



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM VISIT (Online, Distance & Blended Learning)

ORGANISATION: Modern Montessori International (London)

ADDRESS: 46 Leslie Grove,
East Croydon,
CR0 6TQ

HEAD OF ORGANISATION: Marianne Bourke

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 15 April 2016

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 14 July 2016

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Modern Montessori International (London) (the College) is a small Montessori teacher training college with an on-site nursery. The college was incorporated in 1999 as a private limited company in the UK. The college houses the global administrative centre for Modern Montessori International Limited (MMI). MMI was established in 1982 and has two strategic business units, namely Modern Montessori International teacher's training centre and Modern Montessori International pre-school centre. MMI also runs its own corporate-owned pre-school centres with its own MMI curriculum. It also offers various franchise arrangements. The MMI Group has training and/or nursery settings in Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Vietnam, Nigeria, Kenya, Egypt and Myanmar.

The College offers a good grounding in Montessori philosophy and practice, and students are able to apply Montessori principles in modern teaching environments. The teacher-training facility of the College is in Leslie Grove in East Croydon. The East Croydon on-site nursery can accommodate 73 children, up to 37 of whom can be under 3, and has a secure garden area.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The College in East Croydon offers training in Montessori philosophy and practice, and students are able to apply appropriate Montessori principles in modern teaching environments. It offers the International Diploma in the Montessori Method of Education (Level 4 on the national qualifications framework) for teaching children from 2½ to 6 years old. Study is completed through distance/blended learning to students outside the UK with participation on an eleven-day workshop in an MMI centre located near to them held in the final year of their studies.

The Diploma in the Montessori Method of Education (Level 4) and Early Years Educator (Level 3) qualification is for teaching children from 0 to 7 years old. The Early Years Educator component of the conjoined Diploma is awarded by Skills First, a UK based awarding body, with an external verifier visiting the College quarterly to validate students' work. The conjoined Diploma is offered to UK based students only, as a work placement is necessary.

The College can facilitate a placement for its students in an Ofsted recognised Montessori nursery, as it runs linked nurseries on four sites in London and these are used to provide students with practical work experience and teaching practice. Prior to their acceptance onto the Diploma in the Montessori Method of Education and Early Years Educator, students must have a Level 3 Teaching or Early Years qualification and 3 GCSEs in English, Maths and Science at grades A-C. If the students do not have the required GCSEs, they must be prepared to complete these while studying on the Diploma as they cannot be counted in the Nursery ratios (1 teacher: 3 children at 0-18 months) until they have the required qualifications. Students on the Diploma in the Montessori Method of Education (Level 4) and Early Years Educator (Level 3) qualification are eligible for the 24+ Advanced Learning Loan for Level 3 or 4 courses.

The College also offers the Advanced Diploma in Montessori Education for teaching children aged 6 to 12 years old, this course is designed to offer MMI's students the opportunity for further professional development. This is modular based and students complete this qualification by attending four two week blocks of study in the UK. The Advanced Diploma is taught once a year depending on student numbers, the course held in 2015 had eight students. There are also occasional part-time evening classes and workshops held on the premises.

The College is presently completing the development of MMI ELearning, to facilitate online/blending learning provision. Students will complete modules online before taking a two-week practical workshop in an MMI centre prior to taking paper-based examinations.

An international advisory board and an examination board ensure independent moderation of teaching and examinations.

3. Inspection process

The interim inspection visit was completed in one morning, a meeting was held with the Course Co-ordinator and the Principal. All documentation relating to the institution was made available for the inspector to scrutinise.

4. Inspection history

Preliminary inspection:	15 November 2005
Full inspection:	18 January 2006
Interim inspection:	05 May 2009
Supplementary inspection:	30 July 2010
Full re-accreditation inspection:	15-16 November 2010
Interim inspection:	14 March 2013
Online Distance and Blended Learning Full inspection:	22 and 23 January 2015

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

There have been no significant changes since the College's last inspection. However, the College has obtained planning permission to build a two storey extension to its present building. This extension will provide four additional training rooms for the College's students and four adult toilets, one of which will be accessible to disabled students, with shower facilities. The extension will have a separate entrance for its adult students. The College anticipates that the building works will be completed during the summer of 2016.

2. Response to actions points in last report

6.2 - The College's e-learning platform for course delivery and assessment needs to be further developed in order to fully support online and distance learning.

