

The Pier Head Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

01/12/2009

Inspector

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Setting address

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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*.

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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The Pier Head Montessori Pre-School was registered in 2009 and operates from an Activity Centre, in Wapping in the borough of Tower Hamlets.

The setting is reached on the first floor of a community/activity centre. There is a lift available. They have access to a large hall with separate toilets and kitchen. There is no outdoor area although children are taken to the local park on a daily basis. A maximum of 30 children aged two to five years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 12 children on roll. The group is open five days a week from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year.

This setting is registered on the Early years and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare register. This setting follows a Montessori educational approach.

There are four staff including the manager all hold appropriate early years qualifications and two members of staff member has a Montessori International Diploma level 4. One member of staff has Safer Recruitment Training.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff's knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs results in children feeling secure, and benefiting from play experiences that encourage their individual development well. The staff's supportive and positive interaction with the children encourages their self confidence and safe exploration of the environment and helps them progress in all areas of learning. The necessary written records are maintained and good relationships with parents result in information being shared well and links being built with other settings children attend. The manager demonstrates a commitment to continual improvement through attending ongoing training. The use of self-evaluation is fully developed and involves all staff in identifying areas for future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- assess the risks to children in relation to security of the front door and take action to minimise
- provide a suitable range of equipment to meet the developmental needs of the children attending
- continue to improve the arrangements for observations and assessments so they can be used to assist in planning enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences that are tailored to meet children's individual needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by a committed and enthusiastic staff team. Good deployment of staff ensures that children have effective support to meet their welfare and learning needs. Clear procedures are in place for protecting children and staff clearly understand their responsibility for reporting any child protection concerns. All staff have attended recent safeguarding training, developing current knowledge in this area. Staff are vigilant and follow safety procedures very well working as a team. These are undertaken for areas used inside the activity centre as well as for outings, including the daily trip to the local park. Children are taught valuable independence skills such as, how to manage the stairs and to walk together looking out for obstacles and the road as they make the short trip to the park. Good ratios of staff on outings help to promote children's safety. Staff are very aware of the types of risks which may occur on the way to the local park. On arrival at the park staff always check for hazards before they enter. The premises are checked each day to ensure risks are minimised. However, the internal door to the activity centre is often left open by other users of the community centre and the intercom and door release is not currently working.

Management and staff work very well together and benefit from training and advice provided by the early years service. All staff have considered the strengths and weaknesses of the setting to identify how the setting can improve outcomes for children. The space used by the nursery is welcoming and child orientated. The hall used is spacious, allowing children to move and play freely. A good range of play materials and furniture are provided enabling children to play, rest and eat safely and comfortably and they have identified this as an area they are keen to improve on in this newly established nursery.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which they have translated very well, in planning and providing a thorough Montessori curriculum. This will be further enhanced when systems for recording children's progress towards the six areas of learning are fully established. Staff have identified this as an area they would like to further develop. They are working closely with the Local authority early years service in order to plan and assess children's learning and development.

A good range of Montessori resources and a variety of other equipment are set out at children's level, encouraging children's exploration and interest. Staff have a good knowledge of children's individual needs and preferences. This is obtained through detailed discussion with parents and through observation of children's preferences and stage of development. This enables staff to follow individual routines, plan for children's developmental needs and support children well in all the areas of learning as they progress. This also makes it clear for parents and others how staff are delivering individualised learning for each child by building on their interests. Staff discuss children's individual needs on a daily basis with parents and provide regular opportunities to formally discuss children's progress. Systems to fully involve parents in their children's learning by contributing to their daily journals and offering support to continue their learning at home are securely in place.

An inclusive service for families and children is provided, with emphasis on children's individual needs. Information is shared well between the staff and

parents, for example, through detailed written information in daily journals and daily verbal communication. This results in key staff being aware of any changes, and children's home routines being followed, helping children feel secure in their care. Links are already being built by the setting with other settings that children attend, such as, nannies, sharing information and helping to provide continuity of care for children. Parents views are sought through a variety of mediums and their responses about their children's experiences at this setting are very positive. The necessary records and documentation are clearly maintained and well organised. Policies and procedures are shared with parents, and other relevant information and literature is displayed, including the registration certificate.

