

Green Gables Montessori Primary School

4 Wapping Lane, London E1W 2RG

Inspection dates

6–8 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- The proprietor, chair of governors and school leaders have maintained the good quality of education since the previous inspection. The chair of governors visits the school often and has a good grasp of the school's work.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Pupils make good progress and achieve well because they are well taught. However, teaching does not always challenge the most able pupils to achieve as well as they should. Also, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- The curriculum is well planned. Pupils enjoy a wide range of subjects and enrichment activities. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal development and welfare very well. Pupils' behaviour is good and they attend school regularly.
- Children make good progress in early years. Adults follow children's interests well and plan engaging activities. Leaders acknowledge that outdoor provision for children in the Reception Year is not as effective as pre-school.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. The majority of parents and carers are very happy with the school's work.
- Leaders' checks on pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics are not consistently rigorous.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, their action plans do not always include measurable targets to improve pupils' progress further.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school’s strategic improvement plans are strengthened by including measurable targets and success criteria with a sharper focus on improving the quality of teaching and pupils’ outcomes
 - leaders’ checks on the quality of teaching and pupils’ outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics are consistently effective.
- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils’ achievement by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are provided with work that is sufficiently challenging
 - improving the quality of outdoor provision for children in the Reception Year so that it is as exciting and purposeful as it is for pre-school children
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to develop problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher and leaders are ambitious for the school. They are committed to maintaining the school's ethos and vision as well as continually raising standards and improving pupils' outcomes.
- The curriculum is well planned. Leaders have created a curriculum that brings together the national curriculum subjects with a Montessori approach to capture pupils' interest so that they are motivated to achieve well. Pupils enjoy a variety of enrichment activities, which include weekly swimming lessons and daily access to local parks. These experiences strongly promote pupils' self-confidence, happiness and well-being.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together effectively as a team. They know pupils very well and are committed to supporting teachers and support staff in continually improving the quality of pupils' learning. They provide helpful feedback to staff about the quality of their practice and offer opportunities for staff to observe each other's work.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about the many cultures that exist in modern Britain and understand the importance of respecting others. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the world, including sharing daily news together and debating issues that affect London and beyond.
- Leaders are ambitious for the school and want the very best for all pupils. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, their action plans would benefit from including measurable targets and clear success criteria, sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of the different age groups. Leaders monitor pupils' work regularly. However, their checks on pupils' progress in subjects such as art, humanities and science, are not as robust as those in English and mathematics. Leaders acknowledge that improving their checks on pupils' learning in the full range of subjects taught would also raise pupils' achievements across the curriculum.

Governance

- Those responsible for governance have ensured that pupils receive a good standard of education. They hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. They visit the school regularly to look at the impact of leaders' actions to improve the school.
- The proprietor and chair of governors support the headteacher well. They meet regularly to discuss all aspects of the school's work. They are equally ambitious for the school and are keen to continually improve. However, they have not ensured that the school's strategic plans for development relate well enough to pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and acknowledge that these plans need to be strengthened.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, makes sure that safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained to identify the potential signs that pupils may be at risk from harm.
- The school's effective safeguarding policy, which is published on its website, meets requirements and incorporates the latest child protection legislation. Helpful safeguarding information for pupils and parents is also displayed in every classroom and in the school's reception area. This ensures that all staff and parents are aware of their roles and responsibilities in keeping pupils safe.
- The safety of pupils is a high priority for the school. High levels of staff supervision around the school site and on trips and visits help to keep pupils safe.
- The school's curriculum incorporates opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, such as when using the internet and from strangers.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- In each of the four classrooms, adults work together well to meet pupils' learning needs. Classrooms are positive learning environments that are very well resourced and support all areas of the curriculum effectively.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to manage their own learning and to keep track of their activities and tasks. Pupils have consistently good access to a wide range of learning resources and materials. They find things out for themselves, undertake research and follow their own interests.
- Reading is well promoted and taught well. Pupils read high-quality texts in class and for pleasure. They read confidently and learn good comprehension skills. Phonics is taught well and as a result, pupils make great strides in their reading skills.
- Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to write in a range of subjects. Pupils in the upper elementary class are particularly confident at handwriting. Pupils use vocabulary well and are taught to explore the definitions of words so that they produce accurate and interesting written work.
- Pupils develop good calculation strategies in mathematics. They use mathematical resources very well to strengthen their understanding of different concepts. However, activities do not always provide enough opportunities to develop pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills, particularly for the oldest pupils.
- Staff know pupils very well and use plans that address gaps in pupils' learning effectively. Nevertheless, the expectations for what the most able pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Sometimes, these pupils complete work that is too easy.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The ethos of the school and the positive relationships between staff and pupils support pupils' personal well-being very effectively. All staff know the pupils well. There is a shared sense of belonging and togetherness that pupils enjoy and this contributes to pupils' strong self-confidence. Staff make sure that the curriculum is well planned to teach pupils about healthy lifestyles. As a result, pupils' physical and emotional well-being are well promoted.
- Pupils reported that they feel safe in school, and parents agree. Pupils develop a good understanding of safety, including online safety. Pupils know about the different forms of bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying, and reported that it is very rare. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe when out and about and in school.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is almost in line with the national average. Leaders' efforts to improve punctuality have been effective. Staff ensure a prompt start to the school day and the school's thriving breakfast and after-school club supports pupils' attendance and enjoyment of school.
- The school's programme of personal, social, health and economic education is used well to teach pupils about the world around them. For example, pupils learn about faiths and celebrate the backgrounds of their friends in school, such as through festivals. Pupils know that families take many different forms and understand the importance of treating others with respect.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Classrooms are calm and orderly. Routines are very well established so that pupils learn in a safe and organised environment. Pupils say that behaviour is usually very good, and parents agree.
- Adults are positive role models for good behaviour. Staff listen to pupils' views and take their ideas on board. Pupils take responsibility and look after their school well. Older pupils take good care of the class guinea pigs and pupils in all classes respond well to their daily jobs. Pupils keep their classrooms well organised and inviting.
- Lunchtimes are positive. Pupils enjoy daily visits to the park and outdoor spaces. Staff make sure that pupils are safe and well supervised during these times. Pupils socialise well together, create their own games and have fun.
- Pupils are respectful and well mannered. Occasionally, pupils' behaviour slips slightly. This is usually related to the quality of teaching or when large-group activities are not planned highly effectively. This is why behaviour is not outstanding.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Overall, pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers plan for pupils' next steps well and use assessments effectively to address any gaps in their learning.
- Pupils acquire good speaking and listening skills. Teachers plan effective opportunities for pupils to debate, ask questions and research a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. Pupils articulate their learning very well and develop strong independence skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning. The headteacher works effectively with other professionals to ensure that these pupils have the resources, staffing and expertise needed to be successful. Support for these pupils in class enhances their achievement well.
- Pupils attain well in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessment system tracks pupils' acquisition of knowledge and skills in these subjects. Assessment information and work in pupils' books demonstrates that most pupils attain in line with the standard expected for their age.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. Leaders' checks on pupils' progress in the wider curriculum are not consistently of the highest quality. They acknowledge that this sometimes prevents pupils from making even better progress across the curriculum.
- Inspectors reviewed work in pupils' books, across different classes and subjects. Pupils develop good reading and writing skills across a range of subjects and apply these well in different contexts. Sometimes, staff do not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently well and this restricts their progress. Pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics are not consistently strong. Occasionally, activities to support these skills are not challenging enough.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision consists of a pre-school class of children and the Reception Year. The deputy headteacher, together with the headteacher, oversee early years provision effectively. Leaders ensure that all the statutory requirements for early years are met.
- Over the past year, leaders have found it difficult to recruit suitably qualified and experienced staff for the pre-school room. Nevertheless, they have worked effectively to ensure that all staff have had in-school training and support from leaders and practitioners from other nurseries in the company.
- Children are happy and settled. Staff know children well and ensure that care routines are firmly established. Effective arrangements are in place to ensure that children's welfare and learning needs are met. Children's behaviour is good. They work and play well together, take turns and use good manners.
- The pre-school children experience a wide range of sensory opportunities to develop their mathematical and literacy skills. Staff use resources creatively and encourage children's

