

Clapham Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	144049
Inspection date	22/05/2012
Inspector	Loraine Wardlaw
Setting address	St Paul's Community Centre, St. Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, London, SW4 0DX
Telephone number	0207-498-8324
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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 was registered in 1991 and operates from St Paul's Community Centre, in the London Borough of Lambeth. The nursery comprises of a first floor classroom with toilet facilities 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 uses an enclosed garden area which is also available to members of the public. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time. There are currently 29 children on roll. Children aged three and four years are funded for early education. The nursery owner /manager employs five staff. Four staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two hold Early Years Professional Status. They adhere to Montessori teaching principles and hold Montessori teaching qualifications. The nursery is accredited with Montessori Education (UK).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall, most children enjoy their time at the nursery and their welfare needs are appropriately met. Most children make appropriate progress in their development. However, planning does not sufficiently meet the unique needs of all children learning English as an additional language and does not focus on language for communication and thinking. This is partly because the Montessori approach and the Early Years Foundation Stage are not successfully woven together. The key person system is not well-established and systems to promote good behaviour are not effectively implemented by the staff. Appropriate continuous improvement since the last inspection has taken place and the nursery has plans for future development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further systems for planning by linking children's next steps more closely to the early learning goals and by placing more emphasis on activities that promote language for communication and thinking
- help children develop a growing understanding of what is right and wrong and the impact of their actions on themselves and others
- improve the key person system to develop a genuine bond with children and enable a settled and close relationship
- value linguistic diversity by providing opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff give appropriate attention to safeguarding children. All staff have been vetted and adult volunteers are not left alone with children. A visitor's book is used to monitor unknown adults to the nursery. Staff have a clear understanding of the child protection procedures to follow in the event of safeguarding concerns. They make risk assessments of the premises and garden to help ensure that hazards are minimised, making them suitable for children's use. They also risk assess annual outings with parents. The learning environment is organised to cover both the Montessori areas of learning and the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum areas. Children can choose from an appropriate range of resources which help them make progress. They have regular opportunities to use the newly developed outdoor area at the end of the session and also use a downstairs area for physical play. Staff have a sound understanding of the cultural and linguistic background of each child and incorporate the special traditions of each family into their activities. However, they do not enable children who speak English as an additional language to effectively use and see their home language in play and learning. As a result, these children are not fully supported to make progress and their linguistic diversity is not fully valued.

The manager/owner, who is well-qualified, demonstrates a sound commitment to driving improvement. For example, she has sourced a local authority grant to develop the garden into a fun play area with a willow dome, stepping stones and raised beds for digging and planting. Staff attend training workshops, such as in mathematics, although they have yet to implement the new ideas they gained. They are involved in evaluating the provision and helping to identify areas for further development. They build appropriate relationships with parents and carers. Some parents are extremely positive about the benefits of the nursery while others feel there is improvement to be made on daily communication between the key staff and themselves. Staff are willing to help parents, to give advice on learning and are friendly and approachable. None of the children currently attend other settings. However, the manager/owner is aware of the importance of linking with other settings to promote a shared approach to children's care and learning.

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

Most children enjoy the Montessori classroom and make gains in their learning and development following specific 'work cycle' activities. For example, they use the mathematical rods to count and match to numerals and use coloured two-dimensional shapes to make a square mosaic. Some use the sandpaper letters with staff and link sounds to letters and words. They are able to mark make and some children can write recognisable letters of their name. Children paint freely and talk with their friends about mixing colours and which two are needed to make a specific colour. In the practical life skills area they master tasks such as pouring,

threading and polishing. Staff understand their key children's individual learning needs but they do not always address them effectively. This is because they do not adapt their planning to ensure that every child makes appropriate progress towards the early learning goals from their starting points. Planning is based on Montessori goals rather than the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, some aspects of children's learning are not fully planned for. For example, there is less emphasis on activities which encourage every child to be a talker and develop language for thinking. This is a particular issue for those children learning English as an additional language who are not always fully involved and supported in activities. In addition, although a key person system is in place it is not always used effectively so that children can develop a genuine bond with their key adult. This is particularly evident during classroom time and settling-in times when some children do not fully engage with their key person.

Children feel safe and secure in their familiar environment. However, staff do not consistently address instances of running indoors. Children are not learning sufficiently about what is right and wrong or about the possible effect of their actions. They do not always share or take turns which sometimes results in hitting or snatching. Staff do not sufficiently address these issues through consistent group teaching to promote positive behaviour. Personal independence, such as hanging up your coat and washing up after snack time, is promoted well in line with the Montessori ethos. Children have a lot of fun in the garden and they are becoming proficient tree climbers. They climb and jump from a height they feel comfortable with and swing from the branches. They run in the fresh air finding their own 'dens' and use their imaginations with the play equipment and in the natural environment on offer. Children enjoy their own packed lunch provided by parents and can help themselves to drinks of water, milk and snacks of raisins and bread during 'work time'. This helps them learn about healthy practice. They learn about different communities. For example, they make a picture of a large dragon and take part in a dragon dance at Chinese New Year.

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	3

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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