



Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board

School Accreditation

This report is prepared following two accreditation visits made on behalf of the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board. It considers how far the school follows the criteria set out in “The Guide to the EYFS in Montessori Settings” (2008) and subsequent 2012 revisions. The second visit sought to assess the progress made on the recommendations set out in the report from the first visit.

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.

Rosewood Montessori Nursery School

16 Myrtle Avenue, Eastcote, Middx HA4 8RZ

Date of first re-accreditation visit: 7 November 2013

Date of the second re-accreditation visit: 4 March 2013

Date of previous MEAB accreditation: July 2009

This accreditation report relates to the provision for children aged 2 to 5 years old.

Description of the school

Rosewood Montessori School was first registered in 2003. It is based in a residential area of Ruislip in Greater London. The nursery operates from a converted house with a large garden, which is privately owned, and serves the local and wider community.

The nursery has sole use of the premises. There are two main classrooms on the ground floor; one in the house and one in the conservatory as well as a separate outside classroom which all the children have access to. There is also a garden which includes a fenced-off nature study area. The children have access to the outdoor areas through the hallway and conservatory. The ground floor also has a small kitchen, hall, and lavatory facilities. The first floor has two classrooms, one small and one larger, and additional rooms which can be used for small group work. A room designated as a staff and parents’ room is on the second floor. Forest School, gym and drama are offered as extra activities.

The nursery supports children with special educational needs (SEN) as well as children with English as an additional language (EAL). It liaises with other agencies such as the local authority and speech therapists. There are currently 45 children on the roll and up to 45 can attend at any one time. On the day of the second visit 26 children were attending. The youngest child is 2 years old. Children can join morning or afternoon sessions, or a combination of both. They bring their own snacks and those that stay all day bring packed lunches. The nursery is open during term times from 9.00 to 14.45, Monday to Thursday and until 12.15 on Fridays.



There are 10 members of staff working directly with the children including the owner/senior manager who is Montessori qualified, has a degree and is Forest School trained. Another manager who deputises for the owner is Montessori qualified and has Early Years Professional Status as well as having a degree in Early Childhood Studies. The remaining staff team members are all Montessori qualified and some also have other early years' qualifications.

Summary and conclusion

The Montessori philosophy is the foundation of the children's learning at Rosewood Montessori Nursery. The excellent and committed staff team provide a supportive and interesting early learning environment for children from two to five years old. The freedom of choice, the child-led activities and the staff's commitment to promoting independence, while involving the parents in understanding the Montessori philosophy, help the children develop their full potential. The recommendations made at the previous accreditation in 2009 have been implemented as the children now enjoy the benefits of the mixed age group and free flow between the inside and outdoor learning environments. The outstanding outside area is fully utilized and enjoyed by all the children and the Forest School gives them an unique opportunity to learn and develop in this natural environment in an urban area.

The manager and her staff acknowledge children's differences and embrace them. The promotion of equality and inclusive practices is a great strength of the school. They acknowledge parents as the primary educators and the relationships that staff cultivate with the parents, professionals and other agencies ensures that all individual children's needs are met. The staff keep in close contact with the parents, who are very happy with the provision and the progress their children make.

In response to the first re-accreditation visit a careful review of resources and room layout has been carried out. As a result the classrooms are more airy and spacious, with particularly inviting book corners in each room. The addition of a new basin makes hand washing easier for the children.

Freedom of choice and the staff's encouragement of independent learning is a real strength of Rosewood Montessori Nursery. The children are treated with respect and valued as individuals.

The school provides an education which follows the principles of the Montessori approach and environment. The school has successfully addressed the points for action recommended on the first visit, and this merits accreditation by the Montessori Evaluation and Accreditation Board. Consideration should be given to the following point for further development:

- To consider providing a lunch table layout that is more conducive to social interaction.

