



**PRESS RELEASE
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Montessori Nursery expansion following nursery acquisition in Sale, Manchester.

23rd February 2018 – Montessori nursery provider has expanded their business with the acquisition of Park Avenue Nursery in Sale. Funding to support the purchase has been provided by Allied Irish Bank (GB).

Danielle Hignett bought her first nursery in 2015, the 'Outstanding' Holly Tree Montessori Nursery in Edgeley, Stockport which employs 20 staff. The acquisition of Park Avenue Nursery is the group's second nursery and has been relaunched as the Pear Tree Montessori Nursery. Danielle has increased the capacity for children aged between 0-5 years with five new jobs being created as part of the growth plans.

At Pear Tree Montessori Nursery care will be provided in five bright, spacious rooms on the ground and first floor of a large detached period property on Park Avenue in Sale. Each of the rooms has a separate age group, theme and purpose so that every child has the opportunity to learn and develop through the Montessori Philosophy.

Danielle Hignett, Managing Director explains: "I am delighted to acquire Park Avenue Nursery and expand the facilities and continue the high standards of care that have been established. I am a qualified Montessori teacher myself and am excited to enhance the nursery's existing facilities and learning by introducing our proven techniques and activities. We are focused on following each child's different learning styles and carefully structure activities to allow your child to develop at their own pace. Our Montessori baby and toddler rooms create a nurturing environment that supports each child's growing need for independence equipment. This is supported with the use of equipment that is designed to help children develop their language, fine motor skills and gross motor co-ordination, as well as their senses. The acquisition of this nursery grows my business to two Montessori nurseries. The backing of Allied Irish Bank (GB) has proven to be instrumental in helping with this acquisition and giving me the confidence to grow my business."

David Booth, Relationship Manager at Allied Irish Bank (GB) used his specialist knowledge of the nursery sector to assist Danielle Hignett with the acquisition.

David Booth, Relationship Manager at Allied Irish Bank (GB) said: "It has been a huge privilege to be involved in the growth and acquisition of this nursery. Danielle Hignett is a well-established operator who has a great reputation for delivering high quality childcare and learning centred around the Montessori philosophy. The acquisition forms part of the Hignett Holdings commitment to expand its footprint across the area and I would like to wish Danielle and the team all the best for the future of the Pear Tree Montessori Nursery."

Commercial and legal advice was provided by Banking and Real Estate Finance Partner David Marlor, Commercial Property Partner Stephen Lopeman and Corporate Associate Helen Mather of Manchester commercial law firm Kuits. Kuits was recently named as one of the most active dealmakers in the region in Experian's MarketIQ 2017 report.

Helen Mather, Corporate Associate at Kuits said: "We have advised Danielle Hignett on the growth and expansion of her successful Montessori enterprise since the acquisition of her first nursery in 2015. We expect to see a further increase in M&A activity in the childcare sector as we move through 2018, partly spurred on by marketing of the government's '30 hours free' scheme. It has therefore been our pleasure to help expand the reach of Hignett Holdings in the local nursery market, positioning the business for future success, via this latest acquisition."