

# Walthamstow Montessori School

Penrhyn Hall, Penrhyn Avenue, London, E17 5DA  
St John's Church, Brookscroft Road, London, E17 4LH

## Inspection dates

25 March 2013

## Reason for inspection

The school was last inspected in March 2010, when the education provided was judged to be good and all the regulations for registration as an independent school were met. The school received a material change inspection visit in October 2012 in order to gain consent for the use of a new building at St John's Church and to increase its numbers from 87 to 150 places, continuing to accommodate pupils between two and 11 years of age. The inspection visit found that the school did not meet two of the independent school regulations. There were shortcomings in the security of the premises and the flooring in the dining hall was not fit for purpose. The school submitted two action plans in response to the report. The second action plan was approved by the Department for Education in February 2013.

The purpose of this unannounced visit was to establish whether the school has implemented its action plan so as to meet the regulatory requirements.

## Conclusions

The school ensures that adults and children are safe on the school site in most respects. However, the flooring in the hall has not been replaced and this does not meet requirements. An examination of safeguarding and health and safety documents revealed a number of regulations that are unmet. Although the school has a suitable safeguarding policy; procedures are not implemented effectively to safeguard children at the school. The school has conducted all the vetting checks on its members of staff to ensure their suitability to work with children, but such checks on staff's identity and right to work in the United Kingdom are not recorded in the single central register. The school has not ensured that other persons who have access to the school's premises or carry out regular maintenance jobs in the school are appropriately vetted. The school has not ensured that the required information on checks on these individuals is entered in the single central register. All members of staff have received child protection training and the designated officer for child protection has been trained to the appropriate level.

There are procedures to assess and manage safety risks related to educational visits, the premises and first aid. The behaviour policy has a clear code of conduct along with an appropriate set of sanctions and rewards and strategies to counter bullying. Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school. Those from different cultural backgrounds play and work together in harmony. Pupils say that they like to come to school. They report that there is no bullying in school and are confident to approach a member of staff for support whenever needed. Records of first aid interventions and accidents are recorded

appropriately.

Fire emergency evacuation procedures are in place and fire drills are undertaken. Although the school has a fire risk assessment, this is not robust enough to ensure pupils' health and safety. There are gaps in the checks undertaken and not all the electrical appliances and fire equipment have been tested to ensure that they are safely operational. There is no suitable accommodation for the medical examination of pupils or provision for pupils who are ill or injured. The school has reviewed the information made available to parents and carers, but this does not meet requirements. The school does not make available all the required information on its staff, particularly the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications.

There are omissions in the school's written complaints policy. The complaints procedure does not provide for a formal complaint to be made in writing if parents are not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint. It does not stipulate that, if the parents are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint, there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. It does not state that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school and parents are allowed to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied. The procedure does not provide for the panel to make findings and recommendations or stipulate that a copy of the findings and recommendations is to be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, and made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the headteacher. The procedure does not provide for written records of all complaints to be kept confidential, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.

The quality of teaching and assessment continues to meet requirements.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

### **The school requires improvement and must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ('the Regulations'), and associated requirements**

- make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and ensure that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State paragraph 7
- take effective measures to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfE guidance paragraph 11
- ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 paragraph 13
- ensure that there is an admission register and that the attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil paragraph 17

- Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- ensure that all the required checks are carried out and recorded on staff not directly employed by the school (paragraphs 20(2)(a) to (d) and paragraph 22(5))
  - ensure that for each member of staff appointed on or **after** 1 May 2007, the register shows that the following checks were made, including the date on which each check was completed or the certificate obtained: paragraph 22(3)
    - the person's identity
    - of their right to work in the United Kingdom
  - ensure that there is accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils paragraph 23B(1)(a)
  - ensure that there is accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet paragraph 23B(1)(b)
  - make available to parents and carers information about the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications paragraph 24(1)(b)
  - ensure that the complaints procedure provides all the required information. paragraphs 25(e) to (k)

## Inspection team

Fatiha Maitland, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Information about this school

- The Walthamstow Montessori School is an independent, non-selective nursery and preparatory school for boys and girls aged between two and 11 years. It opened in April 2001. Currently there are 118 pupils on roll, 73 attending full-time and 45 attending part-time. Of the 76 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 18 are under three and 58 receive public funding under the government's nursery education scheme. There are no pupils with special educational needs or with a statement of special educational needs. Many pupils are bilingual or have English as an additional language. Pupils and staff come from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- The elementary and upper preparatory classes have moved from the school's Unity Hall site, which is no longer to be used by the school, to a new site at the nearby St John's Church. The lower school remains at its original site at Penrhyn Hall. The school provides a daily breakfast club for pupils of all ages for one-and-a-half hours. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary

parts of the Childcare Register.

- The school aims 'to create a stimulating, caring, happy and safe environment for all the children in our care; to create a developmentally appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of each child in line with the Montessori philosophy of education'.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134579
<b>Inspection number</b>	421120
<b>DfE registration number</b>	320/ 6064
This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.	
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery and preparatory
<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	118
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	45
<b>Proprietor</b>	Ms Lorna Mahoney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Lorna Mahoney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 October 2012
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,620 to £5,400
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8523 2968 (Penrhyn Hall)/020 8531 2624(St John's Church)
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8523 2968
<b>Email address</b>	e17montessori@aol.com

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