

Inspection of The Ark Montessori Nursery

37 County Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8HN

Inspection date: 1 April 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Inadequate |

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happily at the nursery and settle in quickly when they first start. They make good relationships with their key person and other staff. They are confident to seek their attention, when needed. For example, when they need some assistance during activities. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure at the nursery. They make their own choices in play and learn at their own pace, building on their confidence, self-esteem and imagination. Children show positive attitudes to learning because staff have high expectations of them. They are active and enjoy a wide range of experiences outdoors. This helps to support children's physical development. For example, they ride on tricycles and use age-appropriate apparatus.

All children acquire good language skills from their starting points. They benefit from hearing their home language in their play. In addition, skilled staff teach children simple Arabic during planned circle time. Children develop an awareness of the natural world around them. For example, as they explore the movement of worms they randomly find in the garden, during a dinosaur hunt. Children develop a high level of independence because staff encourage them to carry out simple tasks themselves. This includes putting their coats on and helping themselves during snack times. Children confidently follow the routines of the nursery and behave well. They happily share, take turns and play cooperatively together.

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

- The provider and the management team have worked hard since the last inspection to improve the overall quality of education. For example, they have made good use of support and training from the local authority to enhance the quality of teaching and learning experiences for children.
- Staff know children well. They carry out required assessments of children's learning and are able to identify where individual children need more support. Staff are clear about what children need to develop next. They plan exciting activities following children's individual needs and interests.
- The manager conducts regular supervisions and offers support and feedback to staff. As a result, the staff's teaching has improved. However, there are occasions during planned activities when staff do not focus closely enough on maximising learning opportunities for all children. This means that the most-able children are not consistently challenged.
- The management team and staff continue to focus on children's personal, social and emotional as well as communication and language development. They aim to help close all gaps in children's development following the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they arrange 'show and tell' sessions and encourage children to talk about what they brought from home to build on their confidence

and communication skills.

- Children enjoy exploration and often initiate their own imaginative play. For example, when children explore the texture of rice, they fill in the pots and pans and pretend to make some risotto for their lunch.
- Children confidently count in sequence and recognise shapes as they play. For example, they name and count the shapes they cut out of play dough.
- Staff are kind and caring and teach children to value and respect each other's differences. This includes discussions about different languages children speak and festivals they celebrate. This helps children learn about diversity.
- Overall, staff engage with children well and model language clearly. However, on occasions, staff do not give children enough time to respond to questions before they move on to another or answer themselves. This means they do not always extend children's thinking, imagination and communication skills as much as possible.
- The management team and staff work effectively with other agencies to support and meet the needs of individual children. Staff work well with parents and they regularly share information about children's care and learning. These effective partnerships help provide continuity in children's development.
- All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language, make good progress and develop skills they need for the next stage in learning.
- Staff help children develop an understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. For example, they hold conversations about how eating fruit and vegetables keeps them healthy and strong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team and staff are knowledgeable about child protection and have a good understanding of wider safeguarding issues. They know how to identify possible signs of abuse and know the correct procedures to follow, should they have a concern about a child or a member of staff. The provider and the management team implement robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure only suitable staff work with children. Staff are vigilant and carry out effective risk assessments of the nursery environment to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff's skills to make the best use of planned activities to maximise learning for all children
- provide sufficient time for children to think and respond to questions to extend their thinking, imagination and communication skills even further.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY102531 |
| Local authority | Croydon |
| Inspection number | 10213655 |
| 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 | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 20 |
| Number of children on roll | 30 |
| Name of registered person | Neotrace Ltd |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP527908 |
| Telephone number | 0208 240 0076 |
| Date of previous inspection | 15 October 2021 |

Information about this early years setting

The Ark Montessori Nursery registered in 2001. It is situated in the London Borough of Croydon. The nursery is open from 9am until 3pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions run from 9am to midday and from midday to 3pm, or children can stay for both sessions. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. There are seven staff members, all of whom have relevant childcare qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Katarina Hustava

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed the learning walk together.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation together and evaluated the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the management team, staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documents, relating to the suitability, training and support of staff.

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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