

Inspection of Belfield Montessori Day Nursery

Montessori Day Nursery, Belfield House, Greenhill Park, New Barnet, Barnet EN5 1HG

Inspection date: 5 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy to be at nursery. Staff have been proactive in identifying the impact of prolonged absences due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic on children's learning and development. Children benefit from being cared for by a warm and consistent staff team, and enjoy seeing familiar faces when they arrive each day. This helps children to feel safe. Children who are new to the setting settle quickly.

The manager takes responsibility for the quality of care and education. She brings out the best in her staff team through the creation of a positive working environment. The manager acts with integrity to ensure that all children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make the most of their access to early education.

Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They encourage all children to learn and use good manners. Children are well behaved and engaged in their learning. They show a positive attitude to their learning. Children are keen to explore the resources on offer. They look forward to particular activities that they have enjoyed before. For example, children are excited when they get to explore the outdoor 'water station' and mud kitchen each day.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Overall, children benefit from a curriculum which is well planned. Staff get to know the children well. They find out about what children already know and can do. Staff use their observations of children's development successfully, to help children achieve their next steps in learning. Children show that they remember what they have been taught.
- Staff build strong relationships with parents and communicate effectively about children's learning and development. Parents speak very highly of the nursery and how supportive staff have been, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. They especially appreciate the calls, videos, and the suggestions for activities they can do at home.
- Staff know it is important to children's learning to listen regularly to stories. However, they do not consistently offer these at times that are best suited to an activity that requires children to be able to listen and concentrate well. For example, sometimes staff read to a group of toddlers at a time when children need to be called away one by one to change their shoes or get ready for sleep times.
- Children learn to respect and value one another. Staff encourage children to recall the rules in nursery and to discuss how they are feeling. Children behave well and show their understanding of boundaries.

- Children develop good independence skills in managing their personal care. Staff help children to develop the key skills and attitudes they need to be ready for school. For example, they encourage children to complete tasks independently, including pouring drinks and serving themselves at mealtimes.
- The staff ensure that children learn essential core skills in preparation for school. For example, there is a clear focus on developing children's speech, building on their experiences and helping them to be confident to learn new skills. However, on occasion, staff miss opportunities to extend older children's learning even further. For example, staff do not make effective use of questions and explore ideas with children, in particular at lunchtimes.
- The outdoor area is exciting and thoughtfully equipped. Staff ensure that children have a wide range of experiences that encourage them to be physically active. For example, children make potions with mud and foam, and climb and manoeuvre around a wooden pirate ship.
- Staff support children to develop their small- and large-muscle skills in order to develop the physical skills and control needed for writing. For instance, babies use textured rolling pins to crush wheat cereal. Older children show that they can write their name and are beginning to form letters correctly.
- The manager provides ongoing training and supervision for staff. She promptly identifies specific training needs for all the staff. Staff feel valued and appreciated. They benefit from regular feedback about their performance. They are given time and support to further their knowledge and qualifications.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Robust recruitment and vetting arrangements help ensure that those working with children are suitable for their role. Members of the senior staff team test staff's knowledge of child protection. They use a range of methods to ensure that safeguarding is at the forefront of staff's minds. All staff can recognise wider safeguarding matters. They confidently describe the action they would take if they had concerns about a child's welfare or regarding a colleague's practice. Staff complete regular risk assessments of the environment to identify and act on any hazards.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- plan activities for toddlers more carefully to make sure that children can focus and concentrate on their learning
- consider ways to help all staff make the most of all opportunities to extend older children's learning even further, in particular during lunch periods.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY552335
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10143528
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	43
Number of children on roll	63
Name of registered person	Belfield Montessori Day Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP552334
Telephone number	02084408822
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Belfield Montessori Day Nursery registered in 2017. It follows the Montessori teaching philosophy. The nursery is open from 8am until 6pm on weekdays throughout the year. It employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery provides funded early education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anahita Aderianwalla

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- At appropriate times during the inspection, the inspector spoke to staff.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- Children spoke to the inspector.
- Parents shared their views with the inspector.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider, the manager and the deputy manager, and sampled relevant documentation to help establish their understanding of how to safeguard the children in their care.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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