

Inspection of Little Sponges Montessori

38A Hyde Vale, Greenwich, LONDON SE10 8QH

Inspection date: 15 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 have warm, caring relationships with children. They treat each child as very special. For example, during the morning welcome sessions, staff ask children to look inside a basket with a mirror and see themselves. This makes them feel excited and special. Staff manage children's behaviour exceptionally well. For instance, children are encouraged to give each other a 'peace' rose to make up following a disagreement. Children understand their feelings and know how to manage them. For instance, children create faces representing different emotions and play 'feelings' games. They comfort each other when upset, and try to resolve their differences through discussion. Children gain excellent independence skills, such as learning how to dress themselves, preparing their own snacks and helping to lay the table at lunchtime. They behave in very safe ways. For example, they carefully put away floor resources once they have finished, and meticulously roll up resource mats which they place carefully in a box. Children learn about differences in creative and innovative ways. For example, they are learning about the daily life of a child in Bangladesh. Staff discuss and teach children about a wide range of international cultural and religious festivals, such as Dutch Sinterklaas and Greek Name Days. This supports children's understanding and respect for others from different backgrounds.

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

- Staff effectively combine the Montessori method of learning with learning through play. Children independently select from a wide range of Montessori equipment, according to their ability. Staff monitor children closely and use the information they gather to plan children's next steps in learning. Children are challenged and make excellent progress.
- Staff support children's communication and language skills exceptionally well. For example, children use recordable talking boxes to record their voices outdoors and send each other messages. Staff provide excellent ways to promote children's early literacy skills. For instance, children re-enact stories using an extensive range of props and books, and often create their own stories independently. Children have strong knowledge of letters and sounds, and many can write their own name.
- Children have excellent early mathematical skills. They count securely beyond 10, and many older children can perform simple addition and subtraction. Children have very good mathematical vocabulary, which they use with confidence. Staff support younger children to gain these skills very successfully.
- Staff teach children about the natural world exceptionally well, including learning about land and sea. Children have strong knowledge of different countries around the world. They plant and grow vegetables, and explore the habitats and features of mini-beasts in the well-designed outdoor area.

- Staff teach children good healthy routines, for example excellent daily physical challenges and healthy eating. Children practise a wide range of physical skills such as climbing, jumping, balancing. Staff help children to gain excellent understanding of the benefits of these routines, for example by having regular healthy eating days for parents and children where they taste and discuss nutritious food.
- Staff work very successfully to promote the best outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They set children challenging targets which are reviewed regularly. Staff work very effectively with parents and others involved in children's care to support them very successfully. There is a wide range of resources to support children's development highly effectively, including a dedicated sensory room to calm and engage children.
- Staff have very well-established links with parents. They keep parents very well informed of their children's progress in a number of ways, for example parents' evening and daily verbal feedback. Parents have secure access to children's online assessment records. Staff provide very good opportunities for parents to support their children's learning, for example by sharing their observations with staff in online records or through discussion.
- The manager supports staff highly effectively. For instance, she meets with them individually to discuss and manage workloads, and to precisely identify any training or support needs. For example, staff have attended a very broad range of courses, including a course on managing children's behaviour. This led to highly effective practice in this area.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a very good understanding of possible signs of concern regarding children's welfare. They have clear understanding of procedures to follow to safeguard children, and staff attend comprehensive, regular training to update their skills and knowledge. Staff have very secure understanding of the 'Prevent' duty, and they teach children how to be safe online. The manager undertakes robust background checks on all staff as part of the recruitment process.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY413470
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10128492
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	18
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Bacon, Nicole Ann
Registered person unique reference number	RP905611
Telephone number	0208 469 9337
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2015

Information about this early years setting

Little Sponges Montessori registered in 2010 and is located in the London Borough of Greenwich. The nursery is open each weekday from 9.30am to 3pm, during term time only. There are four staff members, including the manager. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status, two hold a level 4 qualification in early years, and one holds level 3. The nursery uses the Montessori method of education and all staff are Montessori qualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Beckles

Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector undertook a learning walk in the nursery with the manager, and discussed the curriculum.
- Interactions were observed between staff and children, and the inspector spoke to children when appropriate.
- The inspector paid particular attention to the experiences and activities of several children.
- Documentation was reviewed and a meeting was held with the manager.
- The inspector considered the views of parents and staff during the inspection.

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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