

Maria Montessori School

26 Lyndhurst Gardens, London NW3 5NW

Inspection date

6 July 2023

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2, 2(1)–2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)–2(2)(i)

- Leaders have drawn up a detailed curriculum for pupils aged 12 to 16. This is readily accessible to parents and carers on the school's website.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to reflect the national curriculum as well as the Montessori principles which underpin the school's ethos. For example, the curriculum is divided into three strands or domains: intellectual development, creative expression and preparation for adult life. Together, these cover the full range of experiences including English, mathematics, the sciences, humanities, technological, creative and expressive education and sports. In designing the curriculum, leaders have made sure that pupils' needs and starting points have been appropriately considered.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is catered for suitably through the intellectual domain. Policies and plans make clear reference to the protected characteristics and citizenship. Preparation for life after school is central to the school's vision and plans include topics about society, and law and government in Britain.
- Careers education is an integral part of the curriculum. Pupils gain experience of supporting community initiatives, care of the environment and enterprise education.
- The school is likely to meet these standards if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Paragraphs 2A(1)–2(A)(3)

- The school's plans and policies set out clearly the programme for relationships and sex education (RSE). These are available on the school's website. Parents have been consulted about the programme and are able to withdraw their children from sex education should they wish to. The plans for RSE make clear reference to consent, responsibility and sexual health.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in these paragraphs if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Paragraph 3(a)–3(j), 4

- The school's policies and plans provide a clear framework for teaching. For example, the section on pedagogy outlines the approaches teachers can use, and how these can support pupils to understand and reflect on ideas and concepts. The way in which the curriculum provides for development of pupils' ability to think and learn for themselves is strong.
- Teachers are appropriately qualified in the subjects that they teach. They are trained effectively to implement the Montessori approach to the curriculum. This is likely to help teachers to ensure that pupils in the proposed age range make progress with their learning and develop the skills that they need for the next stage of their education.
- The arrangements to assess pupils' work are appropriate. Weekly 'advisory meetings' between teachers and pupils provide opportunities to discuss progress and next steps.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in these paragraphs if the material changes proposed are implemented.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in part 1 if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, (5)(a)–5(d)(iii)

- The school's approach to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is robust. For example, moral development focuses on civility, citizenship, civil society and community life. The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to learn how to engage with others in everyday interactions. This work includes the concern for the needs of others and developing a sense of social responsibility. The study of history and humanities provides opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and religions.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in part 2 if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 6, 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a)–9(c), 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a)–16(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The arrangements to safeguard pupils and ensure their welfare are well defined. The comprehensive policy reflects fully the statutory guidance. It provides detailed information for staff about how to recognise and report any safeguarding concerns. All staff receive safeguarding training, including for the school's 'Prevent' duty. The policy is available on the school's website.
- The written behaviour and anti-bullying policies are similarly robust. They are comprehensive and set out the strategies for dealing with serious misbehaviour.
- The school's written health and hygiene policy reflects statutory regulations and provides clear guidance for teachers. This includes references to keeping healthy, administering first aid and medicines, and cleaning.

- The proprietor ensures that the school complies with the fire safety regulations. As well as using an external company to provide a fire safety risk assessment and certificate, the school carries out its own detailed risk assessment every year. Leaders also carry out a variety of other suitable risk assessments, such as for visits to places of interest and the physical environment.
- Staff are deployed appropriately to ensure that pupils are properly supervised throughout the day. For example, named staff are responsible for each class.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in these paragraphs if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(4)(c), 19(2)–19(4)(c), 20(1)–20(9), 21(1)–21(8)

- Vetting arrangements to check the suitability of staff and the directors are thorough and meet statutory requirements. The single central record is carefully maintained and up to date. Pre-employment checks include identity, the right to work and an enhanced criminal record check. Two references are required for all staff new to the school.
- Leaders have ensured that staff who were appointed before April 2007 also have the appropriate vetting checks. Similarly, comprehensive checks are carried out for the directors and for contractors.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in part 4 if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23(1)–31(c)

- This inspection considered the accommodation at two of the school's premises. The building at 26 Lyndhurst Gardens, London NW3 5NW, where the school proposes to accommodate 18 pupils aged 12 to 14, and the premises at 37 Brandon Street, London W1H 5JE, which will cater for pupils aged two to five.
- The premises at 26 Lyndhurst Gardens provides suitable accommodation for pupils aged 12 to 14 years. Two rooms have been refurbished and are suitable for up to 18 pupils of this age. There are separate toilet facilities for boys and girls, a medical room with access to water and drinking water available in all rooms. Pupils attend the local leisure centre for physical education and sports, where suitable shower facilities are available. Lighting and ventilation are appropriate.
- The accommodation at 37 Brandon Street is spacious and newly decorated and provides all the relevant facilities. For example, there is a space for first aid that includes running water and is close to a toilet. Lighting and ventilation in all the rooms are suitable and there is adequate drinking water for pupils. Fire safety arrangements are appropriate, including fire extinguishers, and emergency exit signs and lights.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in part 5 if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33, 33(a)–33(k)

- Leaders have drawn up a comprehensive complaints policy, which is available to parents on the school's website. This provides a three-step process for those making complaints and sets out a clear timescale for each. The policy stipulates that where there is a panel hearing, one member of that panel is independent of the school.
- The policy also specifies that a written record is kept of all complaints. No complaints have been received since the last inspection.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in Part 7 if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The board of directors, which acts as the proprietor, and leaders carry out their respective roles and responsibilities effectively. All have a detailed knowledge of the independent school standards and of the legal requirements that underpin these. Leaders put the welfare of pupils at the top of their agenda, and deal swiftly and effectively with concerns should any arise. As a result, the independent school standards are met consistently.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in Part 8 if the material changes proposed are implemented.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The board of directors ensures that the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	131978
DfE registration number	202/6399
Inspection number	10291808

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Maria Montessori Institute
Chair	Richard Partridge
Headteacher	Michel Capobianco
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,785 to £6,500
Telephone number	0207 435 3646
Website	www.mariamontessori.org
Email address	schools@mariamontessori.org
Dates of previous standard inspection	21 to 24 June 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	3 to 12	3 to 14	3 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	208	325	325

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	137	325
Number of part-time pupils	29	42
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	24	25
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	1	1
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	1	1

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	27	35
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	4

Information about this school

- Maria Montessori School is an independent day school which follows the Montessori philosophy and approaches. It is located on five different sites in London:
 - 26 Lyndhurst Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 5NW
 - 134 Abbey Road, London NW6 4SN
 - St Mary's Hall, 7 Ashley Road, Hornsey, London N19 3AD
 - All Saints Church Hall, 28 Powis Gardens, Notting Hill, London W11 1JG
 - St Matthew's Church, 27 St Petersburg Place, Bayswater, London W2 4LA.

- The school proposes to amalgamate with Great Beginnings Montessori School (URN EY301187), which is located at 39 Brendan Street, London W1H 5JE. The school is registered for 70 children. There are 32 children currently on its roll.
- All sites offer provision for children aged three to six. The Bayswater and Hampstead sites offer further provision for pupils aged six to 12. Parents of Nursery-age children can opt for part-time arrangements. Children in the Reception Year onwards attend on a full-time basis.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place in June 2022.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This material change inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Department for Education to consider the school's application for a material change to increase the age range to three to 14 and the number of pupils on roll to 325.
- The inspection was carried out with two days' notice.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, and the directors ,who act as the proprietor.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of policies and documents provided by leaders, including those for safeguarding, behaviour, health and safety, and complaints.
- The inspector toured the premises at 26 Lyndhurst Gardens, London NW3 5NW and those at 37 Brandon Street, London W1H 5JE with the headteacher.
- The inspector checked staff vetting and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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