

Inspection of Green Gables Montessori Primary School

4 Wapping Lane, London E1W 2RG

Inspection dates:

15 to 17 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils really enjoy coming to this small Montessori school. Pupils are at the centre of their learning. They are able to select activities that interest and stimulate them. Pupils and parents and carers like the fact that staff welcome them at the door each morning. This helps to promote a strong sense of community.

In line with the Montessori principles, staff work alongside pupils to guide their learning. Pupils show positive attitudes. They speak about their learning with confidence and enthusiasm. Leaders ensure that, beginning in early years, children have experiences in a broad range of subjects. However, the curriculum is not planned to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge securely over time.

Pupils are kept safe at school. They are taught about different forms of bullying. Pupils said that bullying does not happen here. Staff support pupils to resolve any issues that they may have. Pupils are respectful and polite to others. Classrooms are calm and reflective spaces for pupils to learn.

Pupils like the opportunities they have for learning and playing in the outside spaces that are available to the school, such as Wapping Woods and the gardens at a nearby church.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The proprietor and governors have not checked closely on the quality of education and the curriculum. They have not held leaders to account well enough for this part of the school's work.

Leaders have not thought carefully about what pupils need to learn in each subject. The order in which pupils need to learn new subject content has not been considered. As a result, pupils' learning does not routinely build up securely and logically over time, from early years through to the oldest children. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. In some subjects, their understanding of important ideas is not secure.

From early years, staff develop children's interest in books using high-quality texts. They promote children's language and communication development effectively. However, the approach to early reading does not build on these foundations. While pupils often use the sounds that letters represent to read new words, teachers do not use a consistent approach or programme to support pupils' learning in phonics. Leaders do not ensure that pupils have reading books that match the sounds that they know. This prevents some pupils from learning to read accurately.

Leaders, including the proprietor, have not ensured that staff are trained to teach pupils to read using phonics. This means that even though some staff have a basic understanding, others do not.

Teaching includes resources to support the development of pupils' understanding. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn to divide using a range of physical resources. Staff use assessment to identify what pupils have learned. They look for any gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, because the curriculum is not coherently planned and sequenced, these gaps in pupils' learning are not routinely addressed.

Parents spoke highly about how the school supports the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They value how leaders and staff care for their children and that the school keeps them safe. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their friends in the classroom. Suitable adaptations, through resources and staffing, ensure that pupils with SEND have the same opportunities as their peers.

What pupils are taught in personal, social, health and economic education helps them to learn about, and show respect for different faiths and cultures. Pupils are taught about their emotions and how to look after their personal well-being. Pupils also learn about democracy and equality, including the importance of valuing the views of others. Teachers encourage pupils to have a say in aspects of their learning. For example, classes decide together which books they will listen to at the end of the day. In line with the Montessori principles, pupils learn in classes alongside pupils of different ages. Pupils learn to support and encourage each other.

From the start of early years, staff foster children's independence. For example, children in the Reception class know why it is important to return the resources once they have finished with them so that other children can use them. Pupils like to help keep their classroom spaces tidy and organised. For example, they enjoy using brooms to sweep up anything that has been dropped.

Classrooms are quiet and calm spaces. Pupils behave well and focus on their learning. If pupils have any disagreements, they are supported at the 'Peace Table' to talk through their conflicts.

Staff promote pupils' wider development well. Leaders have developed plans for relationships education. These meet the relevant requirements of the independent school standards (the standards). Pupils are taught about difference, including that the needs and ideas of others may be different from their own. They learn about people from different cultures and backgrounds. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to have experiences beyond the classroom. For example, all pupils go swimming regularly. Pupils particularly enjoy the challenging and adventurous activities they do in the nearby Shadwell Basin, including climbing and kayaking.

Staff feel part of a valued team and leaders are considerate of their well-being.

Leaders have not made sure that all of the requirements of the standards are met. For example, they have not ensured that parents are provided with all of the required information, as set out in the standards. This includes up-to-date information on policies and procedures for safeguarding and behaviour. The proprietor ensures that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act

2010. The requirements of the statutory early years foundation stage framework are also met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the appropriate checks are carried out on all adults who work at the school.

Leaders have created a culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge of the risks that pupils may face. Leaders and staff know the pupils and their parents well. They are vigilant and ensure that pupils are safe. Leaders work with other agencies to support pupils and their families.

Safeguarding is threaded through the school curriculum. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when outside school and when they use the internet.

The safeguarding policy meets requirements, but is not made available to parents, as required by the standards.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- The proprietor and governors have not focused sharply enough on the quality of education and the curriculum. Furthermore, the proprietor has not ensured that the independent school standards are met in relation to making specific information available to parents and for the quality of education. This means that they do not hold leaders to account consistently well for these aspects of the school's work. The proprietor needs to ensure that the school meets all the independent school standards. Leaders, including the proprietor, should focus more closely on the quality of education offered to pupils.
- The school's approach to early reading is only partially considered. Leaders have not ensured that a systematic programme is in place to teach pupils to read using phonics. They have not ensured that all staff are well trained to teach phonics. This means that pupils are not taught to read consistently. Sometimes, they do not learn to read with books that match the phonics that they know. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of phonics has a high priority in the school from the time that children start in early years. They must ensure that all staff are well trained to teach phonics and early reading, and that pupils have access to books that they can use to build reading fluency.
- The curriculum is not coherently sequenced. Leaders have not thought carefully enough about what pupils need to learn and in what order, starting in early years. This affects how well pupils build up their knowledge over time in each subject. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is developed, so that all staff know what

to teach and when. Leaders need to ensure that each subject or area of learning is planned and sequenced well.

How can I feed back my views?

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If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	131198
DfE registration number	211/6386
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10210769
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Busy Bees Nurseries Ltd
Chair	Simon Irons
Headteacher	Bahar Aliriza
Annual fees (day pupils)	£11,761 to £16,200
Telephone number	020 7488 9237
Website	www.busybeeschildcare.co.uk/nursery/green-gables-primary
Email address	wapping@busybees.com
Date of previous inspection	6 to 8 February 2018

Information about this school

- Green Gables Montessori Primary School is a non-selective nursery and preparatory independent school in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The school caters for pupils from age four to 11.
- On the same site, there is also provision for babies and young children. This provision is registered separately and was not part of this inspection.
- The school is part of Busy Bees Nurseries Limited. The school joined the company in 2020.
- The headteacher took up her post in October 2021, after previously having been the deputy headteacher. The school's most recent standard inspection took place in February 2018, when it was judged to be good.
- This school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of staff. They also met with members of the governing body and the proprietor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. Geography forms part of a thematic approach that subject leaders call 'Culture'. For each of these deep dives, inspectors held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils, and looked at pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.
- The inspection team spoke with parents and considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including the free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtimes. They spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school, including their workload and well-being. Inspectors spoke with pupils to consider their views.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. Inspectors considered safeguarding records, documentation and the single central record of staff suitability checks.

- Inspectors visited the nearby outdoor areas that are used for outdoor play.
- Inspectors toured the premises, scrutinised documentation and held meetings with leaders to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Lloyd

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school’s internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request;
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 32(2)(d) a statement of the school’s ethos (including any religious ethos) and aims.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 32(3)(a) particulars of the school’s policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
 - 32(3)(b) particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently;

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