

Mini VIP's Montessori Nursery and Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY419231
Inspection date	04/04/2011
Inspector	Sandra Jeffrey
Setting address	1 Campbell Road, CROYDON, CR0 2SQ
Telephone number	0208 6897663
Email	joanedwards1@hotmail.com
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Mini VIP's Montessori Nursery and Pre-school (formally First Steps Day Nursery) opened in 2010. It is privately owned and operates from a Hindu church hall within the Croydon area. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area and separate screened off play areas for babies and toddlers. The nursery is easily accessible and is well served by local transport links. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday between 8:00am and 6:00pm for 51 weeks a year, and serves the local community.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 25 children under 8 years may attend at any one time. There are currently 42 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, who attend a variety of sessions throughout the day. The nursery supports children for whom English is an additional language and children with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education and receives support from the local authority through an early years advisor. The nursery employs eight members of staff, including the registered provider who also acts as the nursery manager; of these three hold appropriate Montessori qualifications and three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

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Children are making generally steady progress in their learning and development, they enjoy a variety of activities and learning opportunities, although the planning of some activities does not consistently take into account children's individual learning needs. Children's welfare is supported by the caring staff team who ensure the children are happy and settled in their environment. Children with additional needs are welcomed at the setting and their needs addressed through establishing close working partnerships with parents and outside agencies. Generally effective safety measures ensure that children are safe and secure in the main, although some areas of the garden are in need of attention. The manager has recently taken over the setting and is dedicated to continual improvement; as such, new systems have been implemented in order to monitor and improve the outcomes for the children attending.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- Ensure that appropriate fire detection equipment is in place and in working order.

18/04/2011

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

- extend systems for making assessments of children's progress so that observations are used more effectively to plan relevant learning experiences for each child's continuing development
- continue to improve staffs' knowledge and confidence of the Early Years Foundation Stage, in order to develop their skills around providing care and education under this framework, to facilitate a stimulating and challenging environment
- review the safety of the garden in relation to the growth of stinging nettles and the wear and tear of equipment and resources.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. Effective recruitment procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children and are appropriately qualified. Staff have an understanding of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and are familiar with the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. The majority of staff have attended recent safeguarding training and the remaining staff are due to attend training in the near future.

Generally effective risk assessments contribute to children's safety and staff take steps to minimise any risks identified. However, there is currently no fire detection equipment present in the building, which inhibits the effectiveness of the settings fire safety procedures. Some areas of the garden have been allowed to become overgrown with stinging nettles and some garden furniture and resources are worn and in need of attention. Space and equipment within the main hall is well deployed. Thoughtful organisation helps to create an accessible learning environment where children of all ages can easily access play materials independently. The new owner of the setting is working closely with the owner of the hall in relation to improvements and general repairs to the building, which are due to take place over the forthcoming Easter holidays.

The setting incorporates the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum with Montessori methods of teaching. The setting is due to receive its Montessori launch at the end of April and is committed to having all staff Montessori trained and qualified. The setting is managed by an enthusiastic and motivated manager who has many years experience of running another setting in Croydon. Staff are very caring towards the children and work well together as a team. They have a common sense of purpose; to ensure that all children enjoy their time at the setting. However, some staff members have a lack confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and as such do not always consistently meet all of the children's needs.

Partnerships with parents are good and greatly contribute to children's positive

experience at the setting. Parents are very warmly welcomed into the setting by the multi-lingual staff. This enables the large number of parents who speak English as an additional language, to receive good quality information about the setting and their child's experiences within it. All parents spoken to during the inspection process stated that they are very happy with the new management and the improvements that have been made to the setting since its takeover. The setting has also developed links with other early year's settings and professional agencies involved in the care of the children; including occupational therapists, therefore ensuring that all children are fully supported within the very inclusive environment. The manager and staff team reflect on their practice to bring about continuous improvement. They have identified strengths and weaknesses within the setting and work is in progress to address these in order to improve the standard of care and learning they provide.

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

Children are warmly welcomed, by the caring staff who greet all children and parents with respect and consideration. Children settle well upon arrival and are happy and generally confident in the setting. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they are gently reminded not to run inside and are shown how to use equipment, such as scissors, safely. Children are developing an awareness of good hygiene practices as they wash their hands before eating and after playing in the garden. Their health is further promoted as they enjoy healthy meals that take their dietary needs into account. Parents who choose to provide their own food for their children are requested to adhere to the nursery's healthy eating policy. Children and staff sit together at lunchtimes, chatting and socialising as they eat. Consequently lunchtime is a relaxed and enjoyable occasion for children. Children enjoy daily opportunities to play outdoors in the garden and engage in physical exercise and fresh air. They also learn about the world around them as they plant potatoes and grow seeds, each taking turns to water and tend their plants.

Children are treated with respect and are valued as individuals. Staff are positive role models for the children and encourage them to be sociable and to be kind to each other. Children are gently reminded to share and to take turns and are given support during disputes over favourite toys, for example. This helps children to feel safe and secure and encourages older children to be confident in trying to resolve their own disputes. Babies and toddlers benefit from having their own comfortable and separate areas within the daily routine, where they can play and rest away from the older children. Children follow a simple routine throughout the day, with a balance of adult and child initiated activities. Activities reflect the six areas of learning and are beginning to incorporate the principles of the Montessori teaching method. Children are being introduced to Montessori equipment and are learning how to use these, such as the dressing frames and real life resources including the work bench and tools for example. Most children show interest in the activities provided and have the capacity to concentrate well. However, not all staff are skilled in fostering children's learning effectively and planning is not consistently applied to ensure that all children are fully engaged and challenged in their

learning and development. The new manager is aware of these short comings and is addressing these issues. Children are making satisfactory progress, as staff generally know them well and provide them with experiences and opportunities that establish a satisfactory foundation for their future learning.

Staff set up some activities, such as the home corner and constructional play, before children arrive and children can also select toys and play equipment from the level shelves. Children have regular opportunities to communicate and to practise new sounds and words. They talk about and practise letter sounds and some children are beginning to form letters when they write. For example, older children recognise the letters in their names and many parents commented, that their children have learnt to write their names since the new management took over. Children have daily opportunities to develop their creativity as they freely access creative materials. The children enjoy looking at books and generally listen well and enjoy story time. Children have sound recognition of numbers below 10 and are beginning to understand the concept of simple addition and subtraction through practical activities and counting songs. Children develop skills in using everyday information and communication technology as they complete simple programs on the computer and enjoy battery operated toys such as the police car and kitchen equipment in the home corner. Babies and younger children happily explore in their screened off area as they investigate the play centres, pressing the buttons again and again so that it makes a noise. Children learn about others as they celebrate various special days, with the help of parents who are actively invited to come in to talk about their faith and festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
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	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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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