Philosophy:

Adherence to the Montessori philosophy is the foundation of children's learning at Rosewood Montessori. The management team have a deep understanding of Montessori principles and are effective at communicating this understanding to staff, parents and outside agencies. The staff have created a safe environment where the children truly flourish in their learning and



development. The children are given the freedom to explore and learn at their own pace, developing confidence and concentration while becoming more independent. The staff set challenging and realistic goals to ensure success and, through observations and record keeping, they are able to 'follow the children' in their spontaneous learning.

Partnership with the parents is excellent. The parents are very well supported by the staff and extremely well informed about the Montessori philosophy so that they feel comfortable using it at home. This two way communication contributes to the staff's ability to promote the children's learning and it encourages parents to take an active part in keeping the children's records up to date. The detailed website includes information on the Montessori approach and curriculum, and the principles, goals and implementation of the philosophy are reviewed effectively.

The setting's capacity to maintain and drive improvement is excellent and is due to outstanding teamwork. The staff and management have high expectations of the children and of themselves. The comprehensive and extensive written policies and procedures in place ensure that the aims and objectives are understood and adhered to by all those involved in the nursery.

Learning and Development:

Staff deployment is highly effective and has a positive impact for children as they are very well supported and make excellent progress in their learning and development. The team work closely together. The process of planning, recording and assessment is done collectively to support the less experienced staff and as a result information is shared and fully understood, which contributes to the smooth and efficient running of the setting. This gives the staff the tools to develop an educational programme that is tailored to the children's individual needs to ensure that they all make excellent progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the Montessori curriculum. The teachers understand that they are responsible for keeping the children's records up to date, identifying possible lines of development and sharing information with the team.

A very wide range of child-focused Montessori and other materials and activities comprehensively cover the EYFS areas of learning. The materials are changed to coincide with project work and children's interests. The outside area provides all the children with an extensive curriculum, with the added benefit of the Forest School.

When a need or difficulty is identified, access to training courses and support from the local authority enables the staff to offer an inclusive, nurturing environment that helps children with learning difficulties, disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

Prepared Environment: resources and materials

Children play and learn in an abundantly equipped enabling environment, giving them the tools to develop excellent skills for the future. Children independently access a variety of high quality Montessori and other materials that they can explore and work with at their own rate. All the classrooms inside and out are set up independently of each other and are diligently maintained and prepared with regard to the principles of Montessori philosophy in the defined areas of learning. Each classroom has a very wide range of materials suited to the full age range at the setting. The children are free to use all areas of the setting and can use materials from any room if they are considered capable and are interested, which gives them access to a



developmentally broad curriculum. Provision for the youngest children is very good.

Following the first re-accreditation visit the staff worked very hard re-organizing the environment for the children to work in. They have removed superfluous materials and brightened the rooms with new window blinds. The children now have a light, spacious, airy and uncluttered environment to work in without any reduction in their breadth of choice. A new hand basin on the ground floor has been installed to provide hand washing and washing up facilities for the children. Staff also now track the environment to see what materials the children are using, to ensure that resources continue to reflect the children's interests.

The children love learning and working in the Forest School. They are busy, sociable and purposeful, relishing the range of enjoyable activities such as building a log house in this stimulating natural environment that is situated at the end of the garden. The adults most ably promote the children's interests and help consolidate and extend their skills and understanding. The adult involvement enriches the children's play in this unique outdoor classroom.

Montessori practice: independence, including independence at home, freedom, respect

The morning work cycle of over two and half hours gives the children time to enjoy freedom of movement, choose their own activities and explore the favourable environment. They show amazing levels of independence and take responsibility for caring for the environment and each other. The staff lead by example, they encourage the children to respect and support each other, setting the way for independent and self assured learning. The children clean up spillages and manage their own snacks throughout the session. During the first re-accreditation visit an older child was seen helping a younger child open her snack box, having first asked if she would like help. Role-play is evidently used to help the children acquire social skills and they are sensitively supported by the staff to work through their difficulties. Children choose what they would like to use and once finished they return the equipment to its original place. The orderly atmosphere helps the children develop a strong sense of belonging in an environment where they feel safe.

The children are directed to new activities when necessary by the well informed adults who offer them a choice of activities and ensure that they remain engaged. The children enjoy a high degree of freedom both inside and outside.

