

## Collaborative Montessori Reaccreditation (CMRea) Report

**Name of Assessor:** Hannah Khiani

**Date/s of Assessment Visit:** 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Name of Setting:** Storybook Montessori Nursery School, Ascot

**Address of Setting:** Memorial House, High Street, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 7JH

**Setting type:** Open 50 weeks a year (8am – 6pm)

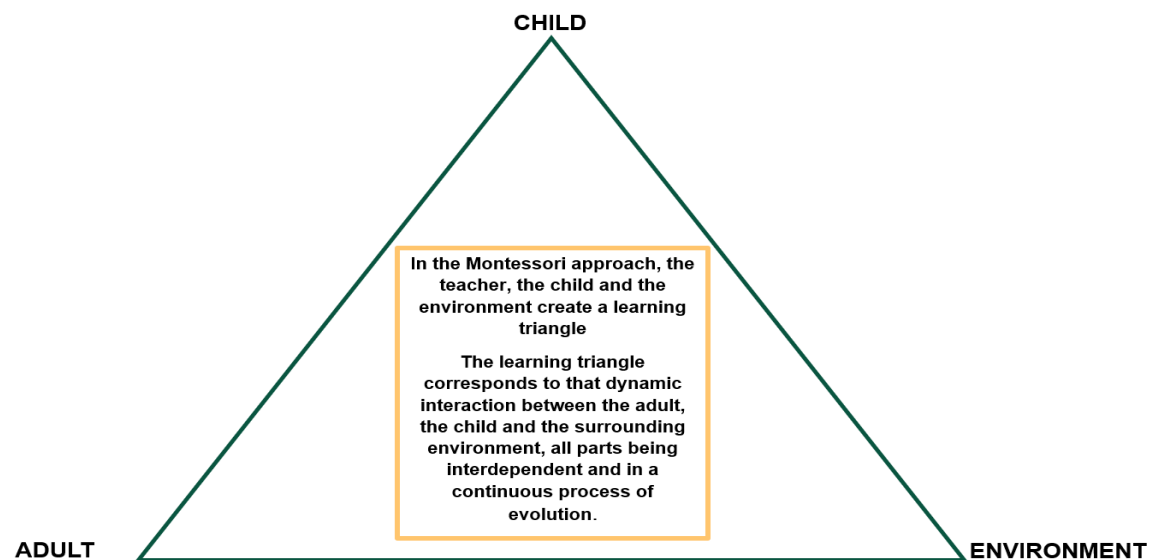
**Facility type:** Memorial Hall - adapted for use

**Ownership of the Setting:** Privately owned

**Date Setting opened:** Storybook registered on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Date and grade of last Ofsted / relevant national inspection:** Good (2023)

**Date of last Collaborative Montessori Accreditation report:** October 2022



The accreditation criteria draw on the principles of the dynamic learning triangle, which is at the core of the Montessori philosophy and approach.

The adult, the child and the environment create the learning triangle, with dynamic interaction and interdependence between all three parts. In effective practice these dynamics enable continued improvement of quality. This triangle underpins all documentation for reflection and assessment in the CM Quality Assurance Programme.

This report is based on the information submitted by the setting (including its self-evaluation) and on the evidence gathered during the zoom meeting and the the Assessor's visit.

## The Environment

### Previous accreditation visit/report recommendations.

- Review the opportunities for vertical integration between the rooms.
- Consider ways to improve the free flow into the garden between the Library and Town Hall rooms.
- Continue to review and enhance the resources in the Town Hall and Library to share and rotate the activities to scaffold children's learning and development.

### Evidence and assessment.

#### Current practice:

Since the last CM (Collaborative Montessori) accreditation the school's environment has not undergone significant structural changes. Different classrooms group children by age range. While Snug 1 does not have direct access to its own garden, it does have a fenced area where the babies can play safely. All the other classrooms have free flow into the prepared outdoor environment. Children contribute to the upkeep of their own environment by helping to sweep up and wipe up spills, clean tables and tidy away their activities. The children also help with laying the tables, preparing snack and cleaning after lunch. The activities are appropriate for the age range of the children in the room. There are Montessori activities available in all the rooms which are supplemented by additional activities in-line with the children's current interests.

On the day of the accreditation visit, the children from the Townhall classroom had forest school which happens twice a week. As well as providing a meaningful connection with nature, this also helps reduce the number of children in the building which helps to create a calmer atmosphere for the children who remain at the nursery to explore activities that interest them and to

enjoy the free flow access to the small garden where a series of appealing activities were planned and set up. The children from the Library room were engaged in the sand and water trays and spent an extended time filling up containers and collecting water from the water butt, exploring and enjoying the outside environment.

