



Mace Montessori School Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335641
Inspection date	28 November 2006
Inspector	Arda Halls
Setting Address	30-40 Dalling Road, London, W6 0JD
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mace Montessori School is one of two nurseries run by Mace Montessori Schools Limited. It opened in 2006 and operates from four rooms in a detached two-storey building of 5000 sq. metres in the London Borough of Hammersmith. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 7:00 to 19:00 for 50 weeks of the year. There is an attached outdoor play area and access to communal play areas immediately opposite the school. Children come from the local and wider community. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 14 staff when the school is operating at full capacity. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority. Teaching methods used include Montessori teaching, Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's well-being is protected and supported by the clear and comprehensive written policies and procedures which are understood and carried out by staff. Most of the staff hold current first aid certificates and emergency consent is in place in case of accidents or if medicine is to be administered. Children are learning good hygiene practices as staff generally maintain good levels of hygiene. However, rest mats for toddlers are placed on the floor well before lunch and are not sufficiently protected from outdoor footwear to ensure a clean hygienic sleeping area for the children. This means there is a risk of infection.

Children enjoy a nutritious and healthy diet as they eat freshly prepared meals and snacks that regularly include fruit and vegetables. Their special dietary needs are met through a regular exchange of information between parents and childcare staff. Children's hygiene is mainly promoted by staff who implement appropriate procedures for reducing the risk of cross infection. For example, aprons and gloves are worn during nappy changing. Surfaces used for eating meals are regularly wiped down by staff, the cook holds a food hygiene certificate. However children do not always wash their hands before eating.

They are developing a positive attitude to physical exercise which is enjoyed on a daily basis. Children show great delight and excitement when visiting the local park as they are having fun and are becoming good walkers. Toys are on order to provide more opportunities for physical development when playing indoors.

Children are appropriately cared for due to the sound procedures in place for first aid, accidents and medication, all of which are shared with parents. They are protected from unnecessary illness and are adequately cared for in emergencies as the staff have good procedures in place for accidents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. There are good security precautions, such as an intercom system in place. The staff help keep children safe in the nursery because they are very careful to closely supervise the children when playing in the nursery or walking to the park. However on the day of the inspection the staff child ratios were not met in the baby room during lunch time, which compromised the safety of the children.

Children's needs are well met within the setting with ample furniture to rest, eat and play comfortably. Resources are clean and well maintained which the children can access safely.

Children show a good understanding of safety issues and group boundaries, for example they tidy the resources away after they have finished with them and push their chairs in after use. However the disinfectant spray is accessible on the low worktops in the children's playrooms, this could pose as a risk to the children.

Children move confidently around the environment making their own choices about their play. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children opportunities to engage in various activities on table tops and on the floor. They have sufficient opportunities to relax and share books in a comfortable environment.

Children's welfare is properly promoted by staff that understand their child protection responsibilities and are familiar with the setting's comprehensive child protection policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff working with younger children use the Birth to three matters framework effectively. They are developing their understanding of how children progress. As a result, they plan a good range of activities for children, such as various art and craft activities for children's exploration. However, the grouping together of two year olds with the three year olds is not conducive to extending the three year olds learning. Three year olds are not consistently challenged. Staff are unable to fully support the older children as they participate in activities.

Children move confidently around the environment, making their own choices about their play. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children opportunities to be active, engage in table top and floor activities and to enjoy opportunities to relax and share books in a comfortable environment. Physical play is not provided indoors. Children walk to the park once a day which promotes good walking skills. They enjoy Autumn forages, squirrel hunts and playing on climbing frames in the park.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children have fun and they play enthusiastically with a range of toys and resources. They play confidently with each other and form good relationships. The children demonstrate good social and emotional development throughout the day. They play happily and are engaged in the activities. Children competently use number puzzles and measuring tools to support their mathematical development and there are simple opportunities for calculation and problem solving such as how to divide up fruit at snack time.

Effective use is not made of time and resources to provide children with opportunities to engage in physical activities indoors, such as climbing and balancing or riding bikes. The nursery has a wide range of resources to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world, such as a computer work station, however this area is not in use. Knowledge and understanding of the world is not fully incorporated into planning and used effectively.

Children enjoy a good range of books which they handle appropriately. Staff use props such as laminated cards to support stories. Children enjoy story times and sit for a considerable time fully engaged, they are captivated by the stories and sit in awe of the story teller.

Warm relationships are evident between staff and children. All children are eager to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. Behaviour is consistently good and children are able to share and play co-operatively together.

Children learn through a range of methods incorporated by the staff. They use effective questioning techniques to help children think. They listen intently to the children and respond appropriately. Staff have some knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. They respond well to children's interests, however planning has not been fully implemented and activities do not effectively cover all areas of learning. The intended learning outcome of activities is not clear or effectively understood by all staff. Staff are not routinely assessing children's progress in relation to the stepping stones. Consequently they do not measure children's individual progress as they do not identify suitable challenges or support that is needed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about themselves and the wider world through planned activities and discussions, for example through a variety of cultural festivals. Taking part in celebrations helps the children understand and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Plans are in progress to ensure that children with disabilities are well cared for by practitioners who know their individual needs and are able to arrange appropriate one to one care when needed.

Children are caring towards one another; they understand responsible behaviour and confidently take on roles and responsibilities within the group such as assisting staff to clear up the table after lunch.

Partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good.

The partnership with parents is good. Children's needs are consistently met through procedures to share information with parents. However, the progress of children's nursery education has not been fully shared with parents as this is the first term with nursery aged children in attendance. Observation and assessment records are systematically recorded and dates have been set to ensure these records are shared with parents. Parents openly express satisfaction with the service they receive.

This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities within the group and work well as a team to promote good outcomes for children. The organisation of the nursery and the deployment of staff is effective throughout most parts of the day ensuring children are happily engaged in activities and secure in their surroundings. On the day of the inspection lunch time

ratios were not met in one room. Staff shortages were not appropriately covered from within the staff team to ensure the baby room had sufficient staff to ensure that the babies needs were appropriately met.

The effective implementation of most policies and procedures and appropriate recording of documentation helps to promote children's welfare, care and learning. The leadership and management of the setting is good with strengths being recognised within the group and some areas for improvement identified.

Children benefit because practitioners are suitable qualified and enhance their knowledge and skills through regular training opportunities although most staff are not trained in nursery education. Plans are in place that confirm trained nursery education practitioners are taking up posts within one week of the inspection. The number of children attending the nursery and the number of staff is increasing on a weekly basis. Practitioners are well supported informally by management and a robust system of training is in place for all staff. The role of evaluating practice and children's achievement has yet to be fully developed. Systems are not yet in place to identify where learning opportunities may be missed. Procedures to monitor the curriculum have not yet been fully implemented.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children's hands are washed before eating and hygienic rest areas are available for children to sleep
- ensure hazardous cleaning substances are inaccessible to children
- maintain staff to child ratios at all times
- improve the curriculum for physical play to ensure children experience a variety of indoor activities on a regular basis.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve assessment methods to ensure individual children's learning needs are fully met and ensure they identify the next steps for learning.
- review the operational plan and grouping of the children to offer more challenging experiences for funded 3 and 4 year olds.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk