

Inspection of Lemon Tree Montessori

St Mary's Church Hall, Purley Oak Road, Sanderstead, Surrey CR2 0NY

Inspection date: 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Overall, children enjoy their time at nursery. They play alongside their friends inside and in the garden. They are curious to explore a range of interesting activities. However, the manager recognises that the nursery is on a journey to improvement. Although the manager has policies and procedures in place, these have not all been shared effectively with staff. There are inconsistencies among staff about how they support children's learning and well-being. At times, children are not able to focus fully on developing new skills and knowledge.

Children have positive relationships with staff, who get to know them. They enjoy spending time with staff and respond to their encouragement and praise. When children need reassurance, they go to staff for cuddles. Children have a familiar routine. They feel a sense of belonging at the nursery.

Children make choices about what they want to play with. They confidently explore the nursery environment. Children have the freedom to discover lots of interesting objects. For example, children use a pestle and mortar to crush herbs. They practise twisting the pestle and talk about what they are doing. Children develop their curiosity.

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

- The manager has policies and procedures in place to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. However, these have not all been shared consistently with staff. For example, not all staff fully understand the procedure for accessing the garden. On occasion, children spend time waiting for staff in the corridor between the garden and indoors, which means that they are not able to fully develop a sense of security.
- The manager and staff create a curriculum with a clear learning intent. This is effectively shared among staff. Staff want children to be able to explore freely and decide what they want to play with. Children gain confidence as they practise new skills.
- Staff find out what children know and can do. They use this information to plan activities that children enjoy. When children have gaps in their learning, staff access additional support from external partners. They sequence activities to help to build children's knowledge and skills over time.
- The manager understands how to deploy staff effectively to support children's learning. However, she does not share her expectations with staff. For example, some activities have too many children and others not enough staff. This means that children are not always able to fully enjoy their learning and concentrate.
- Parents report that children enjoy nursery. They say that staff are responsive to their needs and share information about the activities which their children enjoy.

Parents comment that this helps them to extend their children's learning at home.

- Staff understand that children need support to regulate their own behaviour. However, they do not give children clear and consistent expectations and rules to follow. For example, during focused activities, children do not consistently listen to staff or follow instructions. As a result, all children are not able to fully develop positive attitudes to their learning.
- The manager has not yet implemented an effective system for staff supervisions. The quality of education is not yet consistently high quality across the nursery. All children do not have access to high-quality interactions. At times, they are not all able to develop their language fluency.
- The manager is reflective of her practice. She regularly arranges professional development for all staff. This helps them to further their understanding of child development. The manager has a vision for improvement of the nursery and regularly evaluates her practice with parents and staff.
- Staff understand that it is important for children to learn about differences. Children learn new languages, taste foods and meet visitors to nursery. These opportunities help children to develop an understanding and respect for other people.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand the signs that children may be at risk of abuse or harm. They have a procedure to follow to report their concerns to the appropriate authorities. Staff understand what action to take in the event of an allegation being made about an adult. They are aware of the safeguarding issues that may affect their suitability. Managers have appropriate systems for checking the ongoing suitability of staff. Managers and staff carry out regular risk assessments of the nursery in order to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that all staff understand the nursery's policies and procedures to consistently promote children's well-being	14/07/2023
deploy staff effectively, so that children are fully supported to engage and concentrate.	14/07/2023

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

- promote high expectations for children's behaviour and conduct, to support their positive behaviour and attitudes to learning
- develop support to all staff, including supervision sessions, to help the quality of education to be consistently high across the setting.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY341292
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10295384
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	60
Number of children on roll	98
Name of registered person	Lemon Tree Montessori Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP525281
Telephone number	0208 651 5061
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

Lemon Tree Montessori registered in 2006. The nursery operates within the London Borough of Croydon. It is open all year round, from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The nursery employs 10 members of staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6 and four hold qualifications at level 4 or above. The nursery receives funding to provide early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Daurge

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with staff and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector viewed the nursery and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability 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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