

# Lavendale Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	147571
<b>Inspection date</b>	22/01/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Siobhan O'Callaghan
<b>Setting address</b>	Woodside Park Club, Southover, Wooside Park, London, N12 7JG
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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

Lavendale Montessori Day Nursery is a privately owned provision which opened in May 2006. Prior to this they operated as a pre-school in an adjoining hall offering sessional care. The providers have been offering childcare places since 1998. The pre-school operates from the Woodside Park Club. The provision is situated in Woodside Park in the London borough of Barnet. The nursery is purpose-built and has access to three base rooms, a kitchen, utility areas and toilets. All children have shared access to outside play provision with use of an adventure playground. A maximum of 45 children may attend the group at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday for 50 weeks of the year from 08:00 to 18:00. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The premises are accessed by one small step leading into the nursery; they have ample parking facilities available for parents.

There are currently 62 children aged from one year to under five years on roll. Of these, 32 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery has processes in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports many children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 16 staff. Of these, 13 staff, including the manager holds appropriate early years qualifications and six staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from a qualified teacher and the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Lavendale Montessori nursery provides good care and education for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are warmly welcomed into this bright and stimulating environment where there is an excellent focus on valuing and respecting the uniqueness of each child. Children benefit from the extremely successful partnerships that have been established with parents, consequently children have their individual needs effectively met. The provision demonstrates a positive approach to continuous improvement which is evident within their thorough self-evaluation and within their commitment to further developing their staffs' knowledge and skills through attending up-to-date and relevant training opportunities.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that the timing of accidents are consistently recorded
- ensure that all staff are familiar with the steps to be taken when children arrive with an existing injury, including clearly defined recording procedures
- develop further children's independence skills at lunch times so that they are able to serve their own food and pour their own drinks.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The providers of the nursery are committed to providing high quality care and education for children. Since their last inspection, they have further developed their comprehensive records, policies and procedures. They have implemented effective systems to monitor and evaluate all aspects of children's welfare and learning. This has led to improved outcomes for children throughout the nursery. One strong example has been the development and management of children's key-workers. All children have special named individuals (key-workers) who will take care of their needs throughout the day and ensure consistent liaison with parents. There are also successful systems in place to arrange another adult well-known to the child to care for them should their named person be absent on any given day. These positive improvements ensure that children's welfare and continuity of care is fully promoted. The provision has embraced support from external agencies to instigate improvements within the provision and thus promote better outcomes for children. The newly developed planning and assessment systems successfully focus on individual learning and the importance of involving parents in this process. The close liaison and involvement with parents has grown significantly since the last inspection and is now an outstanding feature of this provision. Parents demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the care and education their children receive through both parental questionnaires and discussion. Parents' comments include: "I am totally satisfied with all aspects of the nursery, the staff are extremely welcoming and are always approachable", "the nursery is fantastic, my child has really come along well".

All staff are actively involved in promoting children's welfare through completing thorough risk assessments of both the inside and outside environments to ensure that children's safety is given due emphasis, thus any risks are quickly highlighted and removed. There are secure vetting and recruitment procedures in place to employ professional and suitable people to work with children. Arrangements for safeguarding children are on the whole secure. Policies and procedures that protect children and keep them safe from harm are quite comprehensive but some, such as the procedure for recording pre-existing injuries and marks that children may arrive with at the setting, are not robust, therefore, the monitoring of these incidents may not be secure. Staff are vigilant in recording all accidents that happen to children whilst they are being cared for in the provision, although, they have failed to consistently time all of these so that parents are fully aware of when the accidents occurred.

The nursery is effectively organised to promote an inclusive and welcoming environment for children. All furniture, equipment and resources are fully accessible to all children, even the youngest in attendance have the ability to make choices about their play and thus become independent and active learners. The bright displays and photographs throughout the whole nursery positively promote a sense of belonging as children observe photographs of themselves and their peers. All children have an individual photo album that acts as a home-nursery link. Parents are fully involved in this process as they are asked to bring in photos of themselves and their families. Staff then make these into laminated albums

