

Clapham Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 144049
Inspection date 18/10/2011
Inspector Gulnaz Hassan

Setting address St Paul's Community Centre, St. Paul's Church, Rectory
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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Clapham Montessori opened in 1991 and operates from St Paul's Community Centre, in the London Borough of Lambeth. The nursery comprises a first floor classroom with bathrooms and a large hall situated on the ground floor. The kitchen, dining area and additional toilets are also situated on the ground floor. The nursery has access to an unenclosed garden area which is also available to members of the public. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 9.15am until 12.15pm, afternoon sessions are available on Mondays and Thursdays from 1.45pm until 3.45pm during school term times only. On days with afternoon sessions children have the option of staying for lunch. There are currently 23 children on roll. Children aged three and four years are funded for free early education. The nursery employs four staff. Of these, three staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. They adhere to Montessori teaching principles and hold Montessori teaching qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Children's needs are not met and outcomes for children are poor. Staff do not have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements particularly concerning safeguarding issues. Practices in place to promote inclusion and diversity are limited and not well understood by the providers. The nursery has not identified any of the significant issues that affect children's safety and welfare therefore the capacity for improvement is poor. The provision is in breach of a number of legal requirements.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing, which takes account of the nature of the outing, and review this assessment before embarking on each specific outing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 17/11/2011
- implement an effective safeguarding policy and 17/11/2011

- procedure that includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. Ensure all members of staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedures (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)
- ensure records are easily accessible and available for inspection (Documentation) 17/11/2011
 - make sure that staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children (Suitable people) 17/11/2011
 - ensure the risk assessment identifies aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis; maintain a record of these particular aspects and when and by whom they have been checked (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 17/11/2011
 - ensure hazards to children, both indoors and outdoors, are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment). 27/10/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop planning across the six areas of learning so it takes into consideration the individual learning needs, interests and achievements of children
- develop the two-way flow of information with other providers in order to support a cohesive approach to children's learning
- offer children opportunities to know about their own and other people's cultures in order to understand and celebrate the similarities and differences between them in a diverse society
- improve the range of resources that help children find out about and learn how to use appropriate information technology equipment that support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The arrangements in place to safeguard children are not effective. Staff's understanding of safeguarding procedures they would follow in the event of concerns about children are inadequate. Furthermore, there is no procedure in place for if an allegation is made against a staff member or if a concern is raised about a child. The staff do not always do all they can to promote children's safety, such as working on their own to look after children outdoors in unsecured areas, where there are ponds and bushes that children play near. This means that children's safety is not effectively promoted as they are not adequately supervised. The risk assessments for the premises do not clearly identify all areas of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis to ensure the security and safety of children. For example, the stone steps and unsecured door that leads into the playroom. The nursery has not considered risks to children from either hazards or members of the public who have access to areas outdoors used by the nursery.

Children are, therefore, exposed to beer cans and chopped and splintered logs which compromises their safety. The organisation of resources does not fully support children's safety; for instance a fire extinguisher at one end of the premises is inaccessible due to storage items. These are breaches of legal requirements. Some documentation necessary for verification purposes, such as first aid certificates, are not available for inspection. The systems in place for the provision to evaluate their practice are not effective. The provider has not identified the breaches in requirements that are present in practice. The training completed in safeguarding has not resulted in positive outcomes for children.

The nursery has a satisfactory range of activities and play materials available. These are freely available and meet the needs of some children. Very few resources reflect aspects of diversity and inclusion, and although staff know the backgrounds of all the children who attend, these are not fully represented. Staff do not fully demonstrate an understanding of the importance and value of planning regular activities and experiences to promote children's understanding the similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures. Although the nursery meets the required adult to child ratios, the deployment of staff means they look after children on their own and this has an impact on safety for both children and adults.

Relationships with parents are generally sound. Staff verbally exchange information about children's care and daily activities with parents on a regular basis. They have developed some systems to obtain information about children's starting points from parents. A number of policies and procedures are in place that are not reflected in current practice. For instance the policy regarding the frequency of obtaining CRBs for staff is not consistent with actual practice. The nursery has not established systems to communicate with and to work in partnership with other providers and service providers who are involved in the welfare and education of children.

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

Staff have developed a generally satisfactory knowledge of the learning and development requirements. However the key methods used for promoting children's learning and development is through the Montessori principles. The system to monitor children's progress is not fully linked to the early learning goals, however staff keep mostly effective records about children's achievements and goals under the Montessori systems. As yet the planning in place does not fully reflect all six areas of learning and the next steps in learning for children are not always based on their individual needs, interests or achievements. This means that not all children are effectively engaged or maintain concentration with the range of resources and activities available. However a number of children demonstrate good levels of engagement and persistence enjoying water activities and 'I spy' games, where they link sounds to objects, and enjoy a range of play materials help them investigate space and shape. Outdoors children collect leaves, play hide and seek, and climb trees. Children participate in activities that promote most aspects of

learning satisfactorily and they particularly enjoy initiating their own play through accessing the suitable range of resources and play materials available. Although children initiate their own activities, this is not monitored and means that they do not access all areas or fully engage in certain activities such as painting, sharing books and mark making. Children have some access to materials and activities that promote their future skills mostly through the Montessori practical life skills materials and there are suitable activities to promote communication, language and literacy and number skills. However there are no opportunities for children to find out about and learn how to use information technology to support their learning.

Children's welfare is inconsistently supported. Children have access to water, milk healthy snacks and meals that are provided by their parents. They enjoy playing outdoors in the fresh air. However, children are not learning about being safe. For instance when children are approached by passers by whilst playing in the outdoor area staff do not discuss the implications to their safety from talking to strangers. Additionally, the key weaknesses in safeguarding mean children's safety cannot be assured. Children demonstrate variable behaviour patterns. Mostly children play soundly together and interact appropriately with the adults who look after them. However occasional disruptive behaviour means that adults have to interrupt work with the children in order to intercept and manage behaviour.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

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	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	4
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- ensure the premises used for the purpose of childcare is safe and suitable for that childcare (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) (Also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 17/11/2011
- implement a written statement of procedures to be followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard the children being cared for from abuse or neglect (Arrangements for Safeguarding Children). 17/11/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Arrangements for safeguarding children/Suitability and safety of premises and equipment). 17/11/2011