

Mace Montessori Finchley Branch

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

Inspection date	01/10/2013
Previous inspection date	26/11/2012

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

- Children make good progress throughout their time in the nursery because staff plan activities with their specific interests in mind.
- Staff make good use of the equipment, as well as the Montessori approach to encourage children to develop good concentration skills and strong hand to eye coordination.
- The staff team are all aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children in their care. They have a strong understanding of signs and symptoms that would cause them concern, and are able to take appropriate action.
- The rooms used by the babies and toddlers are bright and welcoming and staff in these rooms use lots of eye contact to make these children feel very welcome.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Resources in the outdoor area do not promote all possible areas of children's physical development outside.
- Staff do not always promote the oldest children's turn taking skills during large group times.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 spoke to staff, parents and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector held leadership and management interviews with the managers of the nursery.
- The inspector discussed the self-evaluation systems in the nursery.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of practice, with the manager.
- The inspector looked at documentation relating to the running of the nursery, including registers, risk assessments, policies and procedures.

Inspector

Naomi Brown

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. There are currently 65 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 8am to 6.30pm all year round except for Bank Holidays. The nursery employs 16 members of full time staff, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The nursery employs a qualified teacher, as well as six members of staff who hold the Montessori diploma or equivalent National Vocational Qualification at level 4. Three members of staff are qualified to level 3, and six members of staff are all studying towards a qualification at level 3, all of whom hold a qualification at level 2. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and 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 further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance challenges for older children to extend their physical skills further outdoors, for example, by providing more equipment to encourage children to climb and swing
- develop further the organisation of large group times for the oldest children, to fully develop children's turn taking skills.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress across all areas of learning as staff plan well for their individual needs. For example, staff use clear assessment methods to establish all children's starting points when they first join. Staff then use this information to set priorities for children's development based on their individual needs. These priorities are tracked and evaluated on a regular basis and consequently, children's progress is at least good and sometimes better.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities and resources that promote their personal, social and emotional development. For example, children enjoy playing with their friends, both indoors and outdoors. Staff encourage children to play cooperatively, and give children lots of opportunities to sit with their friends, for example during mealtimes and small group time. Babies enjoy rolling balls to one another and sharing toys in the garden, taking turns to push buggies and trolleys along. Older children collaborate well together on art projects during free play, sharing glitter and paint as they cover boxes with different colours and textures. As a result, children are developing strong social skills to support them as they move to school. However, during large group times, staff do not always encourage children to take turns when answering questions, to encourage them to listen to their friends.

Staff plan well for children's physical development, overall. Indoor spaces have plenty of low level furniture to encourage children to independently climb on and off chairs. The baby rooms have equipment of different levels to enable babies to become skilled at climbing and walking on uneven ground. The garden area has been recently refurbished with a soft, all weather surface. Children enjoy using this area and explore the feel of the ground below their feet, spin hoops and run under the large parachute that staff swing up and down. However, this area does not contain many resources to support the oldest children to climb and balance outdoors, to fully extend their physical skills. Staff provide many opportunities for all children to develop their small muscle skills and their hand eye coordination. Children start to develop their pouring and threading skills in the baby room, as they pour pasta and thread cotton reels with close support from staff. As children move through the nursery these activities become more complex. Toddlers manipulate dough, and pour and sort small bells, investigating the noise these make as they move. Children in the pre-school room use pencils with great skill as they write the letters of their name, and use tweezers to move small objects from one bowl to another. Children show strong concentration skills as they focus on these engaging tasks and persevere, even when they find something tricky at first. These activities support children as they develop their first writing skills. Staff encourage them to try again, even if they find something hard, and this teaches children that they can achieve difficult things with practice.

Children are confident talkers and all children are encouraged to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas across the nursery. Staff listen closely to children and overall encourage them to take part in conversations well. Children enjoy listening to, and taking part in stories and staff use questions well, to support children's developing vocabularies. For example, staff take opportunities to read with children, one at a time. Staff read the words and encourage children to say them too, to link print and its meaning. Staff members ask many imaginative questions that encourage children to involve themselves in the story and to challenge their thinking and their vocabularies. Staff echo things that babies say, and the sounds they make, so that they know their efforts to speak are valued. Babies happily point to objects and try to sound out the name. Some babies confidently put two sounds together, to represent a two syllable word. Babies are already beginning to use intonations of speech, for example, raising the pitch of their voice at the end of a sentence, to demonstrate a question and staff readily take turns with them, to show them how to hold a conversation. This demonstrates that children are making good progress in their communication and language skills.

