

Inspection of Dolphin Montessori School

Luther Tyndale Church Hall, Leighton Crescent, London NW5 2QY

Inspection date: 13 January 2025

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

Staff welcome children warmly each morning to this nurturing environment. Children have a strong understanding of the daily routines. For example, upon arrival, they hang up their coats, put their lunch on the trolley and put their outdoor shoes away. Well-embedded routines such as these help children to feel safe and secure.

The provider plans rich and varied learning opportunities to support children's learning and development. For example, children benefit from music sessions in which they practise making different rhythms and sounds with instruments. Staff cook regularly with the children. This helps children to have the opportunity to experience a range of tastes and textures as well as to learn about food from many different cultures and religions. Staff support children to develop their understanding of the local community through regular visits to local parks and shops. Children participate enthusiastically in all the opportunities that the setting offers, and they make good progress in their learning and development.

The kind and caring staff form positive and warm relationships with children. Children respond well to the calm and engaging tones that staff use. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They model expected behaviours to children throughout the day. For example, staff consistently remind children of the importance of saying please or thank you, and of tidying up after play or eating. This helps children to behave well.

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

- Staff know the children very well. They use their strong understanding of children's interests, and the next steps in their development, to plan learning opportunities. This helps children to make good progress on their individual learning journeys.
- Staff support children to develop their communication skills well. They get down to children's levels and narrate as children play and explore. Staff consistently model back to children what they have said so that it is grammatically correct. This helps children to progress in their language skills. Staff support children to develop their love of books and their vocabulary through regular, engaging story times.
- On occasion, staff do not use effective questions or comments as children explore in order to help children to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills or their ideas for play.
- Staff teach children to develop their independence skills. For example, during snack time, children carefully use their cutlery to eat their fruit, and they pour their own milk. Children also help to clean up, wiping the table after cookery.

Developing these skills helps to build children's self-esteem and prepares them well for the next stage in their learning journey, such as school.

- The provider helps children to develop their understanding of leading a healthy lifestyle. They provide children with lots of opportunities to exercise and move their bodies. Staff ensure that children eat healthily at the setting. They help children to learn about the importance of oral health while children take part in their daily toothbrushing.
- Staff carefully consider how to support children with their physical development. They plan many opportunities for children to learn to move their bodies in a variety of ways. For example, children transport water, climb up the slide and balance along obstacles. Staff help children to strengthen their fine motor skills and improve their hand-eye coordination. For example, during cookery, children mix the ingredients together, use handheld whisks and use the pastry brush. Children make good progress in their physical skills.
- Staff support children well in their personal, social and emotional development. They teach children important skills, such as turn-taking. Staff use a sand timer effectively to support children's understanding of the length of time they can play with something before it is another child's turn. They help children to develop their understanding of emotions. For example, staff and children discuss how the characters within stories are feeling. This helps children to understand their peers and develop positive relationships with them.
- The provider continually reflects on how to improve the setting. Staff engage in regular professional development opportunities, such as training, to ensure that their practice is of a good level.
- The provider builds strong partnerships with parents. They communicate regularly about the progress that children are making and how parents can support children's learning at home. The provider ensures that parents have plenty of opportunities to be involved in the setting. For example, parents come in to share religious celebrations with the children. This helps children to transition well between home and the setting and creates a strong sense of community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- consider how to further support children to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills during play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	100610
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10364157
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	6
Name of registered person	Limtouch, Carole
Registered person unique reference number	RP513497
Telephone number	07733554166
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2019

Information about this early years setting

Dolphin Montessori School registered in 1992. The nursery employs two members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and one holds a level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Gordon

Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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