

# Rainbow Montessori School: W.Hampstead

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Inspection date</b>	11/05/2012
<b>Inspector</b>	Catherine Greene
<b>Setting address</b>	Rainbow Montessori School, St. James Hall, Sherriff Road, LONDON, NW6 2AP
<b>Telephone number</b>	07738 206 722
<b>Email</b>	rms@rainbowmontessori.co.uk
<b>Type of setting</b>	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*.

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## Description of the setting

Rainbow Montessori School Nurseries are privately owned and were founded in 1982. Rainbow Montessori West Hampstead registered under new organisation in 2011. They operate from a hall in West Hampstead, in the London Borough of Camden. Children have access to the church hall and a fully enclosed garden.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and 30 children aged from two to five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll; some attend on a part-time basis. The nursery opens five days a week during term time. Morning sessions are 9am to 12pm and full day sessions from 9am to 3pm except for Fridays when they open 9am to 2pm. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs three members of staff, including the manager, and all hold appropriate Montessori qualifications. The nursery receives advice and support from the local advisory team.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of learning opportunities. The environment is mostly well planned and provides a stimulating setting for children. Children are absorbed in their play and make good progress in their learning. Evaluation of children's development is mainly thorough with examples of home learning and inclusion of home languages. Staff working in partnership with parents develop respect for each child's individuality and meet their needs overall. The nursery has the capacity to maintain continual improvement and the manager has developed rigorous systems to monitor its effectiveness.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- support new staff's understanding of the role of the key person to make sure children's individual needs are effectively supported
- plan outdoor activities so that they meet the needs of children of different ages in a shared outdoor space.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The nursery has recently reviewed the procedures for safeguarding children's welfare in line with changes to the organisation. Procedures are shared with parents and new staff in order to make clear the settings priorities for safeguarding children. All staff have attended child protection training. A safe environment is provided for children and written risk assessments for the main hall, outdoor space and for individual outings are in place. The environment is effectively resourced to support children's learning and development overall, and all equipment and resources are easily reached to maintain children's interest and independence.

Parents are very positive about the nursery. They are particularly appreciative of how encouraged they are to take part in their children's learning. They state 'we enjoy coming in to observe our children and can share learning at home as they bring their art folders home each Friday'.

The new staff team are beginning to review what is being provided and readily change what they are doing in order to adapt and adjust to recent changes in the organisation. The senior manager is keen to drive improvement and guides staff working closely with them to plan and implement procedures and improvements. The nursery aims to meet the diverse needs of all families in the community; this is well coordinated, both in the setting and in partnership with other local providers and schools. The nursery has formed good partnerships with other providers, including local schools which have eased children's transitions well.

Secure partnerships have been developed with parents to address areas of inclusion. Parents receive regular opportunities to provide feedback. Details of children's home languages are discussed at the beginning of the placement and key words are used to help children feel acknowledged and settled.

The current system for self-evaluation is effective. Together with partner nurseries and training consultants, the manager has identified areas of practice that she wants to improve. Senior managers are actively working together towards achieving this. Opportunities for quality discussion and the newly proposed questionnaires are also used to measure the views of parents to feed into the evaluation process.

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

Children enjoy activities that enable them to develop many skills for the future. The new manager has continued with the existing successful communication systems previously established with parents. The aim is to support new staff in quickly getting to know children's individual needs and to enable key persons to

reassure children as some find it hard to settle. Staff are generally organised effectively; they have some guidance about their roles and the areas they are responsible for. However, at times throughout the session when children require additional guidance or comfort a key person is not always available to support them.

Staff show interest in children's home lives as they talk about special events they have enjoyed at weekends with their families. This increases children's confidence and sense of belonging. Children learn to value and respect diversity as a range of play resources that reflect positive images of language and people of different abilities are accessible to them. Staff take steps to support children who speak a language other than English at home with a range of communication systems, including cards with examples of other languages to aid staff and children's understanding.

Staff use their knowledge of Montessori teaching and the Early Years Foundation Stage to complete observations of the children and assess their progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have mostly good knowledge and understanding of how to provide a balanced range of activities, which are both adult initiated and freely chosen by children. A large proportion of the day is dedicated to encouraging children in their self-chosen play. Staff use children's learning profiles to record achievements and identify next steps in learning and reflect these in the weekly planning. Important information is shared with parents about their children's progress and parents are encouraged to provide staff with useful information about children's learning at home.

Children play with an interesting selection of toys, materials and equipment to support their learning through play. Shelving and storage boxes are clearly labelled with photographs and printed words; this helps children make independent choices and supports their emerging reading skills. Using name mats, children begin to recognise their own names and sometimes those of their friends. Children are absorbed in the activity when feeling sand paper letters. A group of children spell out their names sounding out phonetically as they confidently find the corresponding letters. Children use their emerging number skills in everyday activities; they count cones and number rods and talk about how many more objects they need to make the road in construction play. They are encouraged to recognise numbers and, as a result, they enjoy pointing these out to the staff whenever they see them. They demonstrate increasing creativity as they paint at the easel and eagerly experiment at the sand tray where they learn concepts, such as filling and emptying.

When children show signs that they need to be more physically active an activity is set up outside that involves a bucket of soapy water and some scrubbing brushes. This is thoroughly enjoyed by a group of boys. However, as this spontaneous activity has not been planned, when younger children show interest in the activity they are not supported in order to join in and little explanation is given for this.

Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is developing in a number of positive ways. For instance, they learn to practise good hygiene routines as they regularly wash their hands. Furthermore, their good health is supported as they are

provided with water to drink and fresh fruit for snack. Snack is available throughout the session so that children can enjoy this when they need it and enjoy more uninterrupted play as a result. Parents really appreciate the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the support offered during transition to school for the older children.

Children are developing essential social skills whilst interacting with other children and staff. They show care and concern for each other. Staff talk to them about why it is important to care for each other and praise them when they do. Children learn useful independent skills as they unpack their lunches and learn to dress themselves mastering tasks, such as zipping up their jackets before they go outside. Before a planned outing to the city farm children benefit from good preparation and this helps them to learn about the staff's expectations for a successful and safe trip.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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