While nappy changing, lunch and snack time still happen at a fixed time in the Library the timetable has become more flexible. For example, children are free to join snack or not and children are invited to have their nappy changed when they have finished an activity. Free flow into the garden area was observed on the day of the visit and is now part of the daily practice. The staff team have worked together to make changes to the routine and to the activities and have also committed to providing free-flow access to the outdoor environment which all supports the sharing of resources and opportunities for vertical integration. It would be good to continue to monitor noise levels in the Townhall to maintain a calm environment. When noise levels rise, teachers can re-direct the children to self-select activities or invite them to join a small group activity.

### **The physical environment**

#### **Indoors (including the activities)**

The layout of the indoor environment means that there is still separation between the rooms and children are divided into different spaces for different ages. However, the baby room (Snug 1) is connected to the toddler room via a tunnel which is opened after lunch, allowing for the different age groups to mix. In the shared space called the Village Green children of different ages can meet and play. This now has loose parts and open-ended play resources, a new well-stocked art trolley and shelves with role-play and building blocks. Children also come together as a group for whole school festivals which happen regularly. These practices confirm that the level of vertical integration has increased following the above recommendations.

#### **The activities**

Each classroom has activities that engage the children and are well organised by the areas of the Montessori curriculum. Although the Townhall and Pre-School mostly share Montessori resources some additional Montessori materials have been bought for the Townhall.

The Pre-school has uncluttered shelves, and all the materials are accessible and well-spaced. The teachers in the Pre-school, Library and Townhall discuss the activities on the shelves and resources are now shared between the classrooms to provide

access to a broad range of materials in the different rooms. To this purpose, the storage shed (Red Brick) has recently been re-organised too. In the baby and toddler rooms, activities are also shared and reviewed regularly.

Heuristics baskets and brightly coloured bangles absorbed the babies; practical life activities were well used in all the classrooms. The pre-schoolers showed deep concentration as they formed beautiful letters (*"I have written Happy Mother's Day, now I want to write 'I love you Mummy'"*) as they made cards for Mother's Day.

### **Outdoors**

The outdoor areas are accessed through the classrooms, with different zones offering places for practicing gross motor skills alongside quieter spaces for reading books and exploring sand and water. Children were observed, transporting heavy objects to adapt to obstacle courses and riding bikes and trikes. Children were fully engaged in both independent and teacher led activities. All the children have access to a mud kitchen and water play which is differentiated by age and interest. For example, in the pre-school water trays contained sea-creatures while the babies had five little ducks to support singing the familiar nursery rhyme. Children are also taken to forest school and walks around town. The outdoors is another area where children have the chance to interact with different age groups. The new canopy is a great addition as it means that the children can play outside in all weathers.

### **First-hand experiences and active learning**

Regular forest school sessions mean that the children at Storybook Montessori Nursery School (SMNS) immerse themselves in the natural environment close to the school. The staff team are also committed to taking the children to the local library. On race days, the children can see the horses pass by and there are also trips to the local church and shops, which also support the children's active learning. On the day of the accreditation visit, children in the pre-school were finding out about seeds and plants. The staff also celebrate a wide range of different festivals that are representative of the staff and families at the school. In the outside spaces, there are mud kitchens, natural resources and water play to provide first-hand experiences.

## The Child

Attendance on the day of the accreditation visit:

Age in years	How many children were present		
	Morning session	Afternoon session	All day
0 – 2	3		19
2 – 3	1		19
3 – 5	2		24
Over 5			

### **Changes from the previous accreditation visit/report including any recommendations given.**

During the visit, it was observed that the children have the opportunity to play together more in the outside areas which supports vertical grouping.

### **Evidence and assessment.**

#### **Current practice:**

The children at SMNS are confident and inquisitive. They arrive with smiles and news from home: “*I got my new, super-fast running trainers on today*” and questions for their teachers: “*What is for lunch today?*” and “*Who is going to help make snack?*”. They are confident about the morning routine: children enter the nursery, hang their coat independently or with support if younger and then choose activities. The children are encouraged to help with the school routines such as preparing snack, finding

mattresses for an afternoon sleep or sweeping the floor of the classroom or dining room. The children are active as they move around their classroom: the babies crawl and choose to explore the treasure baskets and the pre-school children take Montessori materials from the shelf to explore. The children are knowledgeable about risks as they carry and use scissors and chop fruit and vegetables safely. The children are comfortable and assured in their environment.

### **Independence**

As children independently choose activities from the shelves, they also decide where they want to work and with whom. Outside, the babies were observed painting mirrors, their bodies and their hands with fascination and a deep interest! Other babies were free to explore water with much splashing and enjoyment. The babies also looked at books or joined in with singing nursery rhymes. Outside Snug 2, the children rode bikes, explored muddy mixtures and climbed on a ramp. Children in the Library and Townhall were seen washing hands independently before snack and before lunch and reminding others of the routine too: *“It is time for snack now”*. Children used a variety of tools outside the Library room and explored different ways to transfer water and sand. Children freely express themselves, they are listened to, and their views are considered. In the pre-school, the children chose a wide variety of Montessori activities to explore alongside blocks and dinosaurs, reading stories and making Mother’s Day cards. Here, children self-register for garden time too.

