

New Park Nursery and Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	131720
Inspection date	31/05/2011
Inspector	Jennifer Liverpool
 Setting address	 67 Highbury New Park, London, N5 2EU
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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

New Park Nursery Montessori School is a privately owned provision that opened in 1995. It is situated in the Highbury and Islington area within the London borough of Islington. The setting operates on the lower ground floor of a residential property and children have access to five playrooms and two fully enclosed outside play areas. The setting opens each week from 7.30 am to 6.30 pm for 50 weeks of the year. The setting educational ethos is based on the Montessori method. The setting was successfully accredited by the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board.

This setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on the voluntary and compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 34 children in the early years group at any one time. Of these, 12 may be under two years old. There are currently 46 children on roll. The nursery currently supports a number of children with additional needs.

The nursery employs 11 staff and of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2, 3, 4 and 6. There are also three cover staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting was successfully accredited by the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare is promoted to an exceptionally high standard because the management team and staff ensure that children's well-being is of paramount importance. Staff's excellent understanding of the early years curriculum and extensive observation and assessment systems has enabled children to make outstanding progress in all areas of learning and development. Equality and diversity is successfully promoted as the nursery highly values the uniqueness of every child and reflect this in their practice. Partnership with parents and others provides effective continuity of care and smooth transitions. The nursery use comprehensive systems for monitoring and evaluation of its own practice and are committed to continuous improvements with a minor improvement recommended.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the recording of activity plans to include an evaluation of the activity offered to children in order to reflect on how to consistently support

children's learning and development

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding children and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. Designated staff members with delegated responsibilities for leading in matters relating to child protection issues have attended training and ensure that up to date information is shared with the entire staff team. In addition to this, parents are fully informed of the nursery's role in safeguarding children, which includes the procedures for allegations made against staff and safer recruitment. There is robust recruitment systems and extensive vetting procedures in place to ensure that staff are thoroughly checked and suitable to work with children. Furthermore, organised induction process enable new and cover staff to have a very good understanding of safe working practices to fully promote children's welfare.

Effective daily routines and the staff's own efficient practice prevent cross infection. All staff hold a current first aid certificate, which means that children receive very good care in the event of sustaining minor injuries. There are effective security systems on the premises, which include controlled entry access and a visitors record, ensuring that children are consistently kept safe and secure at all times. The nursery further ensures the safety of children with comprehensive health and safety guidelines; training for staff and undertake effective indoors; outdoor and outing risks assessments to ensure children are not put at risk of unnecessary hazards. There is an excellent range of toys and natural resources available to children that are highly maintained in a safe and hygienic condition. For example, efficient systems are in place for the removal and replacement of toys and equipment and top priority given to sterilizing babies' bottles and utensils.

The nursery values parents as partners and recognise the importance of involving parents on all matters that relates to their child. This includes the arrangements for care routines; regular joint reviews about their child's progress and contribution to their child's assessment records. The nursery provides opportunities for parents to understand more about learning and teaching through presentations at parents evening meetings. Purposeful notice boards; newsletters and a secure website ensure that parents are kept well informed about the provision for their children. In addition, the nursery provides parents with DVDs of their child's birthday celebrations and other special events in the nursery. Parents views are actively sought through questionnaires and discussion, and it resulted in the arrangement for the employment of internally trained cover staff for in the event that full time staff are absent. Very good links have been developed with local schools to promote effective continuity of care and transition for children.

The nursery directors and staff have a strong commitment to providing exceptional care and the best possible outcomes for children as they continuously strive to maintain high standards of practice. All staff work collectively to ensure that the ongoing needs of every child's wellbeing are given considerable attention and are

of paramount importance. Policies and procedures are extensive and as a consequence the provision is effectively and safely managed. Self evaluation systems are highly valued by the directors and staff and has been thoroughly assessed and monitored to ensure that the nursery consistently build on its level of service. The nursery is proactive in obtaining external advice and guidance from the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board; private childcare consultancy groups and the local authority, which has immensely benefitted the children and their families. The management and the staff team demonstrate a strong focus to drive future improvements.

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

All children are secure, settled and contented in an environment, in which every child flourishes. An effective key person system means that extremely close and caring relationships are developed and as a result of this, children's emotional wellbeing is fully promoted. Babies receive lots of warmth and affection that enable them to develop a healthy dependence on their key person who is receptive to their needs. Older children are well aware of the daily routine, which instils confidence. Children's behaviour is very good because the expectation for behaviour is consistent and clear. Furthermore, children benefit from lots of praises and encouragement. Staff support younger children in sharing and turn taking. Older children share and co-operate in their play where firm friendships are formed. In addition to this, older children are keen to help younger children to layout the cutlery on the table at lunch time. Equality and diversity is successfully promoted as staff value the individuality of each child and adaptations are put in place to activities and resources are made to support all children. Children gain a very good understanding of their own similarities and differences through birthday celebrations; the different coloured wrist bands that they wear at lunch time that indicates their dietary needs and artefacts from other countries that their families contribute to the nursery.

Babies and younger children language and communication skills are developing very well. They are able to make themselves understood through language and actions. Younger children demonstrate good concentration when listening to short stories during circle time. Older children talk confidently using a range of vocabulary to express their thoughts, ideas and recent experiences. For example, visit from the fire brigade. On the day of the inspection, a planned visit from the police captured children's interests and curiosity and they asked many questions about the police hat and armoured vest. A very good range of writing tools and mark making activities help all children develop mark making skills. Some older children are beginning to write their first names. Labelling on coat pegs; storage units and wall displays help to reinforce children's awareness that print carries meanings. Some older children are able to recognise and name the letters of the alphabet and also link sounds to the letters. These children are beginning to read three letter words and demonstrate interests in reading books.

Children are developing skills in the use of numbers beyond ten and one hundred.

They are able to match quantity to number symbols. Mathematical pattern making is included in activities using rods, blocks and the pink tower. Practical activities, such as, laying the table help children to solve problems, for example, setting out the correct number of cutlery for the children seated at the table. Children have lots of opportunities to observe living things, such as, the life cycle of butterflies and chickens being hatched. There are good opportunities to look at how and why things work when using digital cameras to take pictures and operating the compact disc player to listen to music. An extensive observation and assessment system is in place and used successfully to monitor and record children's achievements in order to inform future planning for each child. Activity plans extensively covers the six areas of learning as well as children's interests. Staff informally evaluate activities to identify how best to help children learn and is in the process of reviewing the current system.

Children's health are exceptionally well promoted through robust systems to support children's individual dietary needs, ensuring all staff are fully informed. All meals are freshly cooked on the premises and foods are low in sugar and salt content. Children enjoy healthy snacks and know that fruit is good for them. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children confidently help themselves. Babies receive regular drinks to ensure that they do not become thirsty or dehydrated. Children are confident in their physical skills as they have excellent opportunities to participate in a wide range of physical activities that includes, yoga; music and movement sessions and use of large equipment outside. In addition to this, children learn to play football; hockey; rugby and basket ball during weekly sport sessions from a visiting sports tutor. Children have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. Children learn about safety in the nursery and they are able to explain how to keep themselves safe when out. For example they know to ask for a police officer if they are lost and to call the emergency contact number in the event of a fire or serious accident.

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

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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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