

# Sakutu Organisation Montessori

Independent school inspection report

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DCSF registration number	304/6078
Unique Reference Number (URN)	132068
Inspection number	345375
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Michèle Messaoudi

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A<sup>1</sup> of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

The Sakutu Organisation Montessori School is an independent co-educational day school registered for pupils aged three to 11 years. Admission is non-selective. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, there were eight pupils on roll. Of these, two were in the last year of the Early Years Foundation Stage and none was in receipt of funding under the government's nursery education scheme. The school is also providing temporary accommodation for 10 to 15 children from a local nursery. The school is located in a residential part of Dollis Hill in north London. It was originally registered in other premises in 2001 by the present proprietor who is also the headteacher. The school reflects the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori. It aims: 'to increase pupils' independence and intellectual development, offering the maximum freedom within a structured environment'. The school was last inspected in May 2007.

## Evaluation of the school

The Sakutu Organisation Montessori School provides a good quality of education and meets its aims. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. Pupils enjoy their education and their behaviour is outstanding. They make good progress throughout the school because of the good curriculum, effective teaching and care. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. There are satisfactory safeguarding, welfare, health and safety systems in place. The school has made satisfactory progress in rectifying the areas of non-compliance highlighted in the last report and, as a result, it complies with all but one of the regulations for independent schools.

## Quality of education

The quality of education is good and the curriculum, which was satisfactory in the last inspection, is now good. The school provides an individualised education matched closely to pupils' individual needs and helps pupils develop into independent and competent learners equipped with a broad range of skills which prepares them

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

well for their future. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Montessori Early Years curriculum mirrors the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. It provides a good range of experiences. Children choose from a broad range of stimulating indoor activities within the Montessori three-hour work cycle. The range of outdoor activities is narrower as the six areas of learning are not promoted with equal consistency. As they move up the school, pupils continue to experience a curriculum taught mostly through the Montessori Method of freedom of choice and personalised learning within a structured environment. Detailed schemes of work support the teaching effectively and a good range of Montessori sensorial resources is used by pupils to develop concepts and solve problems. English, mathematics and science are taught as discrete subjects, which prepare pupils well for secondary school education. The breadth of the curriculum encompasses all the subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as French. Pupils learn to play the piano with a specialist teacher, from Year 1. Provision for physical education is good and includes weekly swimming for pupils throughout the school. The curriculum is particularly well balanced between the different subject areas as there are many opportunities for cross-curricular learning, most notably through regular project work and circle time. Pupils apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to a wide range of contexts. Their learning experiences are enhanced effectively by a rich programme of educational visits. However, there is a limited range of after-school activities to further extend pupils' creative, physical and technological skills.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Staff establish excellent working relationships based on mutual respect, which support pupils' learning extremely well. Daily and weekly assessments of each pupil's learning in each subject area inform individualised planning; as a result, the tasks presented to pupils match their needs closely. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff base their daily assessments of individual children's learning mainly on observations of play initiated by the children. Assessment records clearly indicate what the children can do and what their next steps of learning might be. Staff follow the children's interests to prepare an environment likely to stimulate their natural curiosity. For example, when one child showed a particular interest in her family in role play, the teacher enabled her to extend her learning by introducing the concept of a family tree. In the primary school, staff work very closely with each other to provide good continuity of learning for each pupil. Staff have excellent subject knowledge and are very skilful in teaching mixed-age groups. They ask questions of graded difficulty and set tasks that present varying challenges to match the differing needs of individual pupils. In most sessions, a good level of challenge is maintained throughout so that pupils make good progress. However, on occasion, the more able pupils are not challenged at a consistently high level, and so cannot progress at the rate of which they are capable. Pupils understand how to improve through discussion with teachers. They all make at least good progress over time. They achieve particularly highly in reading, writing and mathematics. Some make excellent progress in their piano playing. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make excellent progress in their personal

development and are on course to exceed the expected goals for their age by the end of Reception.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The staff are excellent role models who create a warm, welcoming and structured learning environment in which all pupils can flourish. Pupils concentrate and develop self-knowledge and resilience by being given the time to explore, by investigating their environment and by sustaining an activity. They demonstrate high levels of self-assurance, self-esteem and self-discipline which result in outstanding behaviour. They exercise their freedom with a good sense of responsibility, as shown in their persistence to complete a task, their considerate interaction with pupils of different ages and their good manners. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle in very quickly because their specific needs are well understood and respected by staff and older pupils. Pupils of all ages play and work harmoniously together. They say that they enjoy being in a small school where everyone knows everyone else well and staff provide one-to-one attention. Their enjoyment is reflected in their very good attendance and punctuality.

