

Oliver's Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	100545
Inspection date	10/02/2009
Inspector	Audrey Opal Ufot
Setting address	52 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HN
Telephone number	020 7435 5898
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Oliver's Montessori Nursery School is privately owned. It opened in 1992 and operates from a Scout hut on the grounds of St. Peter's Church. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is situated in a residential area of the London borough of Camden. Access to the setting is via several steps down to the entrance of the nursery. It is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:00, term times only.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 24 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery supports children with English as an additional language and learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years teaching qualifications. The setting operates in line with the Montessori educational philosophy and provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Staff work effectively as a team promoting all aspects of the children's welfare. The calm and peaceful atmosphere encourages the children's love for learning. Children benefit from the setting's approach that each child is unique and are respected as individuals. Planning for individual children is effective through well detailed observations and assessments plans. The setting provides an inclusive service. Children's rich cultural backgrounds are positively acknowledged and celebrated. Effective systems identify the strengths and areas for improvement within the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure all staff update their knowledge with regards to child protection, in particular being aware of the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member
- ensure more than one member of staff has up-to-date training in first aid, in the event of the manager not being on the premises

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The learning environment is very well organised with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. This promotes freedom for the children to explore and build their independence and self-confidence. The nursery provides a wide range of good quality Montessori materials as well as additional resources. There are

opportunities for children to learn outdoors and develop their large motor skills and gain knowledge of how plants grow. The security systems in place ensure that intruders cannot gain entry unseen and the named parents or carers sign in and out when they bring and collect their children to and from the nursery.

Children's welfare is promoted because clear records, policies and procedures are in place. Staff have a clear understanding of how to apply these policies into practice and they are readily available to parents. However, not all staff are up-to-date with first aid training. All information relating to individual children is in place, well maintained and effectively stored to ensure confidentiality. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Children are supported by qualified and experienced staff. Staff are effectively deployed, ensuring that children are well supervised during activities. Risk assessments identify safety issues. However, recordings of this do not state the date it was carried out and by whom.

The methods used to evaluate the provision are effective and lead to constant improvements. At the previous inspection four recommendations were made. The imaginary play materials and role play equipments have been increased. Children play with a cash till and role play being cashiers as well as dressing-up in cultural clothes. The manager has attended training in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework; with this she has carried out in-house training with the staff team. The nursery has employed a regular cleaner. All staff have attended child protection training, although new staff were less secure regarding the procedures to follow if an allegation of abuse was made against a member of staff.

The nursery works very well in partnership with parents and others. They have clear links with the local authority and other professional bodies in order to support children with any specific needs when necessary.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning and enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this with the Montessori curriculum to plan a learning environment that offers children a wide range of purposeful activities. Staff as a team pay particular attention to children's starting points. Parents and their child are invited to an assessment and observation session so that the children's individual learning paths can be planned. This enables specific goals to be met. Good observations and assessments of children's learning and development means clear learning intentions are identified. For example, staff look for additional information to support children's different learning styles.

Excellent displays of photographs, posters, a nature table and children's artwork make the well organised environment welcoming to children. Resources are laid out on low level storage units allowing children to confidently select their own work materials. Children have many opportunities to demonstrate their independence, when they are finished with their work material they take responsibility for replacing them. Children can recognise the letters of the alphabet and the sound

they make. For example, children enjoy their music sessions as they sound out letters through rhythm songs and say 'F' for 'Fish'. At other times children wiggle their fingers, and count and sing to 'Magic Fingers Hid Away'. Children read a range of common words, such as labels in the classroom. They speak clearly and with confidence, for example, a child calls out the other children's names to line up for outdoor play. Children are learning to concentrate as they participate in the silence game. The music teacher encourages children to sing with their loud, medium and low voices, and then they are encouraged to sing in their heads. Children have lots of fun as some instead of singing in their heads mime with facial expressions.

Children are given many opportunities to learn about the world in which we live. Displays help children to identify different countries in the world, such as, China. By planting seeds and helping to care for them children find out about life cycles and the needs of plants. For example, in the outdoor area a herb was rooted up and staff took this opportunity to talk with the children about how plants live in the ground and talked about the many roots which helps them to grow. Children and staff dug and planted the herb back into the soil. At other times children learn about the different seasons in which vegetables and fruits grow.

Rainy days provide children with many wonderful opportunities for them to wear Wellington boots in the garden. For example, children's imaginations entice them to explore muddy water with magnifying glasses to search for worms. In other situations children use the water to role play pretending they are at the petrol station as one child says 'I am filling my car with petrol'. Staff talk with children about information and communication technology. Children have access to computers both at home and at the nursery. Through everyday activities children count number rods, pegs, and spindles, and learn the concept of addition and subtraction as they build with blocks, and use language such as 'more' or 'less' to compare two numbers. Children count confidently up to 10 as they play with staff 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'.

Parents provide their children with healthy and nutritious packed lunches which reflect children's individual dietary and religious needs. Mealtimes are a social occasion where children and staff sit and eat together, and children chat with their friends in their home languages such as Japanese. Children play an active role at snack times as they cut up bananas and place a piece on top of biscuits. They lay the table with plates and cups in a colour coordinating order. One child serves the other children and as they help themselves they say 'thank you'.

The nursery has established excellent working partnerships with parents. Staff work closely with parents of children with English as a second or third language, gathering phrases in the children's home languages. This helps staff to communicate with the children. Parents are informed about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how it is combined with the Montessori approach to education. Parents are provided with an end of term profile assessment report regarding their children's achievements and progress. Children's observation records are shared between home and the nursery and their art folders are available for parents viewing daily. The nursery celebrates cultural festival events;

this is a rich occasion where parents and their children dress-up in their costumes and parents bring tasty dishes.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.