### **Socialisation**

The children know each other well. They hold hands, invite each other to play and the outdoor spaces provide the opportunity for the children to learn together as they take it in turns to balance on the obstacle course or share a story. The children played and talked confidently to teachers: *“I got this story at my house”* and delighted in sharing news at circle time too: *“I seen lots of daffodils growing”*. The babies offered up smiles and their arms to their teachers and in Snug 2 children were seen leaning into teachers as well as playing alongside other children. The teachers also role-modelled grace and courtesy as they greeted the children and talked to them throughout the day. The children were observed listening to others, waiting to speak and turn-taking with a wide variety of activities. During lunch, children spoke to each other and greeted visitors: *“What is your name?”*. In the garden, the different spaces afford the opportunity for role play and socialising as well as a variety of games such as chasing

games, bikes and exploration of sea-creatures, farm animals and sand and water play which the children explored in pairs or small groups.

### **Exploration**

Children are supported in creating and exploring using their whole bodies and were seen running in the garden, balancing and jumping from a height. At forest school, there were plenty of nature treasures to be found such as chestnuts, special stones, sticks and leaves; a wide range of tools like rakes and spades and a wheelbarrow were used to further explore the surroundings. Children used paint and discussed what seeds need to grow. As the pre-schoolers talked about the signs of spring, younger children worked with puzzles, and mixed water and mud together in the mud kitchens. Inside Townhall, a child explored the spindle box while another child in the pre-school used the number rods to find out about numbers from one to ten. The babies explored the properties of brightly coloured bangles and children in Snug 2 practiced pouring and watched balls roll down ramps. In the Library garden children collected water from the water butt and explored lots of different ways to pour from a height and bury vehicles in sand.

### **Movement**

The children refine their fine motor skills as they use scissors, pens, pencils and paintbrushes. Children develop their pincer grip in preparation for writing as they use a variety of activities. Outside, gross motor skills were developed as planks, tyres and bikes were all used by the children, testing balance and co-ordination. At forest school, there were shovels, rakes, a rope swing and a hammock. A tent, at forest school, provides space for reading and rest.

### **Communication**

The teachers are respectful when they speak to the children and each other. Books, open-ended comments and conversation are used to extend the children's knowledge and understanding on a wide range of topics. A range of books help introduce different topics and new words and teachers act as positive role-models. Children were heard asking for help confidently and were polite to each other. Teachers also support language development through re-casting and by giving children plenty of time

to listen and respond. Parents value the way the staff interact with the children and the support given to bi-lingual children. Children who may need help with their communication skills are fully supported within the school and through collaboration with outside agencies. Children were observed leaning in for hugs when they needed comfort and also using gestures and pointing to communicate their needs. Practitioners in the baby room are tuned into the needs of the babies and respond well to the different cues. Parents also commented on the strong communication between home and school which occurs through impromptu conversations, newsletters and information via the app; any concerns raised were always discussed quickly and appropriately.

## The Adult

Adults present during the accreditation visit.

Initials and roles and responsibilities	Qualifications	Length of time at the setting	Part time	Full time
LP- Manager	LV 5 (IMP Quals)	8 years		x
ML- Deputy manager	LV 4 Montessori	6 Years		x
AC- Deputy manager	LV 4 Montessori	7 Years		x
PC- Room leader	LV 3 in Childcare	6 Years	x	
LS- Room leader	LV 4 Montessori	5 Years		x
AP- Acting Room leader	LV 5 in childcare	2 Years		x
NU- Acting Room leader	LV 3 in Childcare	3 Years	x	
VG- Practitioner	LV 5 in childcare	2 Years		x
SG- Practitioner	LV 3 in Childcare	4 Years		x
FN- Practitioner	LV 3 in Childcare	2 Years		x

RR- Practitioner	LV 5 in childcare	1.5 Years		x
LS- Practitioner	LV 3 in Childcare	4 Years	x	
SH- Apprentice	UQ- working towards LV3	1 Month		x
DJ- Practitioner	LV 5 in childcare	1.5 Years		x
KS- Practitioner	LV 2 in childcare	1.5 Years		x
SA- Practitioner	LV 2 in childcare	4.5 Years	x	
MJ- Apprentice	UQ- working towards LV3	11 months		x
ABH- Apprentice	UQ- working towards LV3	1 Month		x
CP- Practitioner & Forest school lead	LV 4 Montessori & Forest school LV 3	7 Years		x
MO- Practitioner	UQ- Working towards Montessori LV 4	1 Year		x
AM- Practitioner	LV 4 Montessori	6.5 Years	x	
ML- Practitioner	UQ	3 Years	x	

**Previous accreditation visit/report recommendations.**

- Increase the consistency in approach of staff team including agency and bank staff
- Review transitional moments in the day and see where there is scope for increasing choice and child-led activities – such as during circle times.

## **Evidence and assessment.**

### **Current practice:**

To support a consistent approach between the staff team, handbooks featuring the ground rules are available for the children and staff to consult and there is a form for agency staff that can be used if required. Employing regular bank staff has helped improve the way the adults support the children using Montessori principles of respect and support the development of independence and choice. On the day of the accreditation visit, the staff worked together to create a calm environment by, for instance, avoiding calling a child from across the room. There has been an increase in the use of observations and supervisions to support staff, together with an increased focus at staff meetings on ways to enable children's independence and self-regulation. Newer staff members are invited to observe presentations of Montessori activities and more experienced staff model good practice of giving children choices and working at the children's pace. For example, at circle times, all the children were given choices about which books they wanted to read and which songs they wanted to sing which demonstrated a commitment from the team to listen to and respect the views of the child.

### **The Leadership Team**

The founder and owner was present at the visit, and it was a pleasure to be shown around the nursery by the experienced Manager and observe practice in the pre-school which is led by the deputy Manager who has over 30 years' experience as a Montessori teacher. The parents commented on the staff team saying: *"The staff are amazing"*.

### **The Teaching Team**

All the teachers are caring and responsive. The teachers are respectful and sensitive and children were observed being very affectionate towards them. It was a pleasure to watch the thoughtful interactions of the staff team as they read stories, sang songs, answered questions, provoked interest and supported children in climbing and painting and making new discoveries in the classrooms and in the outside environment. Communication with parents/carers is effective and the teachers' planning for the children is based on the current interests of each child. Parents said that they appreciated the *"friendly staff"* and how the setting feels *"like a family"*.

### **The Key Person**

Although each child has a designated key person, all the teachers work together to meet the needs of all the children. Information about the children is shared between the team members on a regular basis and the app is used to share observations with parents and to plan next steps. The parents commented on how helpful they found conversations at handover times, as well as the observations via the app and the newsletter. The team also liaise with outside agencies to ensure that the needs of the children are met. Parents appreciated the way the nursery felt very safe, that conversations with staff were available each day and the way that everyone was made to feel welcome. Parents also appreciate how bi-lingual children are supported to be confident in their communication and language development. With the youngest children, the staff are warm, friendly and approachable and take time to get to know the babies, their individual routines and their different communication styles. The chef was also observed chatting to the children on the day of the visit. She knows the likes and dislikes of the children and on the day prepared one of the children's favourite dishes for lunch demonstrating again the teamwork involved in caring for all the children at a holistic level.

### Commendations

- The shelves in all the rooms have been reviewed, and the activities were well-spaced and appealing. The forest school session was well-resourced with children actively and enthusiastically engaged in the natural environment
- Children's independence and responsibility were very clear as they are encouraged to serve themselves at lunch, help prepare snack and care for their classroom and their friends
- The outside areas are prepared with attention and with the children's interests and holistic needs in mind
- The staff were praised by parents and collaborated on the day to provide a calm atmosphere
- The children partake in a variety of trips around the town so that they feel part of the local community

## Recommendations

- Consider ways to share Montessori activities and principles with parents and families. Information could be shared by teachers from different classrooms to support the children and parents at home. This could also be a way for teachers to reflect on good practice.
- Continue to aim for consistency of practice throughout the school to ensure key Montessori principles are present in all the classrooms. Find ways to support children develop their independence and concentration even further.
- Following on from current projects such as building the wormery (Pre-school) and growing herbs and replanting in the Peace Garden, review ways to extend children's understanding of sustainability, of the natural world and of the principles of Cosmic Education. For example, help children to use paper wisely by drawing on both sides and to find out more about recycling.
- Continue regular audits of the shelves to observe which activities are used and which are not.

## Conditions

The Reaccreditation Assessor has concluded that the setting meets CM main requirements for reaccreditation and therefore no conditions are set.

Name of Assessor: Hannah Khiani

Date of Report: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**The CM Reaccreditation Report has been reviewed by the CM Accreditation Board. The Board has verified the Assessor's recommendation to accredit the Setting.**

Award	
<b>Accreditation is therefore granted to:</b>	
Storybook Montessori Nursery School	
<b>Validity period:</b>	
From: April 2026	to: April 2029

*Receiving reaccreditation carries the expectation that the setting will continue to implement the Commendations, develop on the Recommendations and fulfil the Conditions (if applicable) highlighted in this Reaccreditation Report to continue to strive for best Montessori practice.*

*The report does not directly address the standards of practice that are the responsibility of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).*

*The report does not provide any assessment of financial aspects of the setting.*