Provision for cultural and multicultural education is good. The staff promote respect for diversity well by presenting positive images of various cultures to all pupils and by using parents as valuable resources. For example, parents visit the school to talk about their celebrations and during the annual 'international day', parents and pupils are encouraged to reflect their cultural backgrounds through food, music, dance and demonstrations of crafts. At Christmas time, pupils participate in a piano recital for parents and perform in a play. Pupils' cultural development is further enhanced through educational visits. Pupils learn about public institutions through the curriculum and visits from the police, fire brigade and a nurse.

Pupils of all ages have daily opportunities to contribute to school life, tidying up and laying the table for lunch and snacks. They recently supported a cancer charity by selling the fruit lollipops and bowls of fruit salad which they had made. There are opportunities to contribute to the local and global community, but there is scope for extension. Pupils develop a wide range of skills that prepare them well for their futures, in addition to good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. They are competent independent workers and team members. Their good listening skills enable them to learn from others to find solutions. They easily make connections between different areas of learning and so can think creatively. They are articulate and communicate well with others.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. All the essential policies and procedures are in place to safeguard children and minimise risks. Some are

especially well implemented, such as the procedures for fire safety and first aid. Staff check the premises daily, including play equipment and toys, to minimise risks. Two members of staff have received first aid training with the paediatric qualifications which are required for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The child protection policy complies with the latest guidance and staff are trained at the appropriate level. The staff exercise vigilant supervision and promote very high standards of moral conduct and behaviour. As a result, accidents and instances of bullying are extremely rare. During the inspection, when the school was accommodating children from a local nursery, all pupils demonstrated that they knew how to keep themselves and others safe. However, the anti-bullying policy does not comply with the latest guidance. Since the last inspection, staff have shown better regard to the guidance on health and safety for educational outings. Risk assessments, while compliant with the requirements, do not always record in detail how risks will be reduced. Pupils understand that there is a ban on fizzy drinks, crisps, chocolate and biscuits because it is not healthy to have lots of sugar and salt. They are encouraged to eat and drink healthily and they enjoy a wealth of physical activities.

The school has planned well to increase accessibility and is reviewing how it can further improve its provision.

### Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has improved its recruitment procedures to ensure that all the required checks are carried out on staff for their suitability to work with children. Personnel files have been updated and all the required checks are recorded centrally.

### School's premises and accommodation

The premises provide suitable teaching accommodation and now meet all of the requirements. New carpets have been fitted securely. The garden has been cleared of unnecessary materials and is safe for outdoor play.

### Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides good quality information for parents and others, mainly through its prospectus and its open door policy. Parents and carers receive detailed reports on their children's progress and feel well informed.

### Procedures for handling complaints

Procedures for handling complaints have improved and now meet all of the requirements.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. All the welfare, learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework are met. Inclusive practice and very good partnerships with parents ensure that children's individual welfare and learning needs are met well.

Consequently, children flourish and make good progress in relation to their starting points. They enjoy their time in school and they are on course to exceed the expected goals by the end of Reception. They make exceptionally good progress in their personal development because the curriculum and the teaching help them to become independent and competent learners. They develop very good social skills from interacting with their peers, adults and older children, and demonstrate a maturity well beyond their chronological age. They adopt good daily hygiene routines and gain a growing understanding of how to keep healthy. They behave extremely well and demonstrate an excellent awareness of others.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Effective systems are in place to plan good learning opportunities and to assess children's learning and development. The staff have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of their practice. They have rightly identified as a priority the need to develop the use of the outdoor area to promote the six areas of learning consistently. The staff are suitably qualified and committed to continuous professional development. Links with a local nursery and with the local authority support the staff in further improving the quality of their practice.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations'), with the exception of that listed below.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- update its anti-bullying policy to comply with the latest guidance (paragraph 3(2)(a)).

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

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<sup>3</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm)

- provide pupils with a consistently high level of challenge so that they can progress at an even faster rate, particularly the more able
- extend the opportunities which the pupils have to contribute to the community, at both local and global levels
- ensure that all risk assessments carried out before educational outings record in detail how risks will be reduced
- further develop the use of the outdoor area to promote the six areas of learning consistently in the Early Years Foundation Stage.



Inspection judgement recording form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS?		✓		
What is the quality of provision in the EYFS?		✓		
How effectively is the EYFS led and managed?		✓		
Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS?		✓		

## School details

Name of school	Sakutu Organisation Montessori School		
DCSF number	304/6078		
Unique reference number (URN)	132068		
Type of school	Montessori day primary school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	January 2001		
Age range of pupils	5–11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls: 5	Total: 8
Annual fees	£4,500		
Address of school	346 Dollis Hill Lane London NW2 6HL		
Telephone number	07961181162		
Email address	doherfilm@aol.com		
Headteacher	Filmah Doherty		
Proprietor	Sakutu Organisation		
Reporting inspector	Michèle Messaoudi		
Dates of inspection	27–28 January 2010		