Parents are able to be successfully involved in their children's learning. Staff speak to parents often about what their children have been doing, and they manage their assessment files effectively, so that parents can see the progress that their children have been making. Staff make regular suggestions to parents so that they can extend their children's learning at home. Children all benefit from this strong continuity in their learning, and it supports children's strong progress.

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

The key person system in the nursery is effective and well managed, so that all children feel safe and settled. Parents are all aware of who their child's key person is, and feel able to discuss any issues involving their children. Settling procedures are effective and children have plenty of time to visit their new room and get to know staff before they join, or move within the nursery. Children feel safe and therefore behave well, following the good example of staff. Children show good levels of self-control in relation to their ages and stages of development. They are kind to each other and regularly help to tidy up things that they have used. Older children happily help their friends mop up water that has spilt, fetching paper towels independently to help them do so. They persevere until all the water has been cleared up. This demonstrates that they are learning how to respect and help others around them, which is a useful skill for school

Children have plenty of opportunities to develop a strong understanding of healthy lifestyles. Staff provide healthy foods that support children's good nutrition, prepared on site. Children enjoy eating their snacks and meals as a group and tuck into their food eagerly. Staff use well established routines to enable children to promote their own good health. For example, children readily wash their hands before eating and after messy play in low level sinks. Staff encourage children to be independent in their self care from an early age, supporting babies to find their shoes and put their own arms in their coats as they get ready to go out in the garden. Children have plenty of opportunities to have exercise in the healthy fresh air as they play outside in the garden and go on daily walks to a nearby park.

Staff are well deployed to meet children's needs. For example, staff supervise children closely across the nursery and outdoors to promote their safety. All areas of the premises are well risk assessed so that staff can minimise risks to children. As a result, children develop their skills well, in areas that are suitable for them to use. Staff also encourage children to manage their own safety. Children enjoy opportunities to take managed risks, as they use scissors with close supervision from staff, and take walks around the local area, following clear rules about road safety. This supports children's confidence and independence as they become increasingly responsible, in readiness for their future learning.

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

The management team are responsible and well aware of the requirements of The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The manager of the nursery is well supported by her area managers and her deputy manager. As a result, she is able to spend lots of time in individual rooms with staff and children. This means that she is able to monitor staff practice, and children's progress closely and this has resulted in significant improvements to the educational programmes since the last inspection. The manager carries out regular appraisals, one-to-ones and supervisions with staff, and as a result they are all well supported to continue to improve their practice. The manager has a clear overview of the nursery and is realistic about strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, she, and the area managers, have put in place targeted and effective plans to continue to make significant changes to the nursery. For example, the garden area is being developed and the management have consulted with parents, staff and children, and are in the process of creating an outdoor space that responds to their needs and wishes.

There are secure systems in place to safeguard children in the nursery. Staff are all fully aware of their responsibility to recognise, monitor and refer any concerns and there is a clear reporting process. Staff are vigilant about the safety of children in the nursery and take care to make children feel safe and secure to share any concerns they may have. The manager makes sure that she discusses child protection matters with staff at meetings and appraisals, so that they feel able to raise any issues as soon as possible. Adult to child ratios are well met and children are well supervised, both indoors and out. This strongly supports children's safety and well-being in the nursery.

Recruitment procedures are thorough, resulting in staff that are well-qualified and suitable for their roles. The manager is ambitious for her staff and supports them to continue to develop their skills and obtain new qualifications. She also attends lots of relevant training, meaning that she can continue to develop her own practice and is a strong role model for staff.

Partnerships with parents are well-developed from the outset. Parents have plenty of opportunities to settle their children well and continue to exchange information with staff on a daily basis. They enjoy regular parents' evenings and state that they appreciate that they are able to speak to staff every day. Children make good progress, and settle well because these strong relationships provide them with effective continuity of care. The nursery has made effective links with other agencies and professionals involved in children's care. This means that they are able to obtain extra support for any children who should need it. Also, there are strong arrangements to support children as they move on to school. These include, for example, visiting the child's new school with their key person, and inviting new teachers to come to the nursery. These arrangements help children to feel safe as they make this important move to their new place of learning.

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 action. 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	932254
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	88
Name of provider	Mace Montessori Schools Limited
Date of previous inspection	26/11/2012
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, which are usually the childminder's 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

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