

Halfmoon Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Half moon Montessori Day Nursery has been registered since 1993 and operates from a church building between the Herne Hill and North Dulwich areas of the London borough of Southwark. The nursery offers care to children who are over two years old. They are open five days a week during term time from 9.30am to 3.00pm and children attend for a variety of full-time and part-time sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They are registered to care for a maximum of 54 children at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 102 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting currently supports a few children who have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities and 13 children who are learning English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of early years education. There is a team of 10 staff including the manager all of whom hold recognised early years qualifications, including three staff that hold qualified teacher status. The setting uses the Montessori school of teaching methods and incorporates the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Exceptional efforts are made to ensure the needs of all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are met effectively. The educational programmes clearly promote active learning and staff maintain consistent methods of tracking children's progress; as a result the outcomes for children are outstanding. The capacity to maintain continuous improvement is outstanding as staff successfully monitor the quality of the service. They implement a broad range of policies and procedures that promote children's welfare, learning and development effectively.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further the systems of staff appraisal to promote their continuing professional development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust systems are in place to help safeguard children and promote their welfare. Staff are able to take prompt action if they have any concerns regarding children's welfare as they have completed relevant training and implement appropriate

policies and procedures. In addition, they complete vetting checks regarding their suitability to work with children and participate in induction programmes and ongoing systems of appraisal. However, methods of recording staff appraisal are in their infancy. Staff take positive steps to reduce any risks and promote safety as they complete thorough risk assessments and regular safety checks. All required documentation is in place which is used appropriately and shared with parents, promoting children's welfare.

Parents are actively involved in the life of the nursery and are kept well informed about their children's progress. They have good opportunities to share their views and also receive regular news letters that include details of activities and events. Firm partnerships are being established with other professionals that support the children within the setting, including good links with the local authority. The manager has also completed training regarding supporting children in their transitions to school.

Promoting equality is embedded in staff practice as they cater for children's individual needs effectively. Staff show a clear awareness of children's linguistic diversity and promote inclusion effectively. They successfully implement procedures to ensure the needs of any children who have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities are met appropriately. Children learn about cultures and beliefs through the use of a variety of resources that promote their knowledge and understanding of the world. They participate in a variety of planned activities and perform shows for their parents that relate to a variety of festivals.

Thorough and ongoing systems of self evaluation are in place; as a result, staff make realistic evaluations regarding the quality of their service and target any areas for improvement. They have successfully met all recommendations raised at the last inspection, showing a clear commitment to driving improvement. Deployment of resources is effective as staff make excellent use of time and space. They organise a broad range of interesting activities that successfully promote all areas of children's learning and development.

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

Children benefit from a stimulating learning environment that is attractively organised to promote children's learning and development. For example, staff transform the blank canvas of the main hall and two group rooms into vibrant learning areas. They use creative displays, educational posters and photos along with written words and information about the areas of learning and topic themes; this helps to consolidate children's learning. In addition, a broad range of good quality resources that reflect all areas of learning, including Montessori educational materials, are well organised at low level. This well planned attention to detail is outstanding and shows the high level of commitment by staff to provide a stimulating learning environment that promotes children's active learning.

Children are provided with an excellent balance of learning opportunities, including adult led activities, dance sessions with a peripatetic teacher, group activities and circle time along with time for free play and outdoor activities. Children show an understanding of the Montessori learning methods as they use the resources purposefully, for example, they select toys independently which they use on a mat, creating their own space to complete their chosen task and then replace the toys on the correct shelf after use. This secure level of independence helps them to develop a sense of responsibility and show a positive contribution to their learning environment. Children also show a secure understanding of the expectations of their behaviour and respond well to the daily routines. For example, as they line up when getting ready to go to or from the outside play area. They are developing their social skills of taking turns and sharing during play. They enjoy a relaxed lunch time as they sit in small groups with staff, with table cloths and flowers on the tables, creating a sociable atmosphere.

Excellent systems are implemented by staff to track children's progress and identify their learning needs. Staff working in all group rooms consistently record their observations of children's learning which are supported by photos and samples of children's work. They record children's learning achievements on an early years matrix document along with a Montessori tracking document and use this information to aid future planning which reflects children's individual learning needs. Staff show high regard to promoting children's good health and take positive steps to help stop the spread of infection. They help children to develop their personal independence and learn good hygiene habits. Children are supported well in the event of an accident or illness as staff hold current first aid qualifications and implement appropriate procedures as needed; this helps to safeguard children's welfare. Children adopt healthy lifestyles as they have excellent opportunities to engage in physical play activities that enable them to gain regular fresh air and exercise throughout the day. Children enjoy a variety of fresh fruit at snack time and the setting promotes healthy eating regarding packed lunches that children bring from home.

Staff provide excellent support for children during play; this is evident in the levels of supervision that help keep children safe along with direct learning support. For example, staff follow children's spontaneous interests during play, such as playing hide and seek in the garden and reading stories on request. They also model learning as they demonstrate the use of the Montessori materials with children; this balance of support ensures children's learning needs are met effectively. The outcomes for children are excellent. Children actively engage in a broad range of activities that promote all areas of learning effectively; this enables them to develop their skills for the future that promote successful learning. Children play cooperatively and freely approach staff if they need any help; this shows that they are developing positive relationships that help them feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Children are supported in learning about safety and participate in regular evacuation drills so that they are familiar with the procedures to follow in an emergency.

Children are interested and keen to learn. They play cooperatively and actively participate in group activities, such as story time and dance lessons. Children enjoy exploring sound as they use musical instruments and operate the electronic

keyboard independently. They show an awareness of familiar songs as they sing from memory and enthusiastically join in with the actions. They ask questions and use language to express real and imagined experiences. Older children show excellent progress in their writing skills as they draw detailed representational pictures of people, animals and flowers for example. They then add their names, showing well formed letters. Children use books purposefully and listen intently to stories read by staff. They use mathematical language during play to describe shape and size. Older children show excellent counting skills as they are able to count accurately in excess of 10 and perform simple addition and subtraction of objects during play. They show skilful use of a range of Montessori equipment that promotes their learning of shape, size, sequence and number. Children develop their knowledge of technology as they use programmable toys independently. They show a keen interest in nature as they talk about the life cycles of the caterpillars and tadpoles in the group rooms. They also learn about living things as they grow plants and strawberries in the outside play area. Children actively express their free creative expression as they use a range of paint, collage and drawing materials effectively. For example, they enjoy making butterfly prints with paints and create three dimensional art with recycled boxes, while confidently using a range of hand held tools, including staplers and scissors. Children develop their physical control as they participate in dance sessions and enjoy using the equipment in the outside play area. They show good spatial awareness as they use a variety of wheeled toys and develop their sense of balance as they use the climbing frame with the slide. Older children show excellent coordination as they throw and kick balls. Overall, children make excellent progress as they are enthusiastic, eager to learn and purposefully engaged in play. This challenging learning environment is due to the excellent organisation of staff who track children's progress effectively and provide activities that successfully promote learning and development for all children.

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

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