

Prima Montessori Day Nursery

Unique reference number (URN): EY230735

Address: Elm Court, Capstone Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 3JQ

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 30/09/2002

Registers: EYR, CCR, VCR

Registered person: Prima Montessori Ltd

Inspection report: 17 April 2026

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Exceptional | |
| Strong standard | ● ● ● ● |
| Expected standard | ● ● |
| Needs attention | |
| Urgent improvement | |

✔ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a highly respectful, nurturing and inclusive culture where every child is valued. Staff are exceptional role models and, as a result, children consistently demonstrate care, kindness and consideration towards their friends. Well-established routines are deeply embedded, and children know and follow these with confidence. Staff are highly skilful in adapting routines sensitively where needed to ensure all children settle quickly and feel secure. Older children eagerly take responsibility at tidy-up time, independently scraping their lunch plates and helping their friends to recycle. Other children confidently wash their hands and use the toilet independently. These purposeful daily experiences make a strong contribution to developing children's independence and self-help skills. All children behave exceptionally well and demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning.

Leaders have an excellent understanding of their local community and respond proactively to families' needs. They offer flexible sessions to support attendance and help prepare children successfully for school. Leaders go above and beyond to support families, for example by providing free food through their community shop, alongside practical ideas for healthy snacks and recipes to use at home. They have established highly positive and trusting partnerships with parents and have taken decisive, innovative action to reduce barriers for families. For example, they created a unique front-of-house management role to ensure families receive a warm welcome each day and have an immediate point of contact. This has had a significant impact in reducing barriers to attendance, strengthening relationships and ensuring consistency of care and support.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders ensure they consistently prioritise children's welfare and wellbeing. They adapt and review processes and procedures regularly to ensure children settle well and are supported effectively. They provide individualised and tailored support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have a comprehensive knowledge of their children and families and the challenges they face. Staff provide specialist support, ensuring children feel comfortable and learn to advocate for themselves. A focus on supporting families with healthy eating has been a key priority. For example, staff provide a community shop and free food bags to support healthy snacks and meals at home. Leaders have employed both a nutritionist and chef to ensure all meals are nutritious and balanced. This supports children's understanding of healthy eating very well. Staff ensure children are provided with a wide range of activities to support oral health. Children thoroughly enjoy learning to brush their teeth, supporting their self-care skills effectively.

Leaders ensure well-structured routines are securely embedded, supporting children's understanding of expectations well. This fosters a solid foundation for the future. Children make consistently positive choices with regard to their own self-care and physical and emotional health. For example, children manage their own feelings effectively, seeking safe

spaces when they need to. Other children enthusiastically enjoy choosing fruits and vegetables in the community shop and talking about keeping themselves healthy.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed a highly inclusive culture where every child is valued and supported to thrive. For example, staff with specialist expertise in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensure children's needs are swiftly identified and addressed. Children who face barriers to learning or disadvantage are exceptionally well supported. Staff use assessment effectively to identify individual needs and next steps, ensuring children settle quickly and make substantial progress. Families are provided with tailored support and helped to access funding and additional advice. Staff work closely with parents, external agencies and the local authority to ensure children receive well-coordinated education, health and care plans that support smooth transitions to school.

