

# **Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board**

## **School Accreditation**

This report is prepared following an accreditation visit made on behalf of the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board (MEAB). It considers how far the school follows the criteria set out in "The Guide to the EYFS in Montessori Settings".

The report does not address the standards and quality issues which are the responsibility of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) which reports separately. Also the report does not provide any assessment of financial aspects of the school.

### **Norfolk Lodge Montessori Nursery School**

#### **Description of the school:**

Norfolk Lodge Montessori Nursery School was established in 1996 and is privately owned. The setting subscribes to the Montessori approach. A team of eight qualified Montessori teachers and support staff work with the children. The nursery is registered to deliver care and education to 50 under threes and before- and after-school provision for 80 three to eight year-olds. Currently the number of children attending is 92 aged between three months to 4½ years. Norfolk Lodge is situated in a large country mansion set in 2½ acres of grounds and woodland. It has seven classrooms and the children are divided by age. The setting also provides a breakfast and holiday club and after school provision. It opens from 08.00 to 18.00 for 46 weeks a year.

#### **Summary and conclusion.**

*School's please note: the assessor's recommendations are considered by the Report Monitoring Group which meets two/three times each term and are presented for validation to the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board. The report is published following the MEAB validation and is private and confidential until such time.*

Since her recent appointment, the Head and her team have made major positive changes to the Nursery; by refurbishing the rooms making them warm and inviting for both children and adults and reintroducing and reinforcing Montessori principles into the Nursery. However there are opportunities for further development of the school's Montessori practice.

**The school provides an education which broadly follows the principles of the Montessori approach and environment. This merits accreditation by the**

**Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board, but the school should consider the following points:**

- Review timing of specific subject activities to ensure an uninterrupted work cycle;
- Introduce vertical grouping; and
- Introduce more natural materials into the Baby Room.

**Philosophy:**

The Montessori philosophy is evident in most classrooms. The adults support individual children whilst being mindful of the group as a whole. The children and adults respect each other and the environment. The setting's goals are well defined in the Parents Handbook and are reviewed regularly. However, in order to fully comply with Montessori practice the work cycle should be extended to promote further opportunities for learning and independence. Vertical grouping should be considered as well as changes to the resources available in a couple of the rooms.

**Learning and Development:**

There are comprehensive systems in place for planning and assessing the children's progress. All the staff are involved in the planning, assessment and recording processes in line with the Montessori curriculum, Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the individual needs of the children. Information is shared with parents on a regular basis. Procedures are in place to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs

**Prepared Environment, resources and materials:**

There is a good range of Montessori materials and resources in most rooms and these are appropriate for the ages, stage of development and number of children. They are placed on low shelves and accessible to them. The materials are grouped according to the different areas of the curriculum. The baby room is equipped with an abundance of bright plastic resources and to a lesser extent so is the toddler room. Both rooms could be brought more in line with Montessori practice if natural materials were made available and staff attended Montessori training appropriate for the age group.

**Montessori practice, with comments on *independence, independence at home, freedom, respect:***

The Montessori classrooms promote independence through a work cycle of limited duration.

The Montessori qualified staff are aware of this and that in order to provide the children with independence and freedom in the favourable environment this should be addressed. There is no specific literature given to parents to promote independence at home. However, they commented that children demonstrate growing independence by wanting to do things for themselves. The children and staff have high regard for each other and this is apparent in the harmonious atmosphere of the setting.

**Montessori practice, with comments on *classroom management*:**

The staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work well together as a team. The classrooms are well prepared by adults who take pride in their environment. Transitions between activities, arrival, and departure are smooth. At present the children are grouped by age and the work cycle is interrupted by extra curricular activities.

**Montessori Practice, with comments on *adults' routines and links with parents, including reports and records*:**

The Head and her team have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Links with parents are good and all those interviewed were satisfied with the level of information received. The adult/child ratio is high and this promotes a sense of wellbeing for all the children. The newsletter is informative. The children's learning journal starts from home and is then updated by the key person. This reflects the children's learning. The individual reports celebrate the children's achievements.

**Staffing:**

Job descriptions clearly explain the roles and responsibilities of staff and are reviewed regularly. The fortnightly staff meetings give everyone the opportunity to raise issues and all views are considered. There is a mentoring scheme for new staff and annual appraisals are in place. The children's records are comprehensive, informative and well monitored. Children's dietary needs are recorded and placed in all the classrooms.

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Name of Assessors  
Margot Best/ Rosie Roberts

Date of report  
10/11/08