independence from a young age.

- Children are confident and develop strong self-esteem. Staff support children's emotional needs well and show high levels of care to the children. Relationships are positive. Children happily engage in conversations with adults and their friends. Children in the Reception Year are particularly good at sharing their learning and ideas because staff develop their confidence in speaking and listening.
- Reading is taught well. Small-group phonics sessions are used effectively to help children read new words. Children read well and enjoy talking about the characters and stories they hear. They like it when adults read to them and enjoy the creative ways in which adults bring stories to life, such as with props and puppets.
- Children make good progress in early years. Adults use observations of children's learning alongside a tracking system to monitor children's development. The deputy headteacher checks that adults' observations are appropriate and supports staff well in planning for children's next steps.
- Parents are happy with how well their children settle. They are positive about the approaches used by staff to help their children learn. Leaders ensure that partnerships are purposeful and that parents are provided with up-to-date information in order to contribute to their children's learning.
- Overall, adults plan effective outdoor learning activities. Pre-school children use a well-equipped nursery outdoor area each day and children in Reception use the facilities in a nearby park. Although staff take a range of resources with them to the park, the outdoor provision for children in Reception is not as effective as it is for pre-school children. Leaders acknowledge that this provision could be strengthened further to make it even more engaging and purposeful.

School details

Unique reference number	131198
DfE registration number	211/6386
Inspection number	10012780

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Shahid Hamid
Chair	Sharon Lee
Headteacher	Yemi Afolabi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,600 to £11,100
Telephone number	020 7488 9237
Website	www.macemontessori.com/primary-mace-green-gables
Email address	greengablesprimary@macemontessori.com
Date of previous inspection	30 April–2 May 2013

Information about this school

- Green Gables Montessori Primary School is part of the Mace Montessori Schools group. Children are taught in four mixed-age classes.
- On the same site, there is also provision for babies. This provision is registered separately and was not part of this inspection.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2017, after having been the deputy headteacher at the last inspection. The school's last standard inspection took place in April 2013, when it was judged to be good.

- In July 2014, November 2015 and October 2016, emergency inspections took place to check specific independent school standards. In October 2016, inspectors found that the school met all the standards that were checked.
- The school follows the Montessori philosophy as well as the national curriculum.
- Very few pupils have additional needs. None has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Many pupils speak English as an additional language although very few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The school manages a breakfast and after-school club for pupils.
- The school meets the independent school standards for what it must publish on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice. On the last day of the inspection, all pupils in two of the four classes were out of school on an educational visit.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, operations director and chair of governors. The lead inspector spoke with the proprietor on the telephone.
- Inspectors talked to pupils throughout the inspection and met formally with groups of pupils to find out their views on the school.
- The inspectors reviewed the work in pupils' books, on displays and in their homework and reading files. Inspectors looked at work from a range of subjects and in all classes.
- Inspectors visited all classrooms to observe learning, sometimes jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and accompanied pupils to the park that they use for lunchtimes.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including information related to safeguarding, staff suitability and site safety. Inspectors looked at information about pupils' progress and sampled a range of policies and procedures.
- Inspectors toured the school site, scrutinised documentation and held meetings with leaders to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered the 16 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. They also considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Andrew

Ofsted Inspector

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