

Happy Days Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

10/05/2011

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*.

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Happy Days Montessori School is privately owned. It opened in 1990 and operates from its own building attached to a social club in Wembley Park in the London borough of Brent. The school is open from 9.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend the school at any one time. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs three full-time and two part-time members of staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The school subscribes to the Montessori method of education and is a Montessori accredited school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children experience a very high standard of care and education at this setting. Attention given to children's safety, care and welfare is exemplary. The excellent emphasis on partnerships between parents and others ensure that children's needs are fully met. The highly motivated manager and practitioners have a very clear vision for the setting and children progress so well because the staff put them at the heart of what they do.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop further, the children's outdoor play experiences.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The quality of leadership is exemplary. Very effective teamwork amongst practitioners gives a strong drive to promote children's welfare and raise achievement. There is a strong emphasis on safeguarding with comprehensive policies and procedures clearly understood by practitioners. Children are safeguarded by robust recruitment and vetting procedures, including effective induction procedures for practitioners and students working at the setting. Criminal Record Bureau checks are in place for all practitioners and students to ensure their suitability to work with children. Furthermore, all visitors to the setting are required

to sign in and out using the visitor's book, this ensures an accurate record of everyone coming into contact with the children is maintained. Effective systems are in place to promote children's safety and security for example, comprehensive risk assessments cover all areas of the premises. Staff hold a first aid qualification to administer care effectively in the event of an accident. Furthermore, children's safety is promoted by closely monitoring the frequency of incidents and accidents within the setting. All documentation is maintained to a very high standard and policies and procedures are shared with parents.

In and outdoor space is used very effectively and there is an excellent range of Montessori and traditional toys and resources to meet the varying needs of the children. Anti-discriminatory practice is embedded very securely throughout the setting. Provision for children who are learning English as an additional language, and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is a particular strength. Staff are quick to identify any concerns in relation to children's learning and development, and they work well with parents and others to put additional help in place for them. Furthermore, practitioners establish very good links with the local receiving schools and they provide a well written progress report to assist teachers to plan future learning targets for children.

Particularly strong and purposeful relationships are forged with parents and carers. Parents are invited in to the setting to observe their children and the practitioners' interactions, which help them to gain a sense of how their child is helped to learn and progress. The value of 'Learning Journeys' to monitor progress and involve parents in their children's education is exceptional. Children are extremely proud of these and as they observe their photos and work, their friends also gather around a table to share in their successes. Parents are involved in the setting, for instance, fathers enjoy telling stories with the use of finger puppets. In discussions with parents, they speak very highly of the practitioners and the knowledge they have about their children. Parents state they have seen amazing progress in their child's learning and development and they would recommend the school to everyone.

Rigorous and accurate evaluation of the setting's performance informs plans for the future, and these are directly linked to performance management. The practitioners are now very keen to further develop children's outdoor play experiences. The equal views of children, parents and practitioners are gathered as part of the setting's self-evaluation process and its capacity for further improvement is excellent. The manager and practitioners observe one another's practice and have implemented a policy whereby they are very open to one another's suggestions to continually improve their practice for the children. This demonstrates the professionalism and confidence of practitioners, resulting in this high performing child care service.

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

Children are managed superbly and there is little disruption around the excellent indoor and outdoor areas for learning. They are developing a very strong sense of

right and wrong, and quickly inform on visiting adults breaking the rules, for instance, by stepping on their individual floor mat. Children are taught how to use all of the toys and resources carefully from their very first day in the setting. They competently use a wide range of tools, for instance, graters, hole punches, tweezers and tongs. Children are wonderful helpers; they keenly make cups of tea for practitioners with little adult assistance. They are allowed to explore freely and take calculated risks for instance, as they stand on their chair to build with bricks. They are extremely proud of their own achievements and enjoy taking photos of what they have made to put in their personal Learning Journal.

The staff successfully encourage children to eat healthily at snack time, with fresh fruits and fresh water provided throughout the session. Children decide when they want to have their snack and they automatically wash their hands before they select and cut up their piece of fruit. A very popular weekly activity is when parents come in to the setting to explore food tasting from around the world with the children. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise on a daily basis and they have great fun playing outdoors. They are increasing their physical skills as they climb, balance and slide on apparatus. Children thoroughly enjoy planting and caring for flowers and vegetables, and observe mini-beasts, such as slugs and snails. When watering the flowers, children work out how to use different containers to transport water from the bucket to the watering can by using a cup.

The very welcoming, calm and at appropriate times, exciting atmosphere creates a positive climate for learning. Practitioners are skilled in knowing how to intervene in children's activities and they use very effective systems to observe, assess and record children's learning. Practitioners know their key children very well and they are highly focused on fulfilling the needs of each and every individual. As a result, they are acutely aware of what each child can do and what they need to learn next. An excellent balance is struck between teacher-led and child-initiated activities and from the very earliest age, children are accustomed to making their own decisions as they help themselves to toys and resources both in and outdoors. They show that they can concentrate for extended periods; this is because practitioners plant ideas to ignite and extend their individual interests. For example, as two children discuss who is the tallest, the practitioner suggests they find out by measuring one another. This leads to using tape dispensers to stick paper together, making marks with pencils, using rulers to draw lines, and recording measurements. In practice, this captures the other children's interest and as a result, provokes more learning experiences.

Children are absorbed in activities that really interest and engage them. By nurturing a child's interest in 'milking cows', practitioners provided rubber gloves full of water to represent a cow's udder, to then milk in to a bucket. This led on to extending the children's interests at home, for instance, by going to visit a farm to milk a real cow. Another child expresses an interest in photography, he is able to explain how he found pictures of old cameras on the internet and very proudly demonstrates how to use his camera that he retrieves from his drawer. Each child has a beautiful book in which their art work, writing and photos are placed. This reinforces the respect that all children receive from practitioners.

The wealth of activities involving children in exploring local, national and

international traditions and events gives them a strong understanding of how other people live their lives. The children are learning about caring for those less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for various charities. Happy Days Montessori prepares children extremely well for their future education by providing an environment in which they gain a zest for learning.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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