

Inspection of Walthamstow Montessori School

Penrhyn Hall, Penrhyn Avenue, Walthamstow, London E17 5DA

Inspection date: 18 July 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children show high levels of engagement and emotional well-being as they explore an array of stimulating and educational activities, both indoors and outdoors. They show that they are happy, feel safe, and secure. Children benefit from a rich, varied and well-sequenced curriculum that fosters their curiosity and love of learning. Staff are ambitious for children's learning, and it is evident that children are flourishing and making good progress.

Younger children delight when exploring colourful water beads. This helps them to develop their knowledge of colours, counting and making comparisons. They also have fun washing cars at the car wash. This supports their physical development, independence and imagination. In addition, they enjoy identifying fish and other sea creatures during water play. This helps to develop their knowledge of the world and supports their mathematical awareness, as they count and classify.

Older children demonstrate their inquisitive nature when learning about the life cycle of a frog. They discuss the differences between frogspawn, tadpoles and adult frogs. They also recall a recent trip when they went pond dipping with great enthusiasm. Children speak with confidence and demonstrate good, expressive language skills. Relationships between children and staff are highly respectful. Staff listen to children's ideas and acknowledge their efforts. This motivates them to behave well and show positive attitudes towards learning.

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

- Children benefit from a wonderfully calm and nurturing atmosphere to play and learn. Their independence is fostered extremely well, as they enjoy making choices about their learning. Staff successfully tailor activities and experiences based on children's interests and individual needs. Staff know children very well and are knowledgeable about what children need to learn next. Children have numerous opportunities to explore, be creative and develop their imagination.
- Leaders are passionate and have a clear vision to deliver high-quality education. Children's happiness and welfare is at the heart of their practice. As a result, children feel a great sense of belonging and there is a great sense of community.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to plan and review educational targets. This means they make steady progress in relation to their starting points.
- Staff value all children as individuals. They organise different celebrations to help them to understand their similarities and differences. For example, children celebrate Eid, Diwali and Easter where they engage in dressing up, marble

painting, and in colour- and light-related activities. This supports children to learn about diversity and to develop respectful attitudes.

- Staff help children to develop a love of stories, songs and literacy. Children frequently explore phonics and letter activities, as well as a wide variety of books, in a fun way. Staff have recently engaged in promoting children's literacy-skills training and speak passionately about this part of their practice.
- Children have daily opportunities to learn outdoors in the very well-resourced and inviting garden. Children plant a variety of herbs and vegetables and help to water them. This deepens their understanding of the natural world and supports their independence.
- Staff place great importance on supporting children's behaviour. For instance, they regularly update their knowledge and skills by attending training and work closely with parents to agree consistent strategies to help children manage their emotions and understand boundaries. As a result, children behave very well and children who require extra help are making positive progress.
- The quality of education is generally strong. Staff show good commitment to extending their professional development and the workforce is well qualified. There are some systems in place to coach and mentor staff; however, this is not sharply focused to ensure the highest level of consistency across the whole team.
- Parents are highly complimentary about staff and their experiences at the setting. They state staff provide them with a wealth of information to help them to feel involved in their children's learning. They also describe witnessing good progress in their children's overall development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff show a good understanding that promoting children's safety and welfare is everyone's responsibility. There are thorough vetting procedures in place to make sure staff are suitable for their roles. In addition, staff engage in regular safeguarding training and refresh their knowledge through frequent quizzes and discussions at staff meetings. Staff recognise the possible signs that may indicate that a child is at risk of neglect or harm. They also understand the procedures to follow to report any concerns. Staff carry out frequent risk assessments to help ensure the classrooms, garden and outings are safe. They also talk to children about the importance of drinking water to keep hydrated and the need to play in the shade during very hot weather.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the systems in place for coaching and mentoring staff to help gain

even stronger consistency across the quality of education.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 405124 |
| Local authority | London Borough of Waltham Forest |
| Inspection number | 10233603 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 89 |
| Number of children on roll | 97 |
| Name of registered person | Mahoney, Lorna |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP513854 |
| Telephone number | 0208 523 2968 |
| Date of previous inspection | 7 September 2016 |

Information about this early years setting

Walthamstow Montessori School registered in 2001. The nursery operates in line with the Montessori philosophy of education. It is part of the independent Walthamstow Montessori School. It opens from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 3pm, during term time only. A breakfast club operates from 8am to 9.30am, and an after-school club operates from 3pm to 5.45pm. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years. The provider employs 27 staff who are directly involved in teaching and care. 27 members of staff hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 2 or above, including seven members of staff who hold a level 6 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amy Mckenzie

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received on this site 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 provision.
- The inspector completed a learning walk with the leader and discussed their intentions for the quality of education.
- Parents, children and staff shared their views during the inspection.
- The inspector and owner completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the children's learning experiences.
- The inspector viewed relevant documents, including staff suitability information and training certificates.

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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