

St Marks Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	138251
Inspection date	06/07/2011
Inspector	Jenna Hamilton - Heward
Setting address	St. Mark's Church, St. Mark's Place, London, SW19 7ND
Telephone number	07956356938
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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. Mark's Montessori School opened in 1998. It operates from rooms within St Mark's Church in central Wimbledon. All children share access to a secure enclosed outside area. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 9.30am to 12.30pm during school term time and occasionally from 9.30am to 3.15pm on some days. There are currently 32 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. The setting provides free early education for children aged three and four years. It provides a service for the local community. The setting supports children with special educational needs /and or disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language.

The setting employs six members of staff, all of whom hold Montessori diplomas and are qualified to NVQ Level 4. The setting receives support from the local authority advisory teacher and the area special needs co-ordinator. There are also two visiting teachers for French and ballet.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and make good progress overall due to the nurturing support they receive from the dedicated team of staff. The setting's strong overall commitment to promoting equality and diversity enables all children to develop high levels of self-esteem, and care and respect of others. Good partnerships have been established with parents and other professionals to ensure children are further supported. Effective self-evaluation makes sure that priorities for development are identified and acted on. Consequently, outcomes for children are good and staff demonstrate a strong capacity to maintain improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase further the opportunities for children to develop independence, for example, when accessing water to drink.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust steps are taken to safeguard children and staff demonstrate a strong level of commitment to promoting their safety. Effective procedures are in place and understood by staff for identifying any child who is at risk of harm. Record keeping

is of a good standard, so clear evidence is maintained of staff suitability to work with children and this is reviewed annually. A clear risk assessment system is used to make sure the premises are safe for the children's use. Senior management lead a highly motivated staff team effectively. Their training needs are identified through an effective annual appraisal system. The management routines make effective use of evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the setting, which they do accurately. As a result, those in charge demonstrate how they have raised children's achievements and made improvements to the setting. They have addressed recommendations from the previous inspection, for example, introduced new information and communications technology equipment and a new fire-log book, as a result of on-going reviews.

The setting appropriately and actively promotes equality and diversity as children celebrate each child's cultural festivals and staff have good knowledge of each child's background and needs. The setting is well resourced with Montessori materials that are used effectively. Staff are deployed well to support children's learning and development. The environment is conducive to learning, safe and well cared for.

Effective links exist with parents and carers that help support the children's well-being and learning effectively. For example, parents come into the setting to share their special days and to lead cooking activities. Staff actively welcome all children. There are well fostered partnerships with outside professionals who offer additional useful support to the setting, which help provide good support for children with additional needs.

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

The highly committed staff are experienced in childcare and well qualified in Montessori principles and practice. They use the Montessori method well to coincide with meeting children's developmental needs against the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress towards meeting the early learning goals. Children show interest and independence as they select their own activity from the child-level shelves, therefore allowing them to make consistent progress in their learning in relation to their capabilities and starting points. Staff are close by to offer support and they interact well with the children. Activities cover all required areas of learning well. Children's key persons plan for them individually, so activities meet their needs and next learning steps are established. They track children's progress carefully towards the early learning goals, integrating Montessori systems well.

The Montessori resources are demonstrated and used skilfully by the staff, to support children's learning and to encourage their progression through the tasks. Children develop useful skills for the future. They access an exciting range of resources, which enables them to explore pre-reading and writing skills. They use the well-presented Montessori equipment to learn about solving problems and developing mathematical concepts. Children explore other people's differing needs

and cultures through a range of festivals and activities, where parents are invited to come and celebrate festivals with the children.

Staff within the setting demonstrate a clear understanding of how children's good health is promoted and support children effectively in this area. Children drink water regularly, however, sometimes the water jugs are too heavy for the children to lift, so they cannot do so independently. Children know they wear sunhats while they are outdoors in hot weather. Children demonstrate a positive attitude to being in the fresh air, and enjoy daily exercise outdoors. They enjoy taking on some small responsibilities, such as preparing their own fruit.

Children are secure and develop a sense of belonging to the setting as their key person knows them well and with whom they form strong bonds. Children understand about safety issues as staff talk to children about 'ground rules' and how these 'keep us safe'. Children take part in regular fire drills, which helps them learn about how to evacuate safely.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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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