

# Mace Montessori Schools Limited

Mace Montessori School, 38-42 Millman Street, London, WC1N 3EW

<b>Inspection date</b>	09/07/2014
Previous inspection date	29/07/2009

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

### This provision requires improvement

- Staff teach children to become independent. This prepares them well for the next steps in their learning.
- Staff provide an ample range of interesting activities and daily experiences. Therefore, children enjoy their time at nursery and show motivation for learning.
- Staff have positive relationships with parents and this helps children settle into the nursery well.
- Staff are good role models and speak kindly to the children as they help them understand boundaries. Therefore, children behave well.

### It is not yet good because

- The provider has not ensured that they notified Ofsted about changes in the leadership and management of the nursery within the required timescale.
- Staff assessments of children's progress are not precise or consistent enough in order to track each child's individual progress well.
- Staff do not complete or share with parents the required progress checks for all children attending between the ages of two and three years.

## 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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the premises.
- The inspector took account of the views of the parents.
- The inspector observed children's activities inside and outside and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled children's records, planning and the nursery's required documents, including policies and procedures.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the regional manager to discuss how they meet the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

## Inspector

Carolina Montesinos Zamora

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Mace Montessori Nursery is one of seven nurseries run by Mace Montessori Schools Limited. It registered in 2005 and operates from a low-rise building situated in a block of flats in the London Borough of Camden. Children have access to a large playroom and toilets. An enclosed outdoor play area is also available. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm. The nursery closes for a week at Christmas and bank holidays. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 37 children in the early years range on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery employs six members of staff. All of them hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 or 4. The nursery also employs a cook. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The nursery uses the Montessori teaching method.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- use observations and assessments consistently to monitor progress accurately and support children's learning and development well
- ensure that parents are aware of how the Early Years Foundation Stage is being delivered, with specific regard to the progress check for children aged between two and three years.

### Inspection judgements

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

Staff provide an ample range of activities and daily experiences to children both inside and outdoors. The staff use the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Montessori method of teaching. The learning environment is welcoming and well resourced. This encourages children to be curious and develop independent thinking as they select their activities independently. The educational programmes offer a good mixture of adult-directed and child-initiated play, which cover all areas of learning. For example, as part of the Montessori time, children enjoy choosing their activities from the practical life area and use mats to determine their working space. They complete puzzles, build with construction toys or practise fine muscle movements by scooping and pouring as they do some washing up. These activities enthuse and engage children in purposeful play. Therefore, children enjoy their time at nursery and are becoming active learners.

Staff adequately support children's acquisition of language. They provide enabling interactions to children, including the use of open-ended questions and labelling in order to extend children's vocabulary. Children who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to use their home language at nursery. An example of this was seen during the inspection as a child excitedly tells the staff that they are going on holiday using a mixture of English and their home language. Staff gather key words from parents as they start attending to support children's communication. Additionally, developing partnerships with other professionals such as speech and language therapists mean that staff use extended strategies to support children. They use picture cards, visual timetables and are beginning to use Makaton signs to support children who need additional support to communicate. Therefore, children make steady progress in their learning from their starting points. Staff also use naturally arising opportunities to help children learn new concepts and extend their understanding of mathematics. For instance, they use the sand timer to help children learn about waiting at circle time and they count the number of children in the group together.

Children have free-flow access to the outdoor space and enjoy practising their early writing skills as they use chalk to make marks on the board provided. The outdoor environment promotes children's physical development well. Children enjoy riding wheeled toys, climb, balance, jump and play active games with the support of the staff. Staff help children make connections with local events and the world around them through play. For example, most children become involved in a discussion at circle time about the World Cup and the Tour de France and where in the world these events take place. However, the quality of teaching requires improvement because staff's observations and assessments of children are not precise or consistent enough in order to track children's progress well. Furthermore, although the key person has a general overview of children's needs and interests because they communicate with parents daily, they have not completed the required progress checks for all children between the ages of two and three years or shared this with parents.

Staff prepare children for going to school appropriately as they support them in their development of early writing skills and phonics and talk to children about going to school through activities and at circle time. As a result, children feel excited about going to school. Overall, staff have a positive relationship with parents and welcome parents into the setting to provide feedback and exchange information and ideas. This has a positive effect on supporting children's learning.

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

Each child is allocated a key person when they first start at the nursery. The key person is responsible for liaising with parents to find out all they can about the child's care and learning needs. Staff complete All about me forms with parents about their child's needs and interests and this helps them support children to separate and settle happily. There have been changes within the staff team, which sometimes results in a change in key person for children. However, this has not had an impact on children's well-being because

they have developed secure relationships with all staff. Children demonstrate they feel safe and secure in the care of staff. For instance, children share good news excitedly with all staff and other children and younger children seek the comfort of the staff if they feel sad or tired.

