.

Montessori Practice: Classroom management

Tigglets is well managed by the owner and her team, and effective systems are in place to promote children's safety. They are well supervised during arrival and departure times and staff adjust their ratios in relation to the number of children inside and outside. The key person has the responsibility for updating of the Learning Journeys; however, all teachers support children in their learning and contribute to their records. The adults understand their role and responsibilities in relation to planning individual children's learning opportunities and liaising with parents.

The work cycle of over two and half hours provides the children with plenty of opportunities to access learning independently, both inside and outside, and to follow their unique path of development. On the first visit there was a good balance between adult- and child-led activities. Presentations observed were of a good standard. Optional activities such as yoga and French are offered. The whole team is involved in topic planning. The lunch sessions are supervised as the staff eat in with the children.

Consideration should be given to improving the consistency of approach amongst the team when supporting children's independence.

Montessori Practice: links with parents, including reports and records

The links with parents at this setting are strong. They are respected as their child's first and foremost educators. These positive links begin before the child starts at the setting when parents' views are sought in relation to their child's development. This good practice continues throughout the child's time at Tigglets. Informative reports are sent home three times a year. These cover all areas of learning and reflect the child's achievements. When the child leaves, a final and comprehensive report is also produced for the parents and the next school. The open door policy and yearly parent consultation provides further opportunities for a two way exchange of information. The parents at this setting feel well supported by this professional team.



The role of the key person is well defined. Each member of the team understands their responsibilities in relation to keeping the child's record of progress updated, liaising with the parents and producing meaningful reports. A new record of progress has been put in place in September 2012 to accommodate the changes in the EYFS. Montessori materials are used to chart children's progress through this framework.

The head and her team welcome the support given by the parents to the setting during outings and fund raising events.

Staffing:

There is a clear organisational structure in place. Induction procedures and staff appraisals are effective. Staff meetings are documented and the views of all those present are taken into consideration. The head works alongside her team, leading practice and encouraging continued professional development. All staff attend courses covering all aspects of childcare, delivered by the local authority. This has a positive impact on practice as the setting is able to embrace all children irrespective of their needs.

All five members of staff are Montessori qualified and work directly with the children. They have a good understanding of the Montessori philosophy and of the EYFS.

To further enhance provision it is recommended that peer observation be implemented by the staff, its findings should be evaluated and used to plan continued professional development. Training in observation methods should also be considered for all.

All those involved with this establishment recognize the benefits of Montessori care and education and embrace its approach.

Name of Assessor: Rosie Roberts

Date of report: First report:
 Second report: 30 January 2013