

The Four Seasons Montessori

Mill Hill Park Pavillion, Mill Hill Park, Daws Lane, London, NW7 4SD

Inspection date	09/12/2014
Previous inspection date	11/03/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Staff care for children in a language-rich environment, and are highly effective at enabling children to make excellent developmental progress.
- Staff work extremely well with parents and carers to provide exceptional support for children's individual needs.
- Staff enable children to become independent learners and to develop the skills required for their next stage of learning.
- Staff ensure children have access to a broad range of challenging and exciting learning opportunities, both inside and outside the nursery.
- Staff skilfully combine the Montessori philosophy with the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure children receive an outstanding balance of learning experiences.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability and qualifications, and talked with the owner and duty manager about their self-evaluation process and improvement plans.
- The inspector observed children during child-initiated and adult-directed play, indoors and outside.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed children engaged in play, and examined planning and assessment documentation.

Inspector

Helen Parker

Full report

Information about the setting

The Four Seasons Montessori Nursery School registered in 2002 and is one of two nurseries owned by the proprietor. It operates from two rooms within a pavilion building. The pavilion is situated within the grounds of Mill Hill public park, within the London Borough of Barnet. The nursery is open each weekday during term-time only, from 9.15am until 1.15pm, and provides a lunch club until 1.15pm on Tuesday and Wednesday only. Afternoon sessions are sometimes available and the nursery operates during some school holidays. Children have supervised access to an enclosed outdoor public play area. The nursery serves the local area and the wider community. The provider is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 15 children on roll in the early years age range. The provider receives funding for the provision of free early years education for children aged two and three years old. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs three members of staff, which includes the manager and one member of staff, both of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery operates in line with the Montessori educational philosophy.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for children to see print in a range of languages in the environment to further enhance their understanding of diversity.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have an outstanding understanding of how to promote the learning and development requirements. They skilfully combine the Montessori philosophy with the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide an enriching and thought-provoking learning environment. For example, children explore mathematical equipment as well as play in the home corner, which staff have enthusiastically set up as a doctor's surgery. Children thoroughly enjoy interacting with staff, during a Christmas themed art activity and explore different materials, such as dried pasta and leaves. Staff provide children with a separate literacy room, which contains many books based on children's interest and a comfortable space for them to relax. Consequently, children make effective progress in their early literacy skills, while taking into account their initial starting points on entry.

Staff provide plentiful opportunities for children to freely choose whether to play indoors or out. They ensure children have access to a large grassed area in the park to promote

their physical skills. Children further benefit from staff planning highly interesting and varied experiences on a regular basis, such as a weekly music sessions with a music teacher who plays a guitar. This offers stimulating opportunities for children to express themselves as they sing, dance, and excitedly suggest songs to they like to sing next. This further helps to promote their creative and imaginative skills and enhances children's opportunity to develop relationships with their peers. Additionally, children develop exceptional listening skills in preparation for their next move for when they start school.

Staff effectively develop children's understanding of technology-based items. For example, children have access to the nursery's computer as well as a camcorder, in order to film each other and take photographs. This further helps to promote their self-confidence and independent learning skills. Furthermore, children enjoy partaking in weekly French singing sessions as well as cookery activities, and trips to the local library. As a result, the inspiring and exciting range of learning opportunities that staff plan, further contribute to the excellent progress children make in their learning and development.

Staff sensitively support learning through skilful questioning in a language-rich environment, where children learn to think for themselves. For example, at snack time staff ask children to name the fruits they are eating and discuss where they come from. Children then begin to question where wax comes from; staff explain this clearly and appropriately to build on children's existing knowledge. Staff work very well with parents to assess children's starting points on entry to the nursery, as result, children's assessment is precise. Staff provide parents with regular reports on their children's progress, with many parents contributing to their child's learning journals and sharing in their learning process. Staff closely monitor assessments, identifying children who require additional support and provide individual attention. Where necessary, external agencies work alongside the nursery. Staff carry out progress checks on two-year-old children, which the use to identify their progress, in line with developmental expectations for their age. Staff vary their planning to provide children with highly challenging adult-directed and child-initiated play opportunities. Children enjoy learning about festivals, such as Chanukah and Christmas. They take delight in seeing the Christmas tree and nativity items staff display in the nursery, and talk excitedly to staff about the forthcoming party.

Staff effectively challenge children's mathematical learning by providing stimulating resources. For example, children select a shape-sorting activity, where they fit together the inset pieces into the frames. Staff sit with the children prompting a discussion about the names of the shapes and how many sides they have. As a result, children learn about the names of different shapes, such as hexagon and pentagon. Therefore, children who are more able, benefit from these challenging learning opportunities to help them further progress in their learning. Staff ensure all children develop the necessary skills required to ensure their readiness for starting school.

