

Inspection of Clapham Montessori

St Paul's Community Centre, St. Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, London SW4 0DX

Inspection date: 7 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children arrive to the nursery happy and excited. Staff greet them with a warm welcome. Children are extremely familiar with the routines and settle in well, ready to learn. They independently change their shoes into slippers to maintain a clean learning environment, swiftly moving on to the next activity.

Staff act as exemplary role models, demonstrating behaviour that children mirror exceptionally well. Children are kind and gentle towards each other and take great care of the learning environment and the resources. Staff support children to develop independence extremely well. All children take responsibility for their own learning and maintain a high-quality learning environment. Children access the snack area and select the number of fruits and crackers listed on the board and pour their own milk and water. Staff create a café-like atmosphere for children to enjoy their snacks with friends, building their social skills.

Children benefit from the wide array of activities staff arrange that enable children to apply previously taught knowledge and skills. For example, children learn about growing and plant their own vegetables. Children take care of their plants independently, and they know when to water them if the soil is dry. They use their finger to check if the soil is moist or dry.

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

- Children are extremely independent and exceptionally well behaved. The environment is extremely calm and nurturing. Younger children learn from their older peers and join in with taking responsibility. For example, older children gently lead and guide younger children to change the wet tablecloth at snack time.
- Children benefit from accessing 'grace and courtesy' activities. Children learn to take responsibility for their environment and show high levels of maturity when moving around the nursery. Children behave exceptionally well.
- Staff have created a relaxing atmosphere, and children enjoy reading books in the culture area. Books are changed to reflect the season and events in children's lives. For example, some children are expecting siblings. Staff provide books about new babies at home and what it is like having a new sibling.
- Children have ample opportunities to develop mathematical concepts and vocabulary. The mathematics curriculum has been organised into three groups. Activities are based on the children's current stage of development and next steps. Staff introduce quantity using objects and then move to symbols. They combine the two in order to support children to understand and secure their knowledge of numbers.
- Staff have built excellent partnership with parents. Parents are extremely

thankful and pleased about how the staff and nursery support the children to become independent individuals. Parents are particularly pleased with the way their children have developed their self-care skills.

- Staff feel thoroughly supported by the manager. They provide staff with in-depth meetings and coaching that facilitate with developing staff's excellent knowledge on how to deliver a well-structured curriculum that all children can access.
- Staff have carefully created a learning environment where activities have been structured to support children to build independence, develop fine motor skills, allow free choices and to persevere, concentrate and problem-solve. Activities are organised from simple to complex. Staff have created a community where every child takes responsibility and exceptional care of their relationships with staff, peers and the resources. They take pride and tidy up after every activity. High expectations of children are instilled and embedded.
- Children have superb opportunities to develop their gross motor skills. For instance, children use wheelbarrows, practise climbing trees and enjoy jumping and balancing on the stepping stones. Children have a plethora of opportunities to explore nature and wildlife, such as digging for worms and investigating snails. Children visit a community space and garden. Here, they enjoy observing tadpoles in the pond and the beehives.
- The key-person system is extremely effective. The attachment between each child and their key person is undeniably strong. The key person works closely with parents and carers to ensure children's needs are fully met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The nursery has a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff understand the importance of safeguarding and undertake regular training to extend and embed their knowledge base. Staff are knowledgeable about what could be a cause for concern and know the procedures for reporting and referring concerns. Staff fully understand the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures. This includes whistle-blowing procedures and knowing how to report any concerns about staff practice or conduct. The management team ensures the ongoing suitability of all its members of staff so that they remain safe and suitable to work with children. The setting is safe and secure, with robust risk assessments in place to ensure that any risks to children are discussed and minimised.

Setting details

Unique reference number	144049
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10289562
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Bowles, Rosalind
Registered person unique reference number	RP511725
Telephone number	07931 556595
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Clapham Montessori registered in 1991 and operates from St Paul's Community Centre, in the London Borough of Lambeth. It is open each weekday, during term time only, from 9.15am to 4pm. Morning sessions are also available from 9.15am to 12.15pm. Children bring their own packed lunch. The provider receives funding to offer free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are four staff who work with children, including the manager. The manager and two other staff members each hold an AMI Montessori Diploma at level 4. Three members of staff hold qualified teacher status. The nursery uses the Montessori approach to children's learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Honufa Begum

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- A learning walk of different areas of the nursery was provided by the manager.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out with the manager.
- Interactions between staff and children were observed by the inspector.
- The inspector held a leadership and management meeting.
- A sample of policies, procedures and relevant documentation was evaluated by the inspector.
- Parents', staff's and children's views were sought by the inspector.

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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