

Victoria Road Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Victoria Road Montessori School, located in the W8 area of Kensington, was first registered in 2007 and is one of two private nurseries owned by Multistori Limited. It operates from a church vestry and has exclusive use of an enclosed outdoor area when the setting is in operation.

The setting provides a term service between the hours 09:00 and 12:00. A team of three staff work with the children, all of whom hold early years qualifications. The setting provides care and learning based on Montessori principles.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and may care for a maximum of 16 children in the early years age range at any one time. Of these, none may be aged under two years. There are currently 12 children on roll who are aged between two and four years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for by a well qualified and very committed staff team. They know the group well and have developed warm, supportive relationships with each individual child. Children's overall welfare, learning and development are effectively promoted. They enjoy an extensive range of good quality play and learning experiences in a very inclusive atmosphere and their progress is effectively monitored. There are highly developed systems to promote continuous improvement. In particular, there is a strong commitment to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure nappy changing arrangements afford sufficient privacy for children and are made more comfortable
- review how snacks are organised to ensure younger children are made familiar with the practice of helping themselves

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The overall safety of children is positively protected because staff are highly secure in their knowledge of safeguarding issues and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in child protection. They are familiar with the process for monitoring, recording and reporting concerns and have clear up-to-date written procedures to follow. Senior staff are well informed about the role of Ofsted. In line with new requirements, there is a clear written procedure to follow in the

event of an allegation being directed against a member of staff. Effective recruitment procedures, with careful checking of staff and students for their suitability to work with children, is an added safeguard.

Children are looked after in secure surroundings with highly effective systems in place to ensure potential safety risks are minimised. Good practical safety precautions are taken and routine safety procedures, such as practising fire drills, help raise children's safety awareness. Comprehensive risk assessments are also effectively used by staff to identify and address potential safety risks. Well documented attendance records ensure children's attendance is closely monitored.

Well documented policies and procedures relating to children's overall health, safety and welfare are effectively put into practice by staff; they are well deployed and carry out stringent safety checks before children arrive. Space is organised with a child's needs firmly in mind and staff create a very warm and welcoming atmosphere, which promotes a strong sense of security.

A comprehensive sickness policy helps ensure children are protected from the spread of infection. Information and advice provided by the local health authority is also closely followed. This is effectively shared with parents as part of promoting children's good health. As an example, they are made aware of the symptoms of pandemics such as swine flu and children are also closely monitored by staff, who demonstrate a strong commitment to act decisively if a child's health is remotely at risk. A valid first aid certificate is held by each member of staff.

Leadership and management of the nursery is highly effective. The quality of childcare practice is closely monitored by the owner and manager who work with staff in both establishments to identify areas for improvement through a process of astute self-evaluation. Skills sharing is highly encouraged and training is ongoing. All staff demonstrate a very good understanding of the revised framework governing the care and education of young children, with already excellent systems in place to monitor and guide children's progress.

Excellent partnerships with parents help to ensure children's learning and development is a positive, shared experience. They are valued partners and the individual needs of each child are taken into very good account. Parents receive excellent information about the overall service and curriculum and are positively encouraged to become actively involved in the care and education of their child. They also receive strong support and written guidance as their child makes the transition towards attending mainstream education. The highly comprehensive information gathered as part of the settling in period is effectively used by staff to plan for children's future care. The needs of children who speak English as an additional language and those who may require additional support are extremely well met. Their individual backgrounds, abilities and culture are highly valued by staff who effectively incorporate their needs into the curriculum.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children receive a good standard of care in a safe and secure setting, where consideration of their individual needs is given high priority. They enjoy very warm, attentive care and the calm and gentle approach of staff helps children to feel secure and valued. New children's independence skills are developing well. They are encouraged to be actively involved in the smooth running of the setting by helping to tidy away and learn about the value of cooperation and sharing. They are encouraged to discover behaviour limits and boundaries for themselves and already behave in a safe and considerate way towards others.

Children make good progress in their learning and development. They learn at their own pace and make exciting new discoveries about their abilities and skills. They have a great deal of fun taking part in special projects which skilfully link lots of different learning areas. For example, they see simple scientific principles being put into practice as they add various components to the crater of a model volcano, creating an imaginary eruption. They are enthusiastic contributors during activities, often asking challenging questions. These are met with carefully considered explanations by staff who skilfully take every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary. Children's growing appreciation of books is evident. They treat materials with great respect and routinely look at books either alone or in small groups. The environment is child-centred and well organised. Children choose freely from an extensive, good quality range of play and learning resources, all of which are made easily accessible. The use of work trays and floor cushions are also valuable in helping children to maximise use of the small indoor space in an effective and safe way.

Careful and detailed observations are kept about children's progress with clear plans for each child's next steps. Staff keep parents extremely well informed about children's achievements in a range of ways. For example, they hold individual meetings with parents on a regular basis and also invite them to participatory workshops where they can learn more about the teaching methods of Montessori and how this relates to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Various forms of electronic messaging are also effectively used by key workers to reassure parents on a daily basis.

Families of different religions and beliefs are positively encouraged to share their own cultural celebrations, and interactive role play enables children to explore how other people live in an enjoyable and educational way. As an example, celebration of Eid is shared with children using props, costumes, books, songs and artifacts, some of which are donated by parents. Less well known festivals celebrated by individual children are also successfully incorporated into activities. Staff are conversant with a range of techniques to extend the vocabulary of bilingual children and closely consult parents about how to build children's confidence in speaking English.

Children are developing a suitable awareness of healthy living. Physical exercise and outdoor play form an integral part of children's daily routines in the small but

very well organised outdoor area. This is confidently used by most children to practise their climbing and balancing skills and is also effectively used for gardening and as an extended 'classroom' for more general activities.

Hygiene standards and bathroom facilities are suitable overall, but current arrangements for nappy changing do not afford children sufficient privacy and are not particularly comfortable. Older children are developing suitable independence skills in self-care. They are strongly encouraged to regularly wash their hands and understand how to stop the spread of infection by covering their mouths when coughing.

Snacks enjoyed by children are healthy and nutritious with attention paid to children's specific dietary requirements, likes and dislikes. A review of how snacks are organised is, however, needed as some new, younger children are not entirely familiar with the practice of helping themselves.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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