

Little Sweethearts Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	135056
Inspection date	13/01/2009
Inspector	Helen Maria Steven
Setting address	St Saviours Church Hall, Warwick Avenue, London, W9 2PT
Telephone number	020 7266 1616
Email	
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

Little Sweethearts Montessori Nursery School is a privately owned nursery situated in the Warwick Avenue area in the City of Westminster. The premises are located in the lower ground floor of a church hall and access is via a set of stairs. There is a lift available for disabled persons at the rear of the premises. The play space consists of a hall divided into areas, classroom, kitchen, office, staff room and toilets. There are currently 62 children on roll. The provision is registered for a maximum of 47 children at any one time.

Children attend for a variety of sessions: full days, 8.55 to 15.30; morning sessions 8.55 to 12.00; and afternoon sessions, 13.15 to 15.45.

There is no outside play space at this setting, however, children are taken out on a regular basis to a local school, which provides a private play space for a set time each day. The provision supports children who have English as an additional language and have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are 14 members of staff including the proprietor and manager who are supernumerary. The majority of the staff are qualified, eight are Montessori trained.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and have good relationships with the friendly staff team who are from diverse cultural backgrounds and speak a range of languages as well as English. Practitioners are keen to develop the quality of their service and have begun to evaluate their practice through the Ofsted self-evaluation form and during staff meetings. Practitioners are aware of children's individual needs and meet them well by developing activities to enhance children's sense of belonging. Practitioners are developing their skills in Makaton to enhance their communication with children in their care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the process of self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development to improve the quality of provision for all children
- continue to develop knowledge of Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and guidance to support children's continuous learning and development

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- develop the system for conducting risk assessments, including one for each type of outing carried out,

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review regularly and record when and by whom the aspects have been checked and improve children's safety by addressing the identified hazards (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The provider and her team are keen to develop the quality of their service. They have received training and are in the process of developing their understanding and delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They have systems for observation, planning and assessment, although practitioners do not routinely record children's next steps of learning and do not include parents' comments. The provider has begun to self-evaluate their practice to identify strengths and area for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children, but this process is in its infancy. Practitioners develop very good relationships with parents, verbal feedback is given daily and progress reports are shared with parents regularly. Parents report that they are happy with the nursery and feel able to approach practitioners if they have any concerns. Notice boards and newsletters are used to communicate to parents and carers, currently the focus of information is welfare and policy reminders.

There are a range of policies and procedures in place, which are shared with parents, however, some are unclear and some have not been updated to reflect current practice. Children are safeguarded as there are robust recruitment procedures in place and practitioners are aware of their responsibilities. Interesting activities are carried out in the large hall, however, some can be disruptive for other users of the room who are based in separate areas.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy their time at nursery developing relationships with their peers and the friendly staff team. They learn how to share and have respect for each other as practitioners gently remind them about good manners. Children display confidence when using the Montessori equipment; they make choices and take responsibility to put the resources back when finished. Children settle well in the nursery as the provider has an excellent settling-in procedure enabling new children and their parents to start 30 minutes before the nursery opens. They have a chance to explore the resources, develop their relationships with their keyworker and benefit from their parents sharing information with the practitioners in a relaxed atmosphere. A wide range of resources enable children to problem solve and practitioners encourage them to think about numbers during their ongoing conversations. Children enjoy mark making, for example, they use pencils to draw independently and have opportunities to paint. There are cosy book areas with soft cushions and a good selection of available books. Children use these areas independently and share books with their friends, commenting on the pictures and recalling stories. The children are aware of their local environment as they undertake daily trips to an outdoor space in a local school. There are some

opportunities for children to develop their skills in information computer technology.

Children behave well within their stage of development and practitioners demonstrate skilful strategies and confidence in managing unwanted behaviour. By undertaking activities, such as sorting pictures into healthy/unhealthy foods, through discussions at lunch times and visual displays, children develop an understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, they hold onto to the railing when using the stairs. Practitioners demonstrate that they have risk assessed hazards, but they have not been logged appropriately in line with regulation. In addition, they have overlooked a hazard; the kidney beans used in some activities may harm children if they are ingested. Children have had some opportunities to practise fire drills to develop their awareness of emergency evacuation procedures.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

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?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
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?	3
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 the last inspection.

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.