The College is presently uploading course content and information to its e-learning platform, MMI ELearning. It anticipates that this will be completed by the start of the next academic year. Therefore, it does not yet fully support online and distance learning. Students will be offered one-to-one support if required and a training manual will be made available.

6.5 - Staff must receive relevant training once the e-learning platform is running.

The College's Course Co-ordinator will deliver training to MMI's staff and a guidance document will be produced for all users.

13.1 - The College must continue the development of IT resources and technology.

A computer area will be provided in the new extension to the College. All of the readings required for its courses and detailed assignment guidance will be provided on the College's Moodle platform. Students will also be required to submit their assignments electronically. Students will be able to access their student records and workshop details online. Tutors will also be able to access student information and course materials online.

14.3 - The use of self-evaluation as part of a cycle of performance review needs to be more robust. The College needs to analyse and use evaluation more effectively in order to evidence quality assurance.

The College completes an analysis of its programme of studies when it receives confirmation of the students' results from the examination board. Areas of strength and points for development are highlighted and, in particular, patterns are noted. For example, if students did well in most areas but displayed poor knowledge in one area, the College asks the lecturer who taught the content to reflect on the reason why students received a lower grade.

At the end of each module students undertake "mock questions" as part of their examination preparation. If the previous cycle of grades was poor, these mock questions will be marked by a senior lecturer to ensure the curriculum has been covered.

14.4 - Action plans must be formulated, implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management.

Action plans are now being formulated at the end of each meeting. Some actions have set completion dates, whilst others are ongoing targets. Management is kept fully informed of the outcomes and the Principal regularly updates the Board of Directors with the overall progress.

16.3, 16.4 - Student feedback must be used effectively to evaluate provision and to bring about improvements.

Students completed evaluations at the end of course workshops held in August 2015. Information from the student evaluations was analysed by the Principal and the Course Co-ordinator and it was found that students had asked that course materials be produced in a more professional manner. In response, the College has arranged for professional proofreading to take place before the materials are uploaded to Moodle. Once action has been taken from student feedback, students are informed about what has been done. The College has timetabled further student evaluations for May and August 2016.

20.7 – There is also only one toilet shared amongst all staff and students. An additional toilet will enhance the provision.

Toilet facilities are adequate. As mentioned under significant changes above, the College has obtained planning permission to build a two storey extension to its present building so that it can extend its facilities considerably.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The College’s Board of Directors is not based at the College. However, the Principal has regular contact with members of the Board through emails, conferences, telephone calls and regular meetings held in both London and Singapore.</p> <p>The management structure is clearly organised and IT systems are presently being developed to support online, distance and blended learning.</p>				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Achievement

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be		✓		
Comments				
<p>The College in East Croydon is responsible for marking examination papers, setting and administering practical examinations and awarding certificates. An independent examination board has oversight of examination results.</p> <p>Teaching staff have a comprehensive knowledge of their subject area. Resources are being specifically designed with its students’ needs in mind.</p>				

3.3 Learner Support

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be		✓		
Comments				
<p>Advice and guidance are given during enrolment to ensure suitability. Admission information and procedure is administered by the London office, with all records stored electronically and confidentially. Interviews are held in the franchised offices.</p> <p>Accommodation within easy reach of the College is recommended to those students attending the two week workshops held in East Croydon during the summer. Students can also take advantage of subsidised meals which are provided at a local café. The Course Coordinator provides a point of contact and support whilst the students are in the UK.</p> <p>6.2 - The College's e-learning platform for course delivery and assessment needs to be further developed in order to fully support online and distance learning.</p> <p>6.5 - Staff must receive relevant training once the e-learning platform is up and running.</p> <p>13.1 - The College must continue the development of IT resources and technology.</p>				

3.4 Management of Quality

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				

3.5 Premises and Facilities – face-to-face component

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Provider's strengths

The management and leadership of the College are effective and well established.
The academic staff are knowledgeable about their subject area and are very supportive of their students.
Effective advice, guidance and support is provided for the College's students.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
6.2 - The College's e-learning platform for course delivery and assessment needs to be further developed in order to fully support online and distance learning.	M
6.5 - Staff must receive relevant training once the e-learning platform is up and running.	M
13.1 - The College must continue the development of IT resources and technology.	M

Recommendations

The College should ensure that students are provided with a suitable point of contact regarding the online course content.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	
The College must contact BAC when the new extension to its present premises has been in operation for a short time so that a Supplementary Inspection can be carried out.	