

Blue Planet Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	135255
Inspection date	18/10/2011
Inspector	Anneliese Fox-Jones
Setting address	Michenden Sports Complex, Bramley Road, London, N14 4HL
Telephone number	020 8449 1661
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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

Blue Planet Montessori Nursery School opened in 1999. It operates from a hall in the grounds of Minchenden Association Sports Club in Southgate in the London borough of Enfield. It has exclusive use of the building from Mondays to Fridays. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery within walking distance to transport facilities, schools and shops.

A maximum of 24 children from two years to under five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll in the early years age range. This includes children who receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or children who learn English as an additional language.

The nursery school opens five days a week during school term times. Children attend a variety of sessions which run from 9am until 1pm, 1pm until 4pm, or full day from 9am until 4pm.

Five staff work with the children. All staff have early years qualifications, which include National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level three as well as specialist Montessori qualifications. The Manager holds a degree in Early Childhood Education and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). The nursery practices a Montessori method into the curriculum. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The nursery has taken part in Quality Matters assurance scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive successfully in this very caring nursery. Staff work exceptionally well as a team and have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage(EYFS). Effective planning and observation systems are continually evolving to enable them to deliver a stimulating learning environment where children make excellent progress. Staff actively use their knowledge of each child to ensure that their needs are consistently met and they are offered a wealth of activities that successfully promote children's welfare and learning. Thus making sure everyone enjoys their time in this fully inclusive nursery. Very effective self-evaluation takes account of the views of staff, children and parents at the nursery to enable the management to acknowledge their strengths and identify any areas for future improvements. These processes are further enhanced by the secure and professional partnership with parents and other professionals, in order to raise outcomes for children.

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 use of ongoing observational assessment to inform planning for each child's continuing development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by long-standing staff who have relevant experience, qualifications and skills to do their jobs. Consequently, staff are motivated in their roles. Comprehensive policies and meticulous procedures enhance the excellent practice and are available to all parents. These ensure the setting is managed safely, efficiently and in the children's best interests. Documentation is appropriately organised and is highly effective in supporting operational practice. Highly effective safeguarding procedures ensure that children are protected. Staff are aware of the child protection policy and their responsibilities with regard to children's welfare. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Procedures, such as recording visitors to the nursery, and thorough risk assessments which cover all areas, outings and equipment enable children to move freely and safely. Children display an excellent awareness of safety issues and recognise how to keep themselves safe. For example, they understand that berries on the trees are poisonous and are not to be eaten.

The staff operate an excellent key worker system to promote the feeling of security within the group and build on the intimate, friendly feel that prevails throughout. The enthusiastic staff team benefit from effective training opportunities and work remarkably well together to ensure all children's individual needs and interests are successfully promoted. Staff are well deployed and an extensive range of resources further supports children's individuality and decision making. Children benefit from easy access to a wide range of resources, set out in Montessori style learning areas which stimulate their interest and promote the development of skills. The resources and equipment are maintained in an excellent condition, so that they are attractive and safe to children. The provider is taking well-considered steps to ensure resources and the environment are fully sustainable. Leaders are successful at inspiring staff and setting high standards which are embedded across all areas of practice. As a result, outcomes in children's achievement and well-being for all children are good and some are exceptionally high. Staff work closely as a team and make good use of regular self-evaluation methods to monitor their provision and reflect on their practice. For example, peer on peer observations, daily evaluations and regular appraisals are rigorous and extensive monitoring processes. The group have effectively addressed the recommendations made at their last inspection and are positive about making future improvements.

Staff are highly skilled in providing a rich environment full of opportunities and activities which children thoroughly enjoy and participate in. They ensure that all activities and experiences cater for each child's individual stage of development

and needs. Staff have a very good knowledge of the early learning goals and ensure these are fully covered. Staff make frequent observations that are used to successfully assess children's early progress and to identify their next steps. Each child has their own individual learning journey file which includes observations; these are regularly sent home and shared with parents. Staff promote equality and diversity exceptionally well within the setting to help children's awareness of the society they live in, and offering individual support to any children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Equality of opportunity is actively promoted as a wide range of resources and activities meet the needs of all children and enable them to learn and develop respect for themselves and each other. Children are happy and confident in their play and develop a strong sense of belonging as they feel included and welcomed into the setting. Staff are warm, caring, devoted and have a very unique relationship with the children. This creates a happy atmosphere for the children.