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

Children are happy and settled as staff follow effective procedures to ensure they have good knowledge of children's individual needs. Consequently all children are well supported as staff regularly liaise with parents. The activities are well planned and include strategies designed to help all age groups learn and progress. Children enjoy being in the setting and are encouraged to have fun. Children are warmly welcomed as they arrive at the setting they react happily as familiar staff ensure they separate securely from their parents. They also happily wave goodbye as they leave after the morning session, content as they have had an enjoyable time.

Young children benefit from the staff's awareness of their individual routines, consequently they are able to eat and sleep according to their needs. Settling in arrangements help children feel secure at the setting. Parents are encouraged to bring special comforters to remind the children of home, these are available when the children need extra reassurance or at sleep times.

Children are developing an understanding of diversity and other peoples differing needs through the celebration of cultural festivals. Topic work, when a different country of some relevance to individual children is enjoyed each week, provides a wealth of opportunity to include families who are encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise. Parents and staff are encouraged to share food important to their culture during celebrations. Children feel special as they make transitions such as for new siblings or going to live in another country. This helps to develop their sense of belonging at the setting. Children are developing responsibility and respect for each other as they learn to care for each other's needs. For example, older children return a special comfort toy belonging to one of the younger ones as they know this is important to that child. Children's behaviour is appropriately managed as they are praised for their achievements and encouraged to have good manners. Children are learning about their own health and safety as they play and move around safely. For example, the organisation of the environment encourages them to explore safely the toys and materials and increase their independent mobility. They see the staff following good hygiene procedures, such as, hand washing and tidying away toys, and staff talk to them about being clean and comfortable to start another activity.

Children enjoy opportunities for creative and messy play as they take part in hand printing and drawing. They are learning about shapes and colours as staff sit beside them providing good support and attention. Children happily engage in group singing activities joining in with familiar songs and stories. Staff are attentive

to their needs and engage children in conversations during activities and meal times. They respond to the children's questions about what they will be doing after lunch in a friendly and relaxed manner. Staff use effective methods and questioning to promote children's thinking, vocabulary and understanding to help them make progress in their development. Young children enjoy opportunities to sit comfortably with staff if they are tired or before they go to sleep. Staff know them well and ensure their individual needs are met. The setting practises a key person system and children demonstrate their attachment to their key staff who settle them easily at sleep times or when they are upset.

Children are developing an understanding of healthy living and caring for the environment. They are involved in recycling and understand that we can reuse some items for making things and others can go in the recycle bins to be used again. They learn about good hygiene through hand washing routines and staff follow hygienic routines for nappy changing by wearing disposable gloves and aprons. Furthermore staff ensure that parents are aware of the sickness procedure so children are cared for at home when they are unwell. Children enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they participate in outdoor activities at the local park. Older children are developing good physical skills as they take part in organised physical activities such as yoga and dancing. In the park they are developing confidence as they practise throwing and catching the brightly coloured balls. They happily count how many balls they can see as they help to pick them up at the end of the play session in the park. Children are encouraged to eat healthy meals and snacks including, fresh fruits and vegetables and enjoy making their own smoothies. Children are given choices and are able to plan their snack and lunch themselves for the following day using the picture cards to choose their favourite foods. Regular drinks are provided with fresh drinking water in jugs easily accessible. Children sit together with staff during meal times in a relaxed atmosphere.

Children's individual needs are reflected in the range of activities and play experiences the staff provide and in the organisation of the environment. Children are secure and happy in the staff's care, they smile and confidently talk to staff knowing they will receive a response. Their self confidence and emotional well being is promoted very well by caring, affectionate and supportive interaction with the staff. Children's language development is encouraged very well by the staff taking turns in talking about what they and the children are doing and echoing children's vocalisation. Children's achievements are constantly praised and valued, encouraging them to repeat tasks and try again.

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?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met