

Walthamstow Montessori School

Penryhn Hall, Penryhn Avenue, London, E17 5DA

Inspection dates

15 November 2013

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken at the request of the Department of Education, registration authority for independent schools, in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan.
- 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 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. The inspection visit found that the school did not meet two of the independent school regulations. The school submitted an action plan that was approved by the Department for Education in February 2013.
- The school received an unannounced visit in March 2013 to establish whether it had implemented its action plan. This monitoring visit found that whilst the school had successfully addressed the two previous concerns, further regulations were unmet. These related to the manner in which complaints are handled and the provision of information for parents, carers and others.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Good progress

The quality of teaching and assessment continues to meet requirements. During the visit inspectors informally visited classrooms, scrutinised pupils' work and looked at assessment information. Pupils were fully involved in fundraising activities for 'Children in Need'. They spoke confidently to inspectors about their learning. They engage enthusiastically in additional curriculum opportunities in areas of personal interest, for example, in mathematics, drama and music. Classrooms are safe, well organised and provide calm and stimulating learning environments. Attitudes between pupils and all adults are positive and respectful.

The headteacher ensures that adults and pupils are safe on the school site. Examinations of safeguarding and health and safety documents show all regulations are now met. The safeguarding policy meets statutory requirements. Systems to maintain the single central register are robust. Enhanced checks are made and recorded for all staff, visitors and contractors who have access to the site. Staff regularly review the child protection and safeguarding policies. Current practice is shared with parents and carers through workshops and newsletters. A strong approach to anti-bullying is promoted with pupils throughout the school.

The attendance is now recorded daily on a spreadsheet, which is routinely printed and copies are kept as required. The headteacher monitors these closely and appropriate action

is undertaken if there is poor or erratic absence from school. Admissions information, leaving and destination data is maintained in a single register, in line with requirements.

Washing facilities in the accommodation for the medical examination and/or care of pupils who are unwell have been improved and now meet requirements. There are suitable arrangements in place for the supervision of ill or injured pupils.

The school's commitment to work with parents and carers to meet the needs pupils with special educational or health needs is a very strong aspect of the school. Risk assessments are thorough and systematic and cover all aspects of school life at both sites. Fire and emergency evacuation procedures are undertaken on a monthly basis. Safety checks are made on electrical appliances, fire equipment, and smoke and CO₂ alarms. All records in relation to pupils' welfare, health and safety, such as those for the care of pupils with serious medical conditions, are kept meticulously by the senior leaders in school. These are routinely analysed to help maintain the highest level of care and safety of pupils.

The school has reviewed all the information made available to parents, carers and others and now meets requirements. The new website has been launched. All policies, staff information and curriculum programmes are readily available. The number of staff employed in the school and their qualifications is prominently on display in the school foyer.

The shortcomings in the school's written complaints policy were addressed following the last monitoring visit. The complaints procedure now meets all requirements and it has been agreed in consultation with parents and carers. Although there are no complaints on record, there are arrangements to store this information confidentially and securely.

Compliance with regulatory

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements

Inspection team

Ann Debono, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Ratcliff

Her Majesty's 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.
- It is located in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The elementary and upper preparatory classes are located on the site at St John's Church. The lower school is nearby at Penrhyn Hall.
- Currently there are 135 pupils on roll, 90 attending full-time and 45 attending part-time. Of the 76 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 16 are under three and 60 receive public funding under the government's nursery education scheme.
- A minority of pupils have special educational needs; none have a statement of special educational needs. Many pupils are bilingual or have English as an additional language.
- 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

Unique reference number	134579
Inspection number	428320
DfE registration number	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.	
Type of school	Nursery and preparatory
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	2–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Number of part time pupils	45
Proprietor	Lorna Mahoney
Headteacher	Wendy Palumbo
Date of previous school inspection	March 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,620 to £5,700
Telephone number	020 8523 2968
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