which are then kept at nursery and shared with the children. It is evident that children love to look at these, and to share them with their peers. The nursery positively promotes children's home backgrounds; children who speak English as an additional language have their home language valued in the provision. Different languages are displayed throughout the nursery and a world poster demonstrates where everyone is from around the world, this includes all children and staff. The pre-school room alone have 17 different languages that are spoken. Parents are welcomed into the setting to share aspects of their own cultures with the children. One example of this inspiring practice includes a Japanese mother who came into the setting to make sushi with the children. Thus overall, children are developing a positive self-image as well as learning about the values and beliefs of others within the community.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children's welfare is promoted through many positive practices within their daily routines. They enjoy eating healthily as they are provided with nutritious home-cooked meals. They learn the importance of personal hygiene as they brush their teeth after lunch and wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day. All children have regular opportunities to get fresh air and exercise on a daily basis which positively supports their overall well-being. Babies are taken for walks to the local park whilst older and more mobile children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills on the challenging climbing equipment outside. Toddlers enjoy an afternoon walk around the cricket field, they have their wellington boots on and are clearly delighted to splash in the many puddles along the path. Babies and younger children have good opportunities to rest during the day, all sleeping children are closely monitored and their sleep times are effectively recorded. Children's personal safety is permeated throughout the setting. Staff continually speak to children about keeping themselves safe, they learn how to use resources responsibly and are reminded of the importance to handle these with due care, for example, they are reminded to not walk around whilst holding scissors. Outside they are reminded of being careful not to go too fast on slippery surfaces. Babies too learn how to keep safe as staff demonstrate how to sit on chairs safely and how to use small wheeled resources carefully.

The staff team demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and progress. They effectively focus on children's individual interests and then incorporate these within their planning for their future learning opportunities. Staff ensure that children have a good balance of both adult-led and child-initiated learning experiences as well as giving due emphasis to both the inside and outside learning environment. The staff team have developed valuable learning resources that can be taken outside to support children's play. These reflect the six areas of learning, for example, for knowledge and understanding of the world, staff have developed a bag with view finders, magnifying glasses and containers that encourage children to collect and explore what they can find in the garden. For communication, language and literacy, children access a range of mark-making resources and books to enjoy outside with staff's support and supervision. Older children enthusiastically write on the chalk board in the garden and then wash down their scribes with water and large paintbrushes. Some

children pretend to be painters and decorators as they purposefully carry their buckets of water and paintbrushes and then proceed to paint all the walls and fences with water. A staff member is close by to support children's imaginary role play scenarios whilst another member of staff is on hand to read books to those children who request a quieter activity.

It is evident that staff know their key children well as they monitor their progress through well-informed assessment systems, that are focussed around the six areas of learning. Assessments include bright photos of children at play and therefore, give parents a good insight into what their children are learning whilst at nursery. Parents are fully included in this process as they meet with staff each term to discuss and contribute towards their children's assessment records. Children are on the whole happy and settled within their environment. Babies have established secure and warm relationships with their carers. They confidently approach them for a cuddle or just for reassurance. They energetically engage within physical play sessions where they have opportunities to ride on rockers, drive small cars and jump on a small mattress. Some children who do not want to participate are offered alternative activities, they happily settle with a practical activity where they have to use their mathematical skills to match pairs of socks. Babies are delighted to receive praise when they achieve this task. Toddlers are very busy within their room as they independently access a good range of messy play activities. They are particularly engrossed within their role-play scenarios where they dress-up in a variety of costumes including a policeman, builder, and Father Christmas. Staff provide a box of hats to further support their play as more and more children are interested in joining in. As some hats are more popular than others, staff skilfully use this experience to reinforce the importance of sharing and taking turns.

Pre-school children have a rich and stimulating learning environment which they fully utilise. Children are extremely confident to express themselves as they competently answer my question: "what do you like to do at nursery?" Their replies include: "I like to do reading and Montessori work and I love to play in the vet", "I love to build and make models". Children demonstrate good information and communications skills as they competently play educational games on the computer. They learn about different medical instruments and how they are to be used, such as a stethoscope and a thermometer as they play within the role-play veterinary surgery. Children are excited to show me their growing area outside where they have recently been planting bulbs. In the Spring they have planted vegetables such as potatoes and carrots which they then use in their cooking activities. Therefore, children are learning successfully through their purposeful play. Staff interaction throughout the nursery is very positive; staff sit at the children's level and support all aspects of their care and learning in a sensitive way. However, the organisation of lunch times for the older children does not fully promote children's independence with regards to them choosing and helping to serve their own food and drinks.

Daily routines help to support children in learning excellent codes of behaviour. They enjoy helping to tidy away their environment and to support their peers with tasks. For example, children help each other and a member of staff to lift a table so that the floor can be thoroughly cleaned beneath; children competently tidy away their plates after lunch and help to scrape uneaten food into the bin. They

are delighted to receive lots of praise and recognition for their efforts. Overall, children display exemplary behaviour; they are polite and respectful towards each other. The impact is that children are motivated to learn, they are able to concentrate and achieve desired results as they set about individual tasks. For example, children are able to build complex models and are then delighted to show these off and explain in detail what they have made. Children's work is fully valued and respected as staff ensure children that their models will be put away safely so that these can be shared with their parents later. Overall, children are developing many important learning and development skills which set secure foundations for their future learning.

## 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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	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?	1
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](http://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 that required the setting to take any action.

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.