

# St Michael's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 509698  
**Inspection date** 23/09/2010  
**Inspector** Linda Close

**Setting address** Elm Bank Gardens, Barnes, London, SW13 0NX

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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**

St. Michael's Nursery School was registered under the present owner in 2000. It is located in church premises in a residential road in Barnes in the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames. The premises consists of a large hall and a small hall for children's activities, a stage which is used for storage purposes, a kitchen, toilet facilities and an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The nursery school serves the local and surrounding areas. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 44 children aged from two years to the end of the early years age group. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 41 children on roll aged two to four years. The nursery receives funding for 33 children age three and four years.

A small number of the children attending are learning English as an additional language. The nursery welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities although there are none on roll at the moment. The nursery is open every weekday during term time only. Sessions begin at 9.15am and end at 12.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Older children may bring a packed lunch from home and stay all day during the summer term. The provider manages the setting assisted by 13 members of staff. There are six members of staff who are full-time and eight who are part-time workers. This includes specialist, qualified, peripatetic teachers of yoga, music and art who visit to lead these activities. More than half of the staff are appropriately qualified, six of whom hold Level 4 Montessori Diploma qualifications. The nursery follows the Montessori philosophy and method of education and works within the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The provider and staff are highly successful in promoting the welfare and learning of every child who attends this nursery. The staff team is devoted to helping children to achieve to the best of their ability. The children are safe and secure in the setting and they happily explore their environment and the excellent range of resources and learning opportunities that are made available to them. Strong partnerships with parents, local schools and other agencies make a significant contribution towards meeting the health and learning needs of all children. Most children make excellent progress given their age, ability and starting points. Staff, parents and children contribute their thoughts and ideas to a detailed evaluation of the setting. Priorities for ongoing improvement are identified and actioned for the good of the children.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- ensure that accident records are kept in a way that promotes confidentiality

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

Children's safety and wellbeing is given a very high priority in the setting. All members of staff are checked for their suitability to work with children and any adults who await clearances do not provide personal care for children and they work with established staff members at all times. Rigorous recruitment procedures are followed to ensure that only suitable adults are employed to care for the children. The provider and staff greet the children and their parents at the door and systems are in place to ensure that children are only collected by their parents or a designated adult. Children cannot leave the setting unnoticed and strangers cannot enter unobserved.

The self-evaluation document provides a comprehensive reflection of every aspect of the nursery's provision for children. The provider and her staff have analysed their work in detail and they have matched their Montessori systems to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework with great care to ensure that they support all areas of children's learning in order to help them to make the best progress towards the early learning goals. The setting has successfully completed a recent quality assurance exercise with the local authority. Staff have devised a further action plan which demonstrates that they are not content to rest on their laurels but continue to strive to maintain high standards of care and education through ongoing reflection of their practice and through further training. The provider is currently undertaking a course leading to Early Years Professional Status and she actively encourages her staff to attend refresher courses and to embark on courses leading to further professional development.

Staff begin their day before the children arrive and they provide an exceptionally well prepared learning environment. Montessori equipment is arranged where children can access it easily and they demonstrate high levels of independence in their use of these resources. The indoor and outdoor areas are thoughtfully planned and imaginatively resourced. The environment enables the children to select stimulating activities that interest them and support their learning. Staff observe the children carefully to gauge their level of interest and their take up of the activities provided. They provide the support and guidance that each child needs so that they can access everything that the nursery provides. Staff liaise closely with parents and they enlist the aid of speech therapists and the local authority special needs co-ordinator who visit and provide expert advice and guidance if there is a need.

The staff hold parents and carers in high esteem and their input is warmly welcomed. Informative newsletters are produced online and hard copies are available if parents prefer. Details of forthcoming events and activities are shared with parents so that they can contribute to their child's learning at home and at the setting. A record of what children have been doing is available on a website

which parents can access with a passcode to see photographs and video clips of their children at work and play. Observation files are compiled about each child and shared with parents at any time.

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

Staff believe that children are active learners who need time, space and a well planned and prepared learning environment in which to explore, investigate and learn. Their role is to support the children, facilitate their innate need to learn and help them to engage with learning opportunities. Staff listen to parents, observe the children and assess their individual stage of learning when they join the setting. Each child is given the support and encouragement they need to move forward in their learning, each at his or her own pace. Staff monitor each child's progress and they carefully record each child's achievements. They use the information gained to track children's involvement and interests and to plan for their future learning. The children enjoy their activities which are engaging, stimulating and very worthwhile. They make independent choices and decisions from the moment they arrive. Many choose practical life activities which include pouring, polishing, grinding coffee beans, using tweezers and threading all of which they manage exceptionally well. Children also choose when they will join in with music activities, art and craft and Yoga. They gain a strong sense of independence and their self-esteem grows from the respect that is shown to them in the setting. The children are busy, and very well motivated.

Children show that they feel safe in the nursery in the happy way they leave their parents to join the staff at the start of the session. They share news, triumphs and spills with the staff who are always ready to smile, help and sympathise. Risk assessments and daily checks ensure that the setting is clean and safe for the children indoors, outside and on outings. Attendance records are well kept and fire evacuation is practised and recorded. First aiders are always on site to give assistance and trained staff stand ready to apply an epipen to a child who may need it. Accident records are made although they are not recorded in a confidential manner. Staff are very careful that the only foodstuffs provided at the nursery are healthy, wholesome and not likely to disagree with any of the children. Drinks and fresh fruit and vegetable snacks are set out for children to take as they feel the need. Children learn about good hygiene and all about how their bodies work. They learn about road safety routines indoors and sensible behaviour when they go on outings so that they learn how to keep themselves safe.

Children are gaining particularly good skills for the future. Their communication skills are nurtured by clearly spoken staff who extend children's vocabulary at every opportunity. Children talk freely to staff and visitors. They ask questions, invite adults to join their games and they express themselves fluently and with confidence. Children learn about numbers and counting through their Montessori work and through numerous stimulating play activities indoors and outside. They count accurately and show a growing understanding of one-to-one correspondence. They demonstrate increasing facility in the use of information and

communication technology equipment which includes a 'Pixie' roamer and a 'Beebot'. Even the newest learners quickly grasp the control mechanisms and direct the robots to their chosen destination.

The programme of events includes activities which extend children's knowledge and understanding of diverse people in our society, knowledge of their own culture and the cultures of others. Parents make a valuable contribution to a wide range of cultural events by sharing their own specific knowledge of language, special celebrations, music and customs. The nursery is actively involved in fundraising activities for charity.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### 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>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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