

Little Hands Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY420837
Inspection date	16/11/2011
Inspector	Linda Close

Setting address	Wimbledon Methodist Church, Griffiths Road, LONDON, SW19 1SP
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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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Little Hands Montessori is a privately owned setting that was registered in 2011. The setting is located in a first floor playroom in the Wimbledon Methodist Church building in the London Borough of Merton. The building is located in a residential road within walking distance of the town centre and the railway and underground station in Wimbledon. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register to provide a maximum of 16 places for children in the early years age group and none may be under two years old. There are currently nine children on roll. The setting is open from Monday to Thursday inclusive from 9.30am to 12.30pm during term time only. The playroom is approached via flights of stairs and there is a lift, although this cannot be used in an emergency evacuation situation. Toilet and nappy changing facilities are adjacent to the playroom. There is a roof garden for outdoor play which is accessed directly from the playroom. Children also use a hall on the ground floor of the building for movement activities.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are very happy in the care of the staff in this newly established setting. They enjoy being together, making friends and learning the Montessori routines. Partnerships with parents are good and this helps the staff to meet the individual needs of the children. The children are making good progress in their learning given their age and starting points. Staff safeguard children appropriately although outdoor areas are not fully utilised to further support children's healthy lifestyles. The provider evaluates her service to children in a satisfactory manner and she is actively working to make improvements to benefit the children; however, she has not identified the need to inform Ofsted about changes in the premises or extended her risk assessment to cover additional areas now in use.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- identify all 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 & equipment)

30/11/2011

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

- develop understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements to further support the evaluation of the provision for children's welfare.
- link the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can move freely between them, increasing opportunities for active play outside to further support healthy lifestyles

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff are well informed overall about safeguarding matters. They share their responsibilities concerning child protection with parents through making their policy and procedure documents available. They are ready to take appropriate steps if they identify any concerns about the children's welfare. Staff assess the environment for any risks and reduce hazards effectively. However, they do not include in the risk assessment record new areas being used by the children that need more regular checks. This breaches requirements.

The provider has completed a thoughtful self-evaluation exercise in which she records the strengths of the setting's work with children and identifies some areas for further development. However, she is not rigorously assessing against the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure all requirements are met. She liaises closely with local authority advisors who visit often to appraise the setting. She takes their valuable advice to heart and puts new ideas into practice without delay. She is currently making changes to the system of recording children's progress to make it easier to see how the children are moving forward in their learning. She has started a course of further training to extend her knowledge and understanding of how children learn. Children now have access to new toilets and a hall, which improves the facilities available. However, the provider failed to notify Ofsted of a change to the premises on which childcare is provided that affects the space available to children. It is a legal requirement to do so. On this occasion Ofsted does not intend to take further action.

Staff arrive early to ensure that the children enter a prepared learning environment which is attractive and stimulating. Children are gaining an independent attitude to self-selection. They confidently find what they need and they are learning to put things away again after use. The setting has a wide selection of Montessori equipment and a good range of books which children can access easily. The area set aside for imaginative play has suitable small world toys but not enough materials that children can use according to their own imagination. Children have some access to the outdoor area, although this is restricted.

Staff ensure that children play fairly and they gently explain that they must take turns with favourite toys. Children are learning to treat one another kindly and with respect. The children enjoy activities which include celebrations from a range of cultures including birthdays, Divali and Eid. They learn about the weather, animals and customs in different parts of the world.

This newly established setting has not been called upon as yet to work in partnership with specialists or advisors concerning children with learning difficulties. However, they are willing to take advice and guidance when needed to enable them to support individual children in the future. The provider has booked a place on a worthwhile course to develop her knowledge of supporting children who experience difficulties in their learning.

Parents can access useful information on a notice board outside the playroom. They say they are happy with the care and learning experiences provided for their children. They also say that they feel welcome at the setting and the staff are available to talk to them every day that their children attend. They compliment the provider on the quality of information that she sends to them in newsletters and emails. They can add their own news and views to the contact books that children bring home.

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

Children bring food from home to eat at the setting. Staff make sure that parents know that children's snacks should be healthy in line with the setting's policy and parents are only too pleased to comply. Staff help children to learn why they must have clean hands before eating. The children are reminded to take sips of fresh water regularly throughout the session. Children have some opportunities for outdoor play or energetic play in the hall, which is developing their awareness of the importance of exercise. However, they do not have free access to outdoor areas to further support healthy lifestyles and their individual learning styles.

Children are very helpful when it is time to tidy away their toys. They are getting to know the Montessori way of choosing and using toys and equipment with care before replacing it on the shelves arranged around the room. Children are gaining good levels of independence. They remove their wet paintings from the easel before hanging them on the drier. The children are cooperative and very well-behaved. They respond well to the staff who successfully promote fairness and consideration for others. Staff are good role models. Their pleasant way of speaking sets a good example for the children.

Parents report that their children settle easily and they join in happily when parents leave. The children are calm and relaxed in the setting, which shows they feel safe. Staff make sure that the outdoor area, first floor toilet facilities and the playroom are safe for the children before they arrive. Emergency evacuation from the upstairs playroom takes place each term and the details are recorded.

The children are developing good skills for their future learning. They are learning many new words from taking part in worthwhile discussions with the staff. Their speech is gaining clarity and they express themselves well. Staff take every opportunity to engage children in valuable discussions. They ask open-ended

questions so that children say what they think rather than giving a brief yes or no answer. The Montessori activities provide very good learning opportunities for the children who are involved in matching, counting, ordering and comparison tasks at every session. Children use battery-operated toys well, showing that they understand cause and effect. They learn about the sounds and shapes of the letters of the alphabet and some children recognise and write their own names. Staff are skilled story tellers and the children are gaining good listening skills.

Children are involved in varied topic work which includes learning about animals and life under the sea. This helps them to extend some aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They enjoy energetic play in the fresh air in the flat roof garden, although this area is not fully utilised for exploring early science such as the wind and the weather. Children mould clay and paint their models. They make pictures and paintings according to their own ideas.

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?	3
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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

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