Regular communication with the parents is evident and they are kept involved in monitoring their children's developmental progress and are well informed about the Montessori philosophy through regular meetings and written communications. To gain further insight into Montessori practices and philosophy parents are given an opportunity to purchase the Montessori magazine and are given a Montessori book.

Montessori Practice: Classroom management

The work cycle starts as soon as the children arrive and lasts for the whole morning. The children are not formally grouped but the older children tend to be encouraged to work upstairs as they are more able to use the stairs safely and the younger children are based in the conservatory. They all join their key person for group activities at the end of each session if they choose to do so. The management of the children by the staff is excellent.



The children are given the choice as to where they want to go when they arrive in the morning and staff deployment is arranged according to the children's choices. This is monitored throughout the day. The children develop healthy personal habits and manage the free flow between the inside and outside areas independently. Forest School, gym and drama take place during the work cycle and the children are free to join in or not. As the school has sole use of the premises the environment can remain the same, so the children are very used to the routine and layout.

Excellent Montessori practice is evident at Rosewood Montessori, giving the children opportunities to work individually or as part of a group, at tables or on the floor, upstairs or downstairs, inside or out, as they choose, while using a very wide range of Montessori and other developmentally appropriate materials.

All the staff have key children and are responsible for updating their records and planning next steps. The teachers do observe and interact with all the children, supporting their needs as required and evaluating the observations they make. Following the first re-accreditation visit longer, detailed and evaluated observations are being used very effectively and are helping the staff with their overall assessment of the children. Presentations are given when needed but for most of the time the children work independently, being allowed to follow their natural rhythm of activity and progressing at their own rate. The good use of the staffing ratios means that help is at hand when needed.

The children bring their own snack and packed lunch. They choose which classroom they want to eat in and are able to have a rest when they have finished. The tables used for lunch could be re-arranged to encourage more social interaction. The afternoon work-cycle is shorter but freedom of choice for all the children is still very evident.

Montessori Practice: links with parents, including reports and records

The effective open door policy ensures that the parents are welcomed in the school at any time. They are very appreciative of the amount of contact they have with the staff and the regular flow of information between the child's key person and the parents ensures that all are kept up to date with the children's progress and planning. The school emails information to the parents about forthcoming events and topic work and invites them to join the children on regular outings, as well as offering half termly meetings for them to attend. This helps set up a trusting and mutually supportive partnership.

Detailed information is given to the parents and carers about the Foundation Stage and how it is delivered at the nursery. A new EYFS and Montessori record of progress has been put together recently due to the changes in the framework; this is being monitored for its effectiveness.

Notice boards display a wealth of relevant information and regular newsletters ensure parents are kept well informed. Written reports are regularly prepared and final reports are given to the parents when a child leaves.

Safety and well-being are given high priority in the setting. Regularly reviewed and robust policies and procedures are in place and are available for parents to see at any time. Each member of staff has an area of the nursery to take responsibility for and all help maintain a clean, safe and stimulating learning environment both indoors and out.

**Staffing:**

Leadership and management are very strong. All staff have high expectations of themselves and each other. One of the many strengths of the nursery is the excellent teamwork; the team is highly valued and their capabilities fully recognised and utilized. Daily roles and responsibilities are shared and additional responsibilities are taken on by members of the team, such as the SENCo role.

Training is identified during peer observation, staff appraisals, following suggestions by the manager or by individuals. All staff undertake training each term. Every member of the team is able to contribute ideas regarding daily practice and they all plan for the term ahead together. As all the staff are Montessori trained they are extremely knowledgeable about the philosophy and how this is compatible with the EYFS framework. They have undergone training to keep abreast of the recent changes to the framework.

New staff members undergo a formal induction process, staff turnover is very low. Continuous improvement is given high priority and all the staff at Rosewood are highly motivated and committed to ensuring excellent outcomes for the children.

Name of Assessor: Charlotte White

Date of reports: First visit – 9 November 2012

Second visit – 5 March 2013