

Inspection of St Andrews Montessori

St. Andrews Montessori, Thornhill Square, LONDON N1 1BQ

Inspection date: 23 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Staff effortlessly follow children's emerging interests and help them to develop a very strong sense of belonging and an excellent emotional stability. Children behave exceptionally well. They show kindness and concern for others as they play collaboratively, exploring and investigating the exceptionally well-resourced environment. Children actively take turns, share equipment and listen to each other's ideas and suggestions, developing firm friendships with each other. They are very caring with each other. For example, older children help each other put on aprons and support one another to clear up mess and spillages.

Children demonstrate unapologetic enthusiasm for learning and discovery. They have enquiring minds and are curious, quizzical and eager to learn. They intently work through any difficulties, not giving up until they achieve their desired end result. For example, all children freely access all creative tools and materials. They decide independently what to create without any adult guidance, discussing intently with one another which direction their creations will go in.

Children experience a suitably broad and well-planned curriculum that is ambitious and well-designed. Children's learning is well sequenced across all areas of learning. Leaders and staff strive to ensure that all children enjoy school and achieve well through a range of rich learning experiences. Staff find out what interests the children. They plan activities and experiences that are engaging. For example, children are curious about coins and their value. They work together to calculate how much money and which coins they would need to buy an 'ice-cream'. Children joyously pretend to eat their way through their ice-cream when they find the correct money.

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

- The highly qualified and experienced leadership and staff team successfully fulfils the highest of expectations for all children. They create a vibrant, inspiring environment. They expertly plan activities based on children's interests that ignite their curiosity and thirst for learning. For example, children discover different creation stories for around the world and learn about early man. They make cave paintings and discuss how woolly mammoths may be captured.
- Team morale is high. Leaders place exceptional attention on supporting staff's emotional well-being, including managing their workload. For example, staff have 'catch-up' sessions with the deputy manager to share thoughts, ideas and concerns. Staff feel highly appreciated and valued. They benefit from constructive feedback on their teaching and access ongoing professional development that effectively supports their teaching to the highest level.
- The warm, dedicated and knowledgeable staff work extremely hard to build meaningful relationships with every child. They naturally delve into children's lives to find what is important to them and use this information to enhance their

learning and development. For instance, a project to make Guatemalan worry dolls revealed that one child's worries was about the oceans. Staff and children worked together to find ways in which they could be more sustainable, such as using their own water bottles and recycling art materials to reduce plastic waste.

- Parents comment that the leadership team and staff are devoted to making their children enjoy their learning and feel part of a wider community. They value this immensely. Parents feel extremely included in their children's development and are provided with guidance to support their next steps in learning at home. Therefore, children experience consistent, tailored learning both at the setting and at home.
- The quality of teaching is consistently excellent. Children's early literacy skills are particularly expertly supported. Children show that they love books and are eager to share their favourite with visitors. Older children are beginning to read independently, write phonetically and attribute meaning to their writings. Younger children eagerly join in re-enacting one of their favourite stories in the garden.
- The members of the management team are excellent leaders who constantly reflect and review striving for improvements. For example, they have plans to establish a student council so children are better able to share their own views and ideas about the nursery.
- Children's use of language is outstanding. They are articulate, with a wide vocabulary, using words to express meaning and communicate effectively with friends, sharing ideas and thoughts. For example, children have abundant opportunities to build on their creativity and use their imagination.
- Children behave immensely well. They show high regard and respect for others and demonstrate admirable levels of confidence in social situations, for example contributing to group discussions and explaining their knowledge of the school behaviour rules.
- Children have wonderful opportunities to reflect on their differences and understand what makes them unique. For example, children's cultures, beliefs and traditions are regularly celebrated to promote their understanding of communities beyond their own.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are extremely vigilant and ensure that the environment is safe and secure. They have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding procedures. They are highly proactive in protecting children from harm and know exactly what to do should they have concerns about a child's safety. Staff are clear on what to do if they have a concern about the behaviour of another adult. They keep their knowledge up to date by receiving training in-house from the manager. Effective recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable for their roles and that they understand their responsibilities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	131736
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10138041
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	2 to 8
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	62
Name of registered person	Little Acorn Nursery Schools Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP527822
Telephone number	02077002961
Date of previous inspection	22 April 2016

Information about this early years setting

St Andrews Montessori was registered in 1999. The setting employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine have appropriate early years qualifications at level 4 or above, including one who has early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are Monday to Thursday from 8.45am until 3pm and Friday from 8.45am to midday. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school is a Montessori accredited school.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anna Hindhaugh-Feldman

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of interactions between staff and children, and assessed the impact of these on children's learning.
- The inspector viewed the areas used by children, indoors and outdoors, and discussed with the deputy head how children's learning is supported during a learning walk.
- The inspector sought the views of parents during the inspection.
- The inspector met with the leadership team and discussed monitoring, self-evaluation and development plans.
- Documentation was reviewed, including evidence of professional development, staff suitability and records relating to children's safety and health.

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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