Children benefit from the highly positive partnerships with parents, which contribute to children's individual needs being met appropriately. Excellent settling-in procedures and home visits enable staff to plan and provide effective support for each child and to help settle the children into the nursery. Parents are provided with detailed information about the educational programme, daily events, activities and updates on children's achievements and progress. Parents have regular opportunities to meet with staff and discuss their child's progress on a one to one level. They actively share and contribute to their child's learning and development files and provide valuable feedback. Consequently, staff form strong relationships with parents to help them stay up-to-date and feel part of their child's ongoing development. Through discussion with parents it is evident that they are extremely pleased that their children are happy and making good progress; they say the nursery provides a secure environment where their children are genuinely cared for, loved and treated to exciting experiences. The nursery works closely with other providers and professionals in order to ensure a consistent approach to individual children's care and education. In addition, the nursery has established extremely good links with teachers of local schools to ensure continued progression of children's care, learning and development.

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

Children flourish in this stimulating and calm environment. Children really enjoy their time at nursery and are happy, content and occupied within this provision. The established key person system supports all children in feeling secure as they have their individual needs successfully met. The staff team effectively plan an exciting and challenging range of experiences for all children both inside and out. Children benefit from regular free flow opportunities to the outside garden space and outdoor play within the additional outside area. Children confidently access their environment where it is evident that they are supported to become independent and active learners. Staff enthusiastically engage within children's play and skilfully follow their interests. Children's play is supported through positive interaction as the staff fully support children. For example, children are

excited to write shopping lists and include staff members in their imaginative role-play scenarios. During circle time, children are delighted to recognise and link sounds to letters with various objects associated with autumn. They enjoy playing an interesting game, finding the objects, words and letters.

Children's well-being is prioritised by staff who ensure that children keep safe and healthy whilst in their care. Staff help children to gain an excellent understanding of safety issues by welcoming the community police into the nursery. They are encouraged to take safe risks with close supervision of staff. For example, they learn how to use small wood work tools safely while exploring and investigating how things work. Children's good health is promoted through daily opportunities for them to enjoy physical play and fresh air outside. They can climb, run and jump in the garden where a broad range of resources are available to develop their physical skills. Staff promote children's independence skills as they encourage them to feed themselves at lunch time and they make choices when making their own sandwiches at snack time. In addition, they enjoy a selection of fresh fruit along with fresh drinking water throughout the day. Children make a positive contribution to the nursery as they display exceptionally polite and cooperative behaviour. They are learning to show consideration for others and are able to share and take turns with popular resources. Positive staff role models have a successful impact on children's behaviour as they display polite and respectful manners. Overall, children are developing many valuable learning and development skills which help to set secure foundations for their future learning.

Children make excellent progress in the setting as they access play and learning opportunities which are a balance of adult and child-initiated. A good focus on taking the lead from children supports them to be active learners. The setting has extensive understanding of the starting points of each child and ongoing observations are used to monitor the progress that children make. Observation and children's personal choices are used to develop planning and identify children's next steps in their learning. However, it is not made clear in the evolving planning process, how children's next steps and individual observations are carried into future planning. Nevertheless, the information collated by the setting is of high quality and allows children's progress to be understood and future needs to be accommodated. This ensures children are interested in what they do and face appropriate challenge.

Staff skilfully encourage children to use their senses to explore their surroundings and make sense of the world. For example, through Montessori practical life and natural materials in their play. There are various opportunities for children to explore creatively, expressing their own ideas in pictures, messy play and imaginative play. Children have many positive opportunities to learn about nature and the wider world. They find out about the local environment in walks, such as an autumn nature walk and organised activities around cultural and religious festivals. Staff encourage children to think about the weather and discuss the types of clothes that need to be worn when it is cold. Children develop mathematical concepts reinforced through a varied range of activities which involve patterns, problem solving, similarities, differences and sequences in their play. Children enjoy the challenges of puzzles. Children have extensive opportunities to develop skills for the future such as communication, language and

literacy. For example, they share books, experiment with mark making, enjoy singing, conversation and the written word. In addition, children have very good opportunities to take books home to share with their parents. Fun and challenging language activities are presented to the children with good quality resources as they learn sounds and names of letters of the alphabet, consequently early reading skills are beginning to evolve. Electronic toys are used skilfully to introduce children to technology.

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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