Leaders are proactive and passionate in their commitment to supporting children with SEND. They use funding highly effectively to purchase specialised equipment and resources that help children develop the essential skills they need for the future. Parents are provided with free healthy food and regular ideas to support learning at home. Staff receive extensive training to enable them to support children with complex and high-level needs confidently and effectively. Leaders regularly monitor the impact of this support to ensure it remains highly effective. Staff adapt environments thoughtfully and regularly to meet children's individual needs, providing safe and calm spaces where children can relax and retreat when needed. This makes a significant contribution to children's emotional wellbeing and sense of security.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders and managers have faced significant challenges regarding governance and staffing. However, there is a new management structure and team in place, which is having a significantly positive impact. Partnerships with parents are now significantly improved. Leaders use their perceptive analysis of the setting to inform their action plan to ensure they focus on consistency of practice. They are acutely aware of where to focus their support to enable staff to improve their practice even further. Leaders and managers are very reflective and proactive and monitor the effectiveness of staff training and professional development to ensure it is focussed appropriately. They ensure they develop a culture of high expectations, with a focus on ensuring staff have access to a wide range of training and support. Leaders continuously review what they offer and adapt practice and provision to ensure they remain highly responsive to the changing needs of their children and families and local community. Leaders seek specialist support and advice to ensure they have a continual focus on supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who face barriers and disadvantage. They ensure staff workload is manageable, reviewed regularly and staff report high levels of support. Parents speak very highly of the setting and the very positive relationships they have with staff. They directly reference the positive progress their children have made and the support they receive as parents.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Children develop age-appropriate knowledge and skills and are provided with activities and experiences that build their learning across all areas of the curriculum. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face disadvantage or barriers to learning, are prepared well for their next stage of learning. Children who were non-verbal when they started now use words and signs to communicate. Children receive tailored support to help them reach their individual goals. They are provided with visual aids to help them understand what is happening next and to make choices about what they want to do, supporting their independence and understanding. However, at times, some children are not given enough time to process what is asked of them or are not consistently encouraged to extend their thinking further during activities. Nevertheless, all children achieve well from their starting points and are happy and content. They display high levels of confidence and positive self-esteem.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure children are provided with a well-planned and inclusive curriculum. Leaders are acutely aware of the strengths of the setting and where they need to focus support. They accurately identify that some staff need support to build their confidence to identify how they can extend activities to support children's learning even further. Leaders have also identified, that at times, some staff do not always give children enough time to process what is asked of them before moving on. However, leaders have a clear action plan to ensure consistency of teaching and are supporting staff with this.

Leaders have prioritised support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who face disadvantage and barriers to learning. This means children are ready for their next stage in education successfully. Staff focus on developing children's social and communication skills. Children learn about feelings and demonstrate kindness and care towards their friends. Children with SEND are provided with tailored support to help them settle and as such, they make positive progress from the starting points. Staff use funding to create sensory spaces for children helping them to develop important physical skills. Children are supported to develop their mathematical understanding effectively. For example, children learn to measure different quantities when following a favourite playdough recipe. Older children use money in the community shop developing their knowledge effectively.

✔ **Compulsory Childcare Register requirements**

This setting has met the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

How we check if a provider meets the requirements of the Compulsory Childcare Register

When we check if settings meet the Compulsory Childcare Register requirements, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met
 - Not met
-

✔ **Voluntary Childcare Register requirements**

This setting has met the requirements of the voluntary part of Childcare Register.

How we check if a provider meets the requirements of the Voluntary Childcare Register

When we check if settings meet the Voluntary Childcare Register requirements, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met
 - Not met
-

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children and their families are warmly welcomed into this happy and safe setting. As a result, children display high levels of confidence and emotional wellbeing. Staff demonstrate genuine care and affection towards children, and children are respectful and kind to one another. Children check in with staff, asking if they are okay and immediately seek them out for cuddles and comfort, demonstrating very secure attachments.

Children thoroughly enjoy the activities staff plan for them. For example, some children explore herbs in the mud garden, learning about healthy ingredients. Others enjoy

purchasing items from the community shop, choosing recipes to take home and try. These meaningful experiences help children understand where food comes from and how to make healthy choices.

Staff place a strong emphasis on children's mathematical learning. Children learn to count and identify colours, proudly sharing with staff the different shapes they make. Staff praise and encourage children, celebrating their achievements. Other children explore tyres of different sizes, rolling them down ramps outdoors. Babies beam with delight as they explore soft-play resources, developing their climbing and balancing skills. These activities support children's physical development effectively.

Children benefit from staff who are positive role models. Staff prioritise children's language and social development. Children sustain high levels of concentration when making playdough, taking turns and sharing resources cooperatively. Staff use sign language to help children communicate. Babies eagerly join in with rhymes and share books together, demonstrating very positive attitudes to learning.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. Staff know their children and families exceptionally well. Leaders identify children's needs swiftly and ensure families receive the help and guidance they need. For example, staff build strong partnerships with parents to help reduce barriers to learning. Staff also offer flexible sessions to help children attend regularly. As a result, all children make very positive progress from their starting points and are well prepared for their next stage in learning.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen staff confidence in identifying when to extend activities for children, including when to allow children more time to process what is being asked, in order to further support and deepen children's ongoing learning.

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, managers, special educational needs coordinators and practitioners during the inspection.

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.

Inspector:

Victoria Salisbury

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): EY230735

Address:

Elm Court
Capstone Road
Gillingham
Kent
ME7 3JQ

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 30/09/2002

Registered person: Prima Montessori Ltd


Register(s): EYR, CCR, VCR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday : 07:00 - 07:00

Local authority: Medway

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 17 April 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

0 to 4

Total number of places

132

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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