Staff provide children with praise in order to encourage positive behaviour and positive attitudes. Some staff pay particular attention to providing specific praise, which is more meaningful to children. For example as a child has a go climbing and walking on a structure a member of staff praises the child on their 'good balancing'. Staff support children as they develop increasing independence skills and control over activities. For example, staff choose a child to be a helper at lunch time, which involves helping set up the tables, serving and giving out the food. Children learn to manage their own personal needs and wash their hands after a messy activity or before having a meal. This helps them prepare for going to school. Staff speak softly to the children and encourage cooperative play, they talk to children about sharing and about respecting each other's work as situations arise. As a result, children learn to cooperate and encourage each other to help tidy up. They say 'it is S-T-O-P time!' so they put their toys away as they sing. Therefore, the atmosphere in the nursery is calm; most children are fully involved in their activities and behave well.

The nursery cook plans and prepares nutritious meals and snacks for the children according to their individual dietary needs. Good hygiene practices are followed throughout the nursery, for example, children learn to wash their hands during the routine of the day, access tissues to clean their faces independently and wear protective clothing when it is their turn to be the lunchtime helpers. Children enjoy daily fresh air and physical exercise. This contributes positively to children's well-being and their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Staff place importance on the safety of the children and help children develop an understanding of safety. Staff conduct regular risk assessments of the premises and involve children in daily checks of the environment, to ensure it is welcoming and all resources are in good condition. Children also participate in fire evacuation drills as they learn about fire safety and what to do in case of an emergency. Staff have a sound understanding of their safeguarding policies and procedures and information is available and displayed for all staff regarding steps to follow if they had concerns about a child.

The organisation of the learning environment works well in promoting self-choice, positive interaction and appropriate challenge for all children. Therefore, children are involved in their activities and develop concentration and problem-solving skills. Children interact well and help each other learn new things as they play together. Staff ensure they communicate with parents regularly about children's care needs to adapt their practice and give children time to settle. This helps prepare children emotionally for change.

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

This inspection took place as a result of concerns raised to Ofsted regarding several changes of manager affecting children's care and learning. The inspection found that there

is an overall effective key-person system which helps children receive the care and attention they need. Leadership meets the required staff to child ratios, bringing in trained staff from their other nurseries as needed, to ensure this requirement has been and continues, to be met. The leadership and management have had necessary background checks. However, the provider has not ensured that they informed Ofsted of a change of manager within the required timescale. As the person concerned had already been vetted, this breach of requirements did not have a significant effect on children's welfare. However, owing to the frequent change of manager, the nursery's assessment systems have not been working as they did, or as required. This has meant that at times parents have not been given some required information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example, about their children's progress when aged between two and three years.

There are developing systems for early intervention, which ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities access support in order to make sufficient progress in their learning. The staff make links with other professionals to access advice and to attend group therapy sessions with the children. This supports partnership work and continuity of provision. The manager has made links with the schools children are going to in order to help smooth moves and to provide relevant information to the children's next settings.

Staff are suitably deployed supervising the children well both indoors and outdoors. Suitable staff recruitment systems include Disclosure and Barring Service checks and references. The management confirms that they have systems to ensure that new staff are never left alone with the children to safeguard every child. The management of the nursery has a suitable safeguarding policy, which includes all of the required details. There are flow charts and contact numbers displayed on the information boards so that staff and parents are equipped to deal with any issues that may arise. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of necessary steps to take in order to protect children. There are effective risk assessments and staff take action to ensure that risks, both inside and outside, are minimised so that children play safely. There is a strong policy on the use of mobile phones and social media. Staff have received internal training and feel confident challenging anyone who may not follow this policy. All these procedures to contribute to keeping children safe.

The new manager and the staff have begun to work effectively as a team. Suitable systems support staff in the daily routines and to develop their practice through training opportunities and staff meetings. For example, staff are encouraged to gain further qualifications. There are developing systems for self-evaluation, which the manager is putting in place with the support of her line manager. The manager receives support and feedback from the local authority's early years team and the nursery has recently obtained Montessori accreditation. The manager has a positive attitude towards improvement. She works closely with the staff and has a sound overview of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. However, breaches of the requirements restrict her ability to drive improvement more effectively.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

The requirements for the voluntary 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY303942
<b>Local authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	948159
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	37
<b>Name of provider</b>	Mace Montessori Schools Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29/07/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7242 5842

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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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