

Mace Montessori Finchley Branch

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 20/03/2012
Inspector Catherine Greene

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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

Mace Montessori Nursery and after school care is managed and operated by Mace Montessori Schools. It opened in 2011 and operates from a converted ground floor building. It is situated in North Finchley, in the London Borough of Barnet. There is no outdoor play area, however the nursery uses the local park for outdoor play. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time, of those 28 may be under two years at any one time. There are 83 children on roll all in the early years age group. Children are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 6.30pm all year round except for Bank Holidays. The nursery employs 16 members of full time staff all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications ranging from Montessori level 6 and NVQ level 3/2. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are settling well being supported by caring staff at this setting. A stimulating and enabling environment is provided where children's independence is fostered well. Overall, children are making good progress in their learning and development. Partnerships with parents contribute to staff knowing and respecting each child's needs successfully. Staff, mostly involve parents and children so that they can contribute to continual improvement. The setting is led and managed by an experienced, motivated and enthusiastic management team who demonstrate a dedicated approach towards continuous development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation so that the views of all staff, children and parents are used to identify strengths and priorities for development
- increase the available resources that support children's awareness of diversity and language through the environment and everyday play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and are fully aware of the procedures to follow, should they be concerned about a child in their care. Detailed risk assessments and other safety procedures are rigorously monitored to

keep children safe. Additionally, access to the premises is strictly monitored with a system for magnetic door release. Staff consistently record accidents and any medication administered to children. Parents are fully informed about the setting's policy for sick children and know that they must keep their children at home if they are ill or infectious.

The setting is well organised, it is cleverly designed and safe. All areas are very well resourced and maintained to a high standard providing children with a clean, comfortable and safe learning environment. Senior leaders demonstrate commitment to driving improvement and are working closely with the local authority to seek further development. This is reinforced by self-evaluation that is thorough and realistic. However, as this process is in the early stages it does not yet include the views of all staff, parents and children.

Equality and diversity are promoted well by the staff. They recognise the benefits of children learning about living in a diverse society. Good quality resources, which reflect areas of learning alongside the Montessori approach to learning, are easily accessible to the children promoting their independence. Other languages that children speak, although supported well, are not yet displayed and positive image resources are not as readily available to children as they self-select and play. The managers are aware and very keen to remedy this.

Children's needs and routines are well known by the staff through the strong relationships being formed with parents. Parents are very complimentary about the setting, their comments include: 'we are very happy with the support our child has had in learning to speak English and 'we attended the open evening and were impressed with the staff's knowledge of Montessori practices'. Social events, such as sports relief day, are organised and parents are invited to join their children in these activities.

The setting is committed to developing partnerships with local schools that children will attend as they become more established. There is a strong commitment to 'work together' for the community. This is reflected in the partnership with the local authority enabling the setting to use the local park and children's play area. This ensures quality risk assessment and that equipment is maintained in a very much appreciated community space. Senior staff have a clear vision of how they intend to continue to improve outcomes for children. For example, they plan to apply for planning permission to develop the outdoor space and enable children to enjoy free flow play between the indoors and outdoors.

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

Children are clearly getting settled at this new setting and show that they are happy and content. They are making close and lasting friendships. They express themselves clearly and are very confident speakers. They are developing good communication skills and are able to ask assertively for help when it is needed.

Systems are in place for observation and assessment of children's progress and information gathered is used resourcefully to plan for their next steps in learning. Each child's learning is attractively documented in files which contain samples of work, photographs and observations which are shared with parents. Parents will be invited to make comments and contribute to this process.

Children play with natural resources and relax as they explore the sensory activities, such as paint and play dough. They self-select activities from the range of Montessori resources, with children setting up their own 'work' area independently. Children are using the craft materials to design and make their own projects. Whilst babies sit on the floor immersed as they enjoy the feel of the paint when making hand prints.

The setting has a diverse group of staff who can talk to and help children to learn about other cultures and languages. CD's are played in different languages that children are familiar with from home. Children really get pleasure from reading books with the staff listening and making links between the words and pictures. Their imagination is fostered as they create their own play in the home corner using props and dressing up clothes.

The routines of the setting support children's access to stimulating outdoor play at the park located very nearby. High staff ratios mean that children are able to use the entire enclosed play area as they decide for themselves what they would like to do. They develop their mobility and co-ordination really well negotiating the space and climbing through and under the frame, hiding from each other. Children develop their balance and control, while others roll and catch balls and enjoy the swings.

Children feel safe at the setting and during outings. During the outing to the local park children begin to take measured risks as they run, balance and decide if they can negotiate the climbing frame. Staff promote road safety during the walk to the park, through clear direction and role modelling that enhances children's awareness and understanding of risks and dangers.

Children follow good personal hygiene routines, which are promoted by the staff's good role modelling. Healthy freshly prepared meals are offered which the children really enjoy. At the rolling snack time children decide when they would like to eat. They pour their own drinks developing control and co-ordination, as they make healthy choices from the nutritious fruits and snacks on offer.

Children's behaviour is effectively managed and positive encouragement means they behave well and show kindness and consideration towards each other. Children are forming positive friendships as they work together when completing puzzles and games and taking part in circle time.

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