

Mace Montessori Finchley Branch

The Home Counties House Property Co Ltd, Gloucester House, 150 Woodside Lane, LONDON, N12 8TP

Inspection date	26/11/2012
Previous inspection date	20/03/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
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		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children thoroughly enjoy their learning, become self-confident and make good progress as they learn through active play whilst engaging in challenging activities, particularly in the playroom.
- Adults join in children's games and exploration, extending their play and learning and advancing children's progress in all areas of learning and development.
- Babies enjoy a homely atmosphere in their rooms, where they have carpet and soft furnishings plus easy access to resources.
- Children enjoy a healthy diet while at the setting with meals prepared on the premises from fresh ingredients.

It is not yet good because

- Plans of activities, both adult and child led do not always match children's interests and Montessori activities are not fully integrated with children's play.
- In the baby and toddler playrooms background music make it difficult for babies and toddlers to hear speech sounds. Adults who look after babies and toddlers do not always take every opportunity to speak with them to help develop their language and communication.
- Parents feedback sheets do not show what their children are learning on a daily basis so they cannot complement their learning at home.

- Children progress at a good pace, although the monitoring of their progress is not robust. At times they are engaged in repetitive activities which do not challenge them sufficiently, or promote further learning.

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.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children at play in a variety of situations both indoors and outdoors, during meals and rest times, in adult led and child initiated play.
- The inspector carried out join observations with one of the room leaders.
- The inspector had discussions with the Registered Provider, Deputy Manager, room leaders and key persons, parents and children during the course of the day.
- The inspector looked at a representative sample of documentation, staff qualifications, children's registers, complaints record, plans for improvement of the outdoor provision, self-evaluation, a selection of children's assessment folders and samples of planning.

Inspector

Ileana Shirley-Smith

Full Report

Information about 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. The nursery utilises the local park for outdoor play provision. A maximum of 88 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 63 children on roll all in the early years age group. Three and four year old 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 21 members of full time staff, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications ranging from Montessori level 6 to National Vocational Qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4. The nursery is registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery cares for children who learn English as an additional language. The nursery follows the Montessori approach which is implemented within the Early Years Foundation Stage guidelines.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- plan purposeful play through a mix of adult-led and child initiated activities that take into consideration children's interests and incorporate the Montessori 'work cycles'.

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

- improve systems of monitoring children's progress so that all children fulfil their potential as they progress towards the early learning goals.
- develop further parents' feedback sheets to include children's home hobbies and interests so that these complement children's experiences in the setting.
- develop further the environment and experiences which promote listening to language as well as practicing babbling and language sounds for the youngest children.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy their time in this nursery. They are engaged in a variety of activities and have access to a range of resources which enable them to develop their skills, be creative and become confident young people. Adults are supportive of children's exploration and spend time playing with them, reading them stories, joining them at lunch or playing games with the children in the local playground.

The 'baby rooms' are welcoming and homely, carpeted and with soft furniture. Resources are set up in such a way as to enable children to access these independently. Babies reach into book boxes arranged on the carpet and select sturdy books with hardback pages which are easy to handle. They explore various textures and sounds by playing with interesting objects in 'treasure' baskets, such as brushes or bells. Babies and toddlers have the freedom to move around in the large playroom. They crawl through the tunnel, climb onto the baby gym or begin to stand holding on to furniture. Babies learn to speak by practicing baby babbling and copying adults. However, as soft music is playing in the background the babies sometimes struggle to hear the adults and so do not make as many speech sounds.

Pre-schoolers benefit from Montessori equipment which offers opportunities for science and exploration. Children learn about properties of liquids by pouring water in and out of containers and measuring jugs. They learn to appreciate how much water would fit into a jug and how many cups can be filled out of it. Such activities help children practice valuable mathematical skills, which will come in useful later on in their lives as they go to school. However, these skills are seldom used in planned or free play activities, so children have limited opportunity to consolidate and extend their skills.

Adults suitably deploy themselves joining children in their work. For example, as children wash their dolls in the water tray, the member of staff who is assisting the children talks with them about their families and baby care. She asks open-ended questions which provoke thought and promote speaking. Most of the time the equipment made available is inspiring and helps extend children's play. For example, children use soap and a scrubbing brush as they wash their 'baby' in the water tray endeavouring to get the 'baby' clean. Unfortunately, free play with such exciting games is restricted to certain times in the day; therefore, some opportunities for learning through play are missed.

Children who learn English as an additional language have opportunities to speak their home languages in the nursery. They teach other children and adults some words or songs in their home languages. This enriches the language learning environment in the nursery and shows children and their families that their home cultures are equally valued by all.

Children speak clearly and with confidence during lunch, explaining why certain foods are 'good for us'. They know the origins of some food stuffs, such as cheese, and how 'it makes us strong'. Children use their counting skills to find out how many children are present in their group. Children make satisfactory progress overall in their learning and development. Some children are ready for their next stage in learning, such as doing

simple calculations or make their own story books; however, this is not always identified in their progress folders.

