

Dulwich Oaks Montessori Nursery School

St Margaret Clitherow Church Hall, 22 Dulwich Wood Park, London, SE19 1HL

Inspection date

08/01/2013

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- Children independently access the good range of resources. Staff actively encourage child-led activities and support children's growing self-reliance and skills for the future.
- Children are motivated and independent learners. They are developing growing self-confidence and enjoy their time in the nursery school. They thrive in their development, as a result of effective observation, assessment and planning systems.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff work hard to establish effective relationships with parents. This supports continuity of care and learning and ensures parents' views and wishes are respected.
- Strong leadership and management results in a well supported and enthusiastic team of staff. They continuously reflect on their practice and work successfully together, thereby creating a well-organised setting where children make good progress in their learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always effectively support children's growing independence in relation to appropriate use of tools during snack time and their developing understanding of the importance of how to manage their own hygiene and personal needs.
- Children do not always have access to resources that develop their technology skills,

such as the nursery school's laptop.

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 the children at play in both the inside and outside play areas, observing their interaction with staff and their peers.
- The Inspector spoke with management team and staff, discussing how individual children's needs are met.
- The Inspector sampled documentation including children's and staff records and regulatory records.
- The Inspector invited the manager to partake in a joint observation of nursery practice.
- The Inspector spoke with parents, gaining their views on parental involvement and monitoring of their children's progress.

Inspector

Sandra Jeffrey

Full Report

Information about the setting

Dulwich Oaks Montessori Nursery School registered in 2012 and is privately owned by London and Surrey Montessori Schools Limited and has a sister nursery school locally. It operates from St Margaret Clitherow Church Hall in Dulwich, within the London Borough of Southwark. Parking facilities are located on Kingswood Drive. Children have access to a large hall that is sectioned off into smaller areas. There are toilet and kitchen facilities available. The premises are fully accessible and there is a secure outdoor play area. The nursery school is registered on the Early Years register and cares for children from two years of age. There are currently 24 children on roll who attend a variety of sessions. The nursery school supports children with English as an additional language and follows the Montessori philosophy of education. The nursery school opens each weekday during term time. Sessions are between 9am and 1pm, including a lunch club. There is an early morning club between 8.30am and 9am. Additional extended sessions until 3pm are also available daily. There are six members of staff, four of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The nursery school receives support from the local Early Years team.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- further support children's growing independence in relation to the safe and appropriate use of tools, such as butter knives; and continue to support children's developing understanding of how to manage their own hygiene and personal needs, in relation to the importance of hand-washing before meals.
- consider ways to enable children to have greater opportunities to acquire skills in operating ICT equipment, particularly in relation to the nursery schools' laptop, to enable children to develop a greater understanding of how to retrieve information and operate simple programs with adult support.

Inspection judgements

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

Children flourish in this well-organised nursery school where their individual needs are met well. As a result they are making good progress in their development and are happy and motivated learners. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn. They obtain detailed information about children's starting points from parents, tailoring the educational curriculum to individual children's likes and interests.

Children display good levels of concentration in both their self-chosen and adult-lead activities. For example, when they access the Montessori Practical Life activities, such as pouring, children were observed confidentially and competently pouring water from one vessel to another. They enthusiastically explain to the Inspector how the water goes from one hole in the funnel and out the other. Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate how and why things work and the links between cause and effect. They construct water pipes in the garden, working in small groups, problem solving and extending their learning with good support from staff.

Staff are skilled at allowing children sufficient time to enjoy activities at their own pace and in their own way. They actively follow the children's lead and encourage them to direct their own play. For example, during craft activities children are able to use as many or as few materials as they wish to create pictures. They receive support and guidance as necessary, with newer and/or younger children being offered help using the paint and glue, for example. This helps them gain confidence in managing their own tasks, as their skills and competence develop.

Staff demonstrate a very good understanding of how to support and extend children's learning and development overall. Children enjoy a broad range of experiences and activities that help promote most areas of their learning very well. However, opportunities to use the nursery school's laptop are restricted to set sessions each week. This limits opportunities for all children to acquire skills in operating ICT equipment and programs due to their attendance patterns.

Children receive good opportunities to develop their communication and language skills with good modelling from the staff. Children who speak English as an additional language also receive good support from the multi-lingual staff team. In addition, the children have opportunities to participate in language sessions, including French and Italian. Older children demonstrate their skills as they correctly identify numbers and colours in French, with the support of the dedicated French teacher.

In line with the Montessori philosophy, staff encourage children to co-operate and learn from each other, in child-led activities. They learn to respect each others interests and views and are encouraged to listen to each other. Staff are good role-models, treating children with mutual respect, and efficiently and discretely dealing with any minor disputes. As a result, children's behaviour is very good and a calm and peaceful atmosphere is evident throughout. This helps new children when settling, in addition to the excellent support that staff offer both the children and their parents.

