

# Montessori Infant Community

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY337464

**Inspection date**

28/09/2010

**Inspector**

Elizabeth Mackey

**Setting address**

The Contact Centre, 60 Hambalt Road, Clapham, LONDON,  
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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

Montessori Infant Community opened in 2006. It operates from a contact centre in Clapham in the London borough of Lambeth. It is close to the open spaces of Clapham Common. It operates from a large hall, with toilets and a kitchen, there is not an outdoor area. The setting is easily accessible, it is on the ground floor. Other areas within the centre are used by other groups. The setting is registered on the Early Years register, a maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 11 children from one year to three years on roll. The setting support a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting currently opens two days a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays, during the term time only. Sessions are from 09.30 till 12.00. The setting employs 4 staff, including the Manager, of whom three have early years qualifications. The teaching method used is Montessori, which is combined with the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall, the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children's individual learning needs are well supported by the experienced staff team, however, the systems for observation, assessment and planning are not fully developed. Staff create an enabling environment in which children can independently access a stimulating range of activities. Children behave well because staff manage behaviour positively. Staff informally evaluate their provision but do not have clearly identified targets in place for ongoing improvement. Children gain positive messages about diversity as they play with resources that reflect diversity and all children are fully included 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 the nominated person for safeguarding children has updated knowledge of child protection
- ensure the activities in the Montessori environment are linked with the principals of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- ensure observations contribute to children's individual records of achievement, which are shared with parents
- review and improve the system for the management of regulatory records
- prevent the risk of cross infection by providing individual hand towels

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

The ratio of staff to children is high and as a result children receive good support and the focus on their emotional needs is consistent and effectively met. Staff meet together regularly as a team to discuss children's progress and to develop their service. Staff appraisals take place and ongoing training is encouraged to develop their knowledge. An effective key person system is in place and staff know their key children and their families very well. This ensures that all children's individual needs are known and respected. The Manager has ensured the weaknesses raised at the last inspection have been met. She has begun to evaluate the provision but has not yet formalised this into a working document. In general, the organisation of documentation is poor and some regulatory records are not easily accessible.

Children's safety is protected, because there is a good level of supervision. Also the Manager has first aid training and appropriate procedures are in place for the recording of accidents, incidents and medication. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and an appropriate safeguarding policy is in place. The Manager is the nominated person for safeguarding and she has not updated her Safeguarding training and this is recommended to ensure her knowledge is up-to-date. Risk assessments are conducted and a safe environment is maintained.

Children are provided with healthy snacks and drinks. Children also learn about the importance of healthy eating. This is also promoted with the availability of fruits for them to explore, for example pomegranates. They also enjoy using the juices to squeeze their own juice from the oranges available. There is not an outdoor area available to the children; however, resources are made available for them to climb, balance and develop both their fine and gross motor skills. Staff also ensure that children have opportunities to learn about nature are available, through themed activities and providing plants for the children to nurture.

Parents are well informed about the setting via newsletters, notice boards and one to one feedback sessions with their child's key person on a regularly basis. The staff ratio enables staff to have a meaningful discussion with parents, who arrive before the session ends. Information about the setting's policies and procedures are available to them in the entrance area. Parents are asked to provide information about their child's care and development prior to attending the setting. This enables staff to meet their individual needs appropriately. Parents are also regularly invited to complete written feedback about the setting.

The staff team are skilled in responding to the children's needs and interests and support their development well. They ask open ended questions, which encourage children to think and allow children to be independent and try things out for themselves. They are highly effective in supporting children's personal social and emotional development; it is an extremely nurturing setting. For example, new children attending are reassured and provided with one to one attention, until they feel secure enough to explore their environment. Staff have a very positive

approach and use lovely distraction techniques such as gently singing, using children's names to engage them. The children respond well by joining in.

Children play with good quality resources, including a wide range of Montessori resources. They see images which positively reflect different race, culture, language and disability. Staff liaise with parents and local authority advisory staff to ensure that they fully meet the needs of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language. Furthermore, some of the staff are bi-lingual which helps to support children and families who have English as an additional language.

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

Children have opportunities to make progress in all areas of their learning and development. Staff focus on the individual needs of the children and they are proactive in planning for their individual needs. Staff do make observations of the children to inform their planning, however, there is not sufficient detail recorded within the observations to measure or assess children's progress in linewith the early learning goals.

Children are enabled to become independent learners within the setting because the environment is extremely accessible and stimulating. Children confidently access the wide range of interesting activities that are available to them and play purposefully. They are familiar with the routine in place and independently make choices. For example, when children want to have a drink they select the juicer to squeeze the juice out of the orange for their drink. Children choose when they want to sit down for the snack. They pour themselves a drink of water when they are thirsty. Conversations take place as the children eat and it is a social occasion. Children practice good hygiene routines, for example they wash their hands after using the toilet. They share a towel for drying their hands, which increases the risk of cross infection. The range of activities include activities such as spoons, jugs, fastenings, containers, water for experimenting with pouring, filling and capacity in the 'practical life' area. Children are encouraged to help one another, for example one child is asked to get a tissue for another child and they are reminded to take turns when accessing popular activities. Children learn about the world and nature as they grow plants and explore natural objects such as plants, fruits and vegetables.

Children have established relationships with the staff and they speak confidently to them. The ratio allows for a high level of one to one attention. The book area offers a comfortable and inviting area for the children and they independently access books and handle them appropriately. They also enjoy the attention of sharing a book with staff on a one to one basis. Parents are invited to join the children before the end of the session for a music session. This is enjoyed by all, the children express themselves, enthusiastically singing and performing the actions of the songs. Children experiment with the play dough, they roll it out, squeeze it in their hands and using cutters make a variety of shapes. Children have

plenty of opportunities for mark making, they enjoy creative play at the easel with paint and chalks. Children's physical development is promoted as they access the climbing frame and learn to take turns coming down the slide. Parents are invited to join the session towards the end to join the children and staff for group singing. Parents speak very positively about the setting and comment that their children have settled well.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
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	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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