

# The Ark Montessori Nursery

37 County Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 8HN

## Inspection date

17/09/2012

Previous inspection date

11/05/2010

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

2

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Management have highly effective systems in place to monitor staff and provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and knowledge, which impacts positively on the quality of the provision.
- Each practitioner has a good understanding of how children learn which means that they plan rich learning experiences to support children's learning and development. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and are keen to try out the many exciting activities on offer.
- Children and staff form strong emotional attachments due to the highly effective key person system. This enables practitioners to provide committed support to families and enhances continuity in children's care and learning.
- Children play well together and have good relationships. They are enthusiastic and keen to try out new activities, each in their own unique way.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Resources and activities for writing are confined to designated areas. This means that children are not able to practice their writing skills in areas where they are deeply involved in play such as role- play and construction areas.
- Routines for meal times are inflexible, which impacts on the resulting in missed opportunities to support children to find their own way of doing things, develop their own ideas and learn new skills.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in main hall and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of the provision during a focused activity.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and the registered provider.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector took account of the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan and views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Linda du Preez

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

The Ark Montessori Nursery is privately owned and was registered in 2001. The nursery operates from a large hall within a sports club, situated in the residential area of Thornton Heath in the London Borough of Croydon. Children have access to a large hall with toilet facilities and an outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children on roll aged two to five years. The nursery is open from 9am until 3pm from Monday to Friday during term- time. Sessions run from 9am to 12pm and 12pm to 3pm, or children can stay all day. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children age three and four years. The nursery supports children who are learning English as an additional language.

There are six staff who work with the children all of whom have relevant childcare qualifications including two who have Qualified Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status. The nursery follows some aspects of the Montessori philosophy.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

#### **To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:**

- extend educational programmes for literacy by providing a wide range of writing materials, in various play areas, in order for children to practice writing for a variety of purposes.
- support further children's growing independence by making the most of opportunities to involve them in the preparation of food at snack time

### **Inspection judgements**

#### **How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Each child has their own special person who helps them to settle and feel secure at the nursery. The key persons work closely in partnership with families so that they get to know the children well and have a good understanding of their development. Key persons monitor children's on-going development. As a result, planning, observation and assessment enables staff to set clear goals for individual children across all areas of learning. This means all children receive a good level of challenge and benefit from well-planned, engaging and enjoyable activities to support their individual needs. Staff show a genuine interest in what children have to say and further motivate children's thinking by asking many open ended questions. They respect children's ideas, which makes children keen to share their thoughts and chat confidently. For example, children look in mirrors and talk about their facial features, they compare the colours of their eyes, share their thoughts and compare the differences in their appearance. They follow this with a creative activity in which they make collage faces, drawing on what they have learnt. Throughout the activity, they each focus in their own unique way and remain fully engaged. As children begin to work on their creations, staff support their thinking further by discussing the possibilities of exploring different media. Consequently, children think about different ways of using materials to replicate facial features and develop a sense of purpose. As a result, they each create their own unique collage. Children have a deep sense of

achievement and are very proud of what they have produced.

Children self-select resources indoors and outdoors, so are in charge of making their own decisions. This means that they have time and freedom to explore and become deeply involved in their own choice of activities. However, routines for snack time do not have the same degree of flexibility, which means that there are children are not fully encouraged to develop independence and learn skills in food preparation.

Staff plan for a wide range of mathematical activities. Children enjoy puzzles, problem solving games and sing counting songs. Staff encourage children to use mathematical thinking throughout their play. For example, they ask children whether there are more adults or more children at circle time. Children respond by successfully counting out the people and explaining that there are more children. Children make the most of the literacy tables inside and outside, they make marks enthusiastically. Older children produce recognisable symbols and letters. Staff place value on their work by displaying it creatively around the room. However, they do not always seize opportunities to encourage children to practice writing spontaneously in other areas around the nursery such as during role-play. Staff display many motivating signs, word and pictures around to develop children's interest in print, letters and words. Children show a great deal of interest in books and enjoy sitting in the cosy, well-resourced book area. They look through story books together and listen intently when staff read stories to them. The activities and resources on offer at the nursery provide children with plenty of challenges to support their learning and development. Consequently, children make good progress and are supported to develop skills to prepare them for school.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

All children and parents receive a warm welcome upon arrival at the nursery. The successful key person system means that children form strong attachments to staff and highly positive relationships exist across the nursery. Staff support children to settle in and any upsets are short lived as children soon begin to play. Staff know the individual children very well and are highly receptive to their needs. For example, they notice immediately when a child is quieter than they would normally be and stop whatever they are doing to offer a cuddle and verbal reassurance. This shows that children's emotional well-being is given highest priority within the nursery. As a result, children are secure and the nursery has a very calm and positive atmosphere.

Children's good health is encouraged throughout the nursery. They know to wash their hands after toileting and prior to eating. They enjoy eating tasty snacks such as fresh fruit. Children make strides in their physical development and relish playing games using a good variety of equipment such as bikes, and balancing resources outdoors. They learn how to use the environment safely by taking safe risks with toys and equipment. They help to pack away toys when they have finished playing and tuck their chairs in after leaving the table. This demonstrates how they are developing their personal sense of safety. The staff team work very closely together. They are supportive and good role models for the children. Staff are confident in their roles and provide clear guidelines and

boundaries to support children's behaviour. As a result, children are very well behaved, collaborate with each other in their play and the nursery has a calm, yet vibrant atmosphere.

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

Management and staff attend relevant safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities well. The nursery has made positive improvements in systems for monitoring risks and staff implement a range of safety procedures, such as checking all areas, toys and resources are clean and safe.

The registered provider has a highly committed approach meeting the learning and development requirements. They effectively drive and secure improvement through self-evaluation incorporating the views of staff and parents. This means that the nursery successfully identifies strengths and weaknesses. Recent improvements include changes to assessment and planning, providing a wider range of resources in the outdoors and investing in the professional development of staff. Management have a highly committed approach to supporting the staff team in their professional development. Many staff have recently gained further professional qualifications, and have a thorough understanding of how to promote effective learning for all children. The nursery team are eager to improve the provision even further and have clearly prioritised action plans in place.

Relationships between parents and staff are relaxed and very well established. Staff gather useful information from parents about children's starting points, interests and routines. This enables them to get to know the children and support them to settle in. Parents are positive about the nursery and comment on how caring and supportive the staff are towards their children. Parents have regular discussions with key persons, enabling them to share learning priorities and enhance continuity in children's care. The nursery has developed strong partnerships with other professionals and agencies. They seek additional support for children when needed and some local primary schools visit the nursery to ease transition to a school environment. This process effectively helps to support partnership working and continuity for children and their families.

### **What inspection judgements mean**

#### **Registered early years provision**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready

		for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY102531
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	814377
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	30
<b>Name of provider</b>	Neotrace Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11/05/2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 240 0076

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## **Type of provision**

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