New observation, monitoring and planning systems are in place to reflect the recently revised Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Staff have regular meetings and continuously evaluate their planning and the curriculum to ensure all areas of learning are

covered. Management effectively oversee these systems and ensure the well-established staff team receive support and sufficient time to complete children's records. In addition, the staff team continuously evaluate activities in order to identify any improvements they can put in place.

Parents receive very good information about their children and their development, during the unhurried handover. As a result, parents feel well informed and involved in their children's learning and development. In addition, good links are in place with others involved in the care and education of the children, including local feeder schools. These arrangements enable good opportunities for continuity of care and help support the children during periods of transition.

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

Children have good opportunities to develop their personal, social and emotional development. They are actively encouraged to develop their self-confidence, self-awareness and self-reliance with use of the Montessori materials, for example. These are freely accessible on low level shelves, enabling children to select their activities and be active-learners.

There are also good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills in the large and secure garden. This area is still developing, following the recent opening of the nursery school. Action plans identify numerous additional features and resources for implementation to enhance the use of this outside play area. Children enjoy free-flow access to the garden, benefiting from unrestricted opportunities to exercise in the fresh-air.

In addition, children have opportunities to learn about the importance of a healthy diet within a healthy life-style. This is promoted through planning of appropriate topics and themes. Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks including wholemeal bread and fresh fruit, with drinks of organic milk or water. Children currently all sit down to snack time together, although the manager advised this system is currently under review.

Children are actively encouraged to participate in this social event by helping to prepare and serve the food. The staff are not always fully effective in supporting children's understanding of appropriate use of utensils or routine hygiene practices. As a result, some children place the plastic butter-knives in their mouths and back into the butter used by other children. Also, several children sit down to eat their packed lunches without washing their hands first. The manager was swift to act when both of these issues came to her attention; ensuring appropriate measures were quickly put in place.

Staff are vigilant about the children's safety at all times both inside and in the garden. They practice regular fire drills, so children are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. Additionally, suitable drop-off and collection processes are in place, ensuring the safe arrival and departure of the children.

Children receive good reminders of the need to be aware of their own safety. For example, staff ask if it is safe to climb on chairs. Then give children time to think about this, while guiding them into a sitting position. This enables children to assess risks for themselves and aids their understanding of keeping themselves safe.

The effective key-person system allows children to bond with a member of staff of their choice during their settling period. This enables children to feel secure and content within the nursery school and to develop a sense of belonging. The children settle quickly upon arrival at the nursery school, following the Christmas break. New children settling for the first time receive good support and reassurance from the staff, as do their parents. As a result of these efficient settling-in routines and the presence of sensitive, caring staff, children are content and happy. Children respond well to the praise and encouragement they receive and are aware of the expectations of the staff.

Transitions to the local schools are well prepared for. The nursery school has established links with these and ensures that children leave with detailed end of term reports. These reports help to inform the next stage of their individual learning and development.

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

The strong management team and enthusiastic and dedicated staffing team ensure that the nursery school runs well. They have high expectations and are committed to the success of both the nursery school and the children who attend. They have a secure understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements and are aware of safeguarding procedures.

Robust recruitment and employment procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the children. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and sign the comprehensive policies and procedure to confirm their understanding. These are reviewed annually as a minimum, to ensure they effectively underpin the successful running of the nursery school.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place, to enable the staff to identify and reduce potential hazards in order to help keep children safe. The organisation of the resources and effective deployment of staff further promotes the children's safety and comfort.

Regular meetings enable management and staff to review and reflect upon the organisation of the nursery school. They work closely with the Local Authority and their Early Years Consultant in order to critically review their service. Effective self-evaluation and a drive to continuously progress the nursery school is evident. For example, management value their staff and actively encourage them to contribute to ideas for improvements. Additionally, staff receive encouragement to further their professional development by attending training on a regular basis.

The strong partnerships with parents ensure that parents are very well informed and feel

supported. Parents value their good relationships established with the staff, secure that their individual wishes and home-life are valued and respected. Parents are actively encouraged to share details of their faith and culture with the nursery school. For example, during recent themes relating to Diwali and Hanukah, parents shared artefacts with the children during special circle times. Children have also enjoyed a recital from a parent who is a violinist. She also treated the children to opportunities to play on her violin. These special activities help children learn about the world around them and give children a sense of awe and wonder.

Staff have experience of caring for children with additional needs. Effective links are established with external agencies in order to meet these individual needs as necessary. The manager effectively oversees the children's learning and development, charting their individual progress in consultation with the staff. Following the introduction of the two-year progress check and revised areas of learning, the manager has recently introduced new systems. She uses these to monitor each child closely, to ensure their continual progress. As a result of the hard work of the management and staffing team, children receive high quality care and learning opportunities. They are making good progress in their skills, abilities and wellbeing.

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	EY448433
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	804642
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	24
Name of provider	London and Surrey Montessori Schools Ltd
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	07795 322688

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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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