Staff promote partnership with parents exceptionally well. They plan events, such as a Fathers' day football game, a French breakfast and Grandparents' day, which have been highly successful. Additionally, parents come into the nursery to help with cookery activities and to celebrate religious festivals. By valuing parents' contributions to their children's learning, staff are able to support children very well to enable them to flourish in their learning and development.

Staff work well with parents to support children who are learning to speak English as a second language. They do this by using key words in the child's home language, in order to aid their communication. However, staff occasionally miss opportunities to promote the range of language spoken at the nursery, by displaying different prints in the environment.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children arrive at the nursery enthusiastically and separate happily from parents. Parents report that the settling-in process works very well. Staff ensure children visit the nursery and gradually building up relationships with others, as a result, children feel secure and safe. Parents share important information with key staff about their children, such as likes and dislikes and any dietary requirements, and staff ensure that they effectively meet these needs. Staff implement the key-person system well, to support individual needs and share observations and assessments on their key children with parents. Children show they are very happy and secure with their key person. They enjoy cuddles and affection from staff, particularly when they are upset and need attention. Due to the small size of the nursery, all the staff know the children who attend extremely well and support their learning in an exceptional way. Consequently, children feel emotionally secure due to the close relationship they have with staff.

Staff are highly effective at promoting the importance of exercise and a healthy diet, as well as managing hygiene practices. Staff encourage children to play outside and explain the benefits of daily exercise to keep them fit and healthy. Children have access to a secure outside space in the park, as well as a nursery garden. Children further enjoy using the park playground and tennis court, as well as going on many excursions in the local area. Therefore, children adopt highly positive attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle. Staff encourage children to help prepare a healthy snack of various fruits. Children show good self-care skills as they wash their hands and use small knives with supervision to cut the fruit. They display high levels of independence when chopping up bananas and peeling oranges. Staff discuss the fruits and where they come from with children, therefore, naturally extending children's learning in everyday situations. Staff ensure children remain hydrated by encouraging them to help themselves to drinks throughout the day.

Children show high levels of self-control when climbing on the outside wooden frame. Consequently, they are aware of taking measured risks and how to manage themselves, while enjoying the challenging element of physical play. Staff use consistent and well-planned strategies for managing children's behaviour. They remind children how to keep safe and behave appropriately, for example, by using their soft voices when requesting songs from the music teacher. Younger children are growing in confidence because staff encourage them to manage their own personal care needs. For example, they communicate well with staff if they need their nappy changing. This shows that staff have a good understanding of meeting individual needs and respect children's independence.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

The manager demonstrates a highly reflective attitude and has implemented many positive changes to the nursery since the last inspection. For example, staff have set up a role-play area and children play in the doctor's surgery. Staff fully incorporates props and resources for imaginative and creative play into their planning. They effectively do this while implementing the Montessori philosophy and encompassing the requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, this provides a rich and vibrant range of learning experiences for children.

The manager uses a development plan to identify areas for improvement and works closely with the local authority to improve practice on a continual basis. The manager has recently implemented a new assessment process to help accurately monitor children's progress and allows staff to quickly identify those children who require additional support. The manager is proactive in working with parents and external agencies as required to ensure all children make progress

The manager provides regular training to ensure staff fully understand child protection procedures and act appropriately to safeguard children. Procedures for safeguarding are very clear and well known by staff who work very closely together as a small team, in order to promote children's safety and well-being at all times. The manager ensure relevant contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children Board is visible to ensure all staff have accurate and current information, if they need to report an concern.

Staff attend continuous professional development training, constantly improving their already first-rate understanding and practice. All staff have attended up-to-date safeguarding training and hold paediatric first-aid certificates. They are enthusiastic and highly reflective about their practice. They benefit from the support of the nursery owner who holds annual appraisals and staff training events to further motivate staff, and offer ongoing support.

Partnership with parents is excellent and a real strength of the nursery. Staff engage parents in discussions about their children's learning and share significant milestones and celebrations. Parents contribute to their children's assessments and nursery staff value this contribution. Consequently, relationships between parents and the staff are extremely positive. Staff have worked to establish highly effective partnerships with local schools, in order to support nursery children when they prepare to leave. As a result, school teachers visit the nursery and receive a handover from staff. This helps to prepare children emotionally for their next stage in their learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY152665
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	842506
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	15
Name of provider	Audrey Ann Errichiello
Date of previous inspection	11/03/2009
Telephone number	0208 201 1199

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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