

## 10.1 Early years prospectus

Name of provider	Fountain Montessori Pre-School		
Address	77 Holy well Hill St Albans		
Tel No.	01727 855 935	Email	stalbans@fountainmontessori.com

### Our setting aims to:

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age;
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;
- add to the life and well-being of the local community; and
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

### Parents

Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

- valued and respected;
- kept informed;
- consulted;
- involved; and
- included at all levels.

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer parent helpers;
- has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress;
- is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

## Children's development and learning

At Fountain Montessori Preschool we create a warm, nurturing environment for children ages 12 months to 4+ years. Within our close-knit community, young children develop independence, respect, creativity, and a sense of self. Students are able to learn at their own pace, with guidance from Montessori certified teachers.

All our programs are run by fully qualified "Directresses" and they are supported by other staff with relevant childcare qualifications and experience suitable to the age of children in their care.

All other members of staff hold relevant qualifications and experience for their jobs and all our staff are fully checked by the police to ensure their suitability to work with children in accordance to the Children's Act 1989.

The Montessori approach to education relies on several fundamental principles:

### CHILDREN HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN THEIR LIVES

Montessori identified four phases in a child's life: **Birth to 6yrs, 6-12yrs, 12-18yrs, 18-24yrs.**

Many psychologists have described these different phases but it is only Montessori who has given a way to respond to this understanding as a means of education and in this way has redefined education as an 'aid to life' suggesting that if we support the *natural development* of children at each plane then we will optimise development for the whole human being. She suggested that there is a unique time in each child's life when he is most able to take a particular developmental step. It is imperative that children are given the opportunity to grasp these opportunities at the right moment if they are to fulfil their individual potential.

### CHILDREN HAVE A SPECIAL WAY OF LEARNING

In the first six years of life the young mind just seems to soak up everything in the world around him. It means that a new born baby can learn any language and adapt to any culture simply by living. ***Montessori suggested that much emphasis must be put on education in the first six years of life, while children learn with total ease.***

### THE REAL DIFFERENCE

The formation of children's fundamental capacities is hugely important during the first years of life - not just academic learning but the ability to concentrate, persevere and think for themselves as well as the ability to interact well with others. Children who have been given the right kind of support during these formative years grow into adults who are self-motivated and love learning, can think flexibly and creatively and who are not only conscious of the needs of others but actively foster harmony as they go through life.

### TRADITIONAL VERSUS MONTESSORI

In traditional education adults decide what children need to learn and the ability to retain and reproduce information is used as a measure of academic success. The teacher is the active giver of information and children are passive receivers.

In the Montessori approach it is all about the activity of the child. The teacher takes on a different role, that is, to provide the right kind of circumstances so that children can be guided to find what they need from what is on offer. Children then become active learners and are able to reach their own unique potential because they are learning at their own pace and rhythm focussing on their own particular developmental needs at that moment.

**The Montessori approach provides:**

- **An environment** that serves the specific needs of each child's stage of development
- **An adult** who understands child development and acts as a guide to help children find their own natural path
- **Freedom** for children to engage in their own development according to their own developmental timeline.

## OUR VALUES

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**Love** each other, our work, our community (including parents and children) and to act out of love through our work, actions and words.

**Serve** each other, our community (including parents and children), our future generations through our work, actions and words.

**Build** each other, our community (including parents and children), through our work, actions and words.

**Care** for each other, our community (including parents and children), our planet through our work, actions and words.

## MONTESSORI ACCREDITATION SUMMARY

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### Summary

The team at Fountain Montessori Pre-School is committed to working in close partnership with parents in order to deliver a holistic approach to each child's learning and development. Parents interviewed during both re-accreditation visits reported a high level of satisfaction with the services provided. They particularly praised the team for knowing their child well and for the flow of information between the setting and home. They feel valued and respected as their child's foremost educators. Close links with other agencies are also forged by the team; their support is sought and followed when planning for children with additional needs. These excellent practices are of benefit to all the children and their families.

The children display high levels of self-esteem. They are confident when talking to each other, to the adults in the room and with visitors. They show great enthusiasm when using the learning resources, both in and outdoors. They work well by themselves and in small and large groups. They display independence when helping themselves to breakfast and lunch and when selecting learning resources.

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2012). Our provision reflects the four guiding themes and principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

#### **A Unique Child**

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.

#### **Positive Relationships**

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

#### **Enabling Environments**

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.

#### **Learning and Development**

Children develop and learn in different ways. the framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

#### *How we provide for development and learning*

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The Areas of Development and Learning comprise:

#### **Prime Areas**

- personal, social and emotional development;
- physical development;
- communication and language;

#### **Specific Areas**

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

For each area, the level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

The 'Development Matters' guidance sets out the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the early learning goals. Our setting has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning.

#### *Personal, social and emotional development*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- making relationships
- self confidence and self awareness
- managing feelings and behaviour

#### *Physical development*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- moving and handling
- health and self-care

#### *Communication and language*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- listening and attention
- understanding
- speaking

#### *Literacy*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- reading
- writing

#### *Mathematics*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *numbers*
- *shape space and measure*

#### *Understanding the world*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- people and communities
- the world
- technology

### *Expressive arts and design*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- exploring and using media and materials
- being imaginative

### *Our approach to learning and development and assessment*

#### *Learning through play*

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Our setting uses the Early Years Foundation Stage 'Development Matters guidance to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the Development Matters guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

#### *Characteristics of effective learning*

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Development Matters guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

- playing and exploring - engagement
- active learning - motivation
- creating and thinking critically - thinking

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child is learning and being clear about what we can do and provide in order to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

#### *Assessment*

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves into a different group or when they go on to school.

### *The progress check at age two*

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime learning and development areas of the EYFS: personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language; when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. The key person is responsible for completing the check using information from ongoing observational assessments carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals.

### **Records of achievement**

The setting keeps a record of achievement for each child. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in which the key person and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Your child's key person will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the key person will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

### **Working together for your children**

In our setting we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. We also have volunteer parent helpers where possible to complement these ratios.

This helps us to:

- give time and attention to each child;
- talk with the children about their interests and activities;
- help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and
- allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.

We are open for 52 weeks each year.

We are closed Bank holidays Weeks each year

We are open for Five days each week

The times we are open are 7.30am to 6.30pm

We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 6 months

and 4+ years.

### **How parents take part in the setting**

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff;
- contributing to the progress check at age two
- helping at sessions of the setting;
- sharing their own special interests with the children;
- helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- being part of the management of the setting;
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting;
- joining in community activities in which the setting takes part; and
- building friendships with other parents in the setting.

### **The parents' rota**

The setting has a dated rota which parents can sign if they would like to help at a particular session or sessions of the setting. Helping at the session enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of the setting is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities.

### **Joining in**

Joining the rota is not the only means of taking part in the life of the setting. Parents can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. Parents have visited the setting to play the clarinet for the children, show pictures of the local carnival held in their neighbourhood, and show the children their collection of shells.

We welcome parents to drop into the setting to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

### **Key persons and your child**

Our setting uses a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she/he is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, she/he will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities.

### **Learning opportunities for adults**

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, our staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education.



The setting also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education, as a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, through the Under 5 magazine and publications produced by the Alliance. The current copy of Under Five is available for you to read.

From time to time the setting holds learning events for parents. These usually look at how adults can help children to learn and develop in their early years. Courses on similar topics are held locally by the Pre-school Learning Alliance; watch out for information about these.

### **The setting's timetable and routines**

Our setting believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the setting are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the setting;
- ensure the safety of each child;
- help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

### **The day**

The setting organises the day so that children can take part in a variety of child-chosen and adult-led activities. These take account of children's changing energy levels throughout the day. The setting caters for children's individual needs for rest and quiet activities during the day. Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them.

### **Snacks and meals**

The setting makes snacks and meals a social time at which children and adults eat together. We plan the menus for snacks and meals so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. Do tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met.

### **Policies**

Copies of the setting's policies and procedures are enclosed with this prospectus or are available for you to see at the setting.

The setting's policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the setting is a high quality one and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

The staff and parents of the setting work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

### **Safeguarding children**

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'.

Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

### **Special needs**

As part of the setting's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. The setting works to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Mrs Michelle Byron-Cooper/ Mrs Seble Feleke

### **The management of our setting**

The setting is owned by Mr and Mrs Aiyetigbo (name of owner)

The setting has a parent support group. This group is made up of parents and elected by the parents of the children who attend the setting. In our setting we share with this group. Some of the tasks involved in managing the setting

### **Fees**

The fees are payable monthly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, talk to the.

For your child to keep her/his place at the setting, you must pay the fees see the setting terms and conditions. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply.

### **Starting at our setting**

### *The first days*

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the setting. The setting has a policy about helping children to settle into the setting: a copy is enclosed in this prospectus or is available from Manager -see parent handbook.

### *Clothing*

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities.

We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.