Adults respond well to children's needs. One member of staff successfully uses gesture and facial expressions to read a story, which the children enjoy. She had chosen a book with repetitive and rhythmic text so children can participate in the telling of the story. This helps children understand the stories better, preparing them for later school activities.

Parents are welcome in the nursery and are informed daily about the care their children have been receiving in the nursery. They receive newsletters with future plans of activities for the children and about special events. However, parents do not always know exactly what their children have been learning during the day, so they cannot help children continue this learning at home.

The nursery team is keen to collaborate with parents. Staff have just started to offer parents the opportunity to communicate in writing about their children's hobbies and interests at home, however, these are not fully incorporated in the planning.

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

Children are confident as they meet visitors telling them about their work and play. They select resources and organise their own games, showing that they are motivated to play and are independent in their activity.

Children form secure emotional attachments with key persons. As they arrive in the morning, they receive cuddles and keep hold of their cuddly toy brought from home, which eases their transition into the nursery. Parents fully trust all nursery staff and feel secure in relationships of collaboration with key persons.

Children's safety is a priority in this nursery. Rigorous risk assessments are carried out daily ensuring that equipment is safe and dangers of accidents are minimised. For the daily outing to the local park children wear harnesses while crossing the road and when walking past the pond.

Children's behaviour is impeccable. Children learn to be polite, to share resources and take turns, to help each other and help their 'teachers'. Children enjoy having responsibilities in the nursery, such as sharing out the plates for dinner or tidying up. While using Montessori equipment children are careful and focused, committed to complete difficult tasks. This demonstrates that they persist and are engaged in their work preparing them for later life experiences. Children respect each other and want to learn about each other's family culture and family life. For example, as they wash their 'baby' doll, they discuss how old their real baby sister is, and how she begins to crawl. Children learn words and expressions in other languages than English from children who speak these other languages at home.

Children have a healthy lifestyle in this nursery. They enjoy home-cooked food prepared

daily on the premises from fresh ingredients. Children learn about the benefits of a healthy diet and make their own vegetable soup, touching the vegetables, learning the names of different foods, learning to taste different dishes. Younger children eat finger foods and enjoy being together around the dinner table. Children have the opportunity to rest when tired. The baby rooms have specially designated rooms for sleeping so younger children can rest properly. Older children can rest on mattresses which are laid out to one side of the playroom.

The nursery does not have its own outdoor play area; however, children enjoy fresh air and the freedom of outdoor play in the local park. Here they have a variety of apparatus, grassed and hard surfaces, where they can take plenty of physical exercise and enjoy one another's company.

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

Educational programmes are monitored regularly by the manager and the deputy manager. The owner of this nursery receives weekly reports from the manager and is at all times aware of the plans and activities for the children. Each group have a 'room leader' who leads the planning to ensure that there is a broad range of experiences for all areas of learning and development. She ensures they cover the seven areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage alongside the Montessori activities. Although children enjoy a broad range of activities they do not always have sufficient opportunities to consolidate their learning through free play and adult led activities.

Children's progress is monitored through regular observations carried out by key persons. These are brought to planning meetings where members of staff share their knowledge of children's likes and dislikes, their interests and achievements. However, practitioners' knowledge about children is not effectively used in planning, which leads to some children not being sufficiently challenged.

Members of staff communicate with parents regularly throughout the year in parent meetings, when they discuss the children's learning and development. When children are two years old, key persons, with support from the deputy manager, write a progress report for parents. This looks at the overall development of the young child, helping to identify the things they do well and areas where they will need more help.

Children's safety is a priority in this nursery. All staff have completed their safeguarding training and are secure in their knowledge of identifying signs of possible harm to children. The owner of the nursery is personally responsible for the recruitment process. All new staff are vetted by the criminal records bureau. The nursery ensures they receive verifiable references before allowing staff to commence work and the staff member has a detailed induction programme. This includes the nursery's policies, including safeguarding and equal opportunity policies.

The management team continually self evaluate the provision by monitoring children's

progress and the planning of activities. The owner and the manager are reflective and strive to continually improve the nursery. They make plans for future developments, such as obtaining planning permission for the outdoor play area. The nursery has established systems for staff supervision and performance management. Staff complete questionnaires which refer to their professional development needs and to the activities they plan for the children.

The manager and owner of the nursery use an effective system to monitor the professional development of all staff. Staff are encouraged to upgrade their qualifications and to continue to develop their knowledge. The deputy managers regularly offer in-house training to the whole staff team. Staff also access the training offered by the local authority, for example, they are currently training to be responsible for supporting children with special educational needs and their families. The nursery collaborates with the local authority early years team and colleagues in other nurseries in the borough.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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

Unique reference number	EY435239
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	893221
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	88
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Mace Montessori Schools Limited
Date of previous inspection	20/03/2012
Telephone number	02084461969

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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.

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