



Cator Park Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333129
Inspection date	13 July 2006
Inspector	Jane Elizabeth Chappell
Setting Address	Aldersmead Road, Cator Park Pavillion, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 1NA
Telephone number	020 8778 9893
E-mail	richard.baxter@channelyourenergies.com
Registered person	Channel Your Energies
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cator Park Montessori pre-school was registered in 2006. It operates from a converted pavilion which consists of two large rooms, separate toilet and kitchen provision. It is situated in the grounds of Cator Park Recreation Ground in the London borough of Bromley and serves the local community. A maximum of 39 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week during in term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 till 11.45 or 12.20 to 15.05 or an all day place is 09:00 till 15:05. The pre-school is also registered to run an after school club, term time only however, this is not currently operating.

There are currently 96 children aged two to under five years on roll. Of these 69 receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre school employs 10 members of staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn the importance of good personal hygiene. They wash their hands after using the toilet or before snack and gentle reminders from staff ensure consistency. Pictures are displayed in the bathroom as a reminder that they should wash their hands and why. Staff are good role models for the children by following good hygiene procedures in all areas of their work, for example, washing their own hands before preparing snack.

Several staff hold first aid qualifications. Which, together with a well-stocked first aid box and consent to take children to hospital, ensures appropriate care can be given to children if they have an accident.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. Good topics and activities are planned and carried out to teach the children about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how the body works. Children are given healthy snacks of fruit and vegetables and drinks are available for them throughout the session. Some children stay for lunch, and parents are encouraged to provide healthy and nutritious packed lunches.

Children have daily opportunities to go into the garden and the park weather permitting. Children enjoy regular physical activities both indoors and outside and develop skills such as balancing, jumping, throwing and catching. They develop good running skills and an awareness of space when practising for a variety of races for sports day. These activities help children to keep in good health.

There are good opportunities for children to extend their fine motor development, such as cutting paper, connecting the links to make patterns, tipping, and pouring the sand into a variety of containers within the sand pit. Children are encouraged to develop good pencil control when writing their names and drawing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children thrive in a well-maintained, welcoming and child-friendly environment. The premises are well organised and divided effectively into two rooms. Each room provides suitable learning areas, which are organised appropriately to enable children to move around safely. Children have access to a wide range of good quality play materials that are checked for safety and are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Risk assessments are regularly carried out and recorded however, they do not include an action plan or time scales for any required repairs, which can impact on children's safety. Regular fire

drills are carried out. This enables children to learn how to leave the premises quickly, safely and to become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency.

Children learn to keep themselves safe when staff remind them of the rules within the pre-school, such as not running inside. Children's welfare is protected because staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection. Staff have attended training in this area and know the necessary procedures to be followed if they are concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met and their welfare is promoted. They settle well into pre-school, enter confidently and make themselves at home. Children's independence is developing well, as they choose between a variety of toys, books and activities, which appeal to all. Staff have an understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and use this within their planning. Staff plan activities accordingly and are able to adapt activities well to promote younger children's learning and ensure that children enjoy their time at the pre-school.

Children are happy, busy and enjoy their time at pre-school, behaviour is good and friendships are well formed. Children explore their environment and relish new activities and experiences, they play well in role-play situations and are really involved in what they are doing and are able to extend on their learning and play. Children understand the rules, tell staff when they are happy, upset or if they need help.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas and the setting is constantly reviewing and improving their planning. Staff plan a wide range of practical activities that interest the children. Regular observations by the staff identify children's stage of learning which staff use to plan the next steps for each child. Most of these are documented appropriately and are used effectively to promote the children's learning. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance and the areas of learning. Good planning and teaching throughout the setting helps the children to learn well and to enjoy their time there. Staff create a welcoming environment where children's work is displayed. This shows children's work is valued and gives them a sense of belonging.

Staff build good relationships with the children and help them to behave well through the good use of praise, for instance when they help tidy up or complete a task. Children are interested and motivated to learn because of the well-organised and stimulating activities on offer. Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They show and speak proudly about pictures and objects they have made or items they have brought in from home. They engage in their play as they select and carry out activities and assume responsibility for personal care. They participate in discussion and speak confidently to share their experiences. For example, whilst talking about sport, the current theme, children enthusiastically say which sports they enjoy and participate in.

Children speak confidently to their peers and adults. They talk openly during activities about themselves and their families. They express their ideas and experiences well using appropriate vocabulary. Children have access to a range of writing materials and have opportunities to recognise and to practise writing letters and simple words. Children enjoy books and handle them carefully; they spend time 'reading' and sharing books with friends and adults and can re-tell well-known stories by looking at the pictures.

Children use mathematical language in all areas of their play. They have a sound understanding of, counting, comparing and writing/mark making for a purpose. For example, when shopping at Sainsbury's, children wrote their own shopping lists, decided what they needed, counted out the fruit and vegetables, checked they had everything on their list and noticed when they had the same items or more or less than their peers.

There are good opportunities to use information technology and to explore and investigate how things work, for example, using the toaster to make their own toast and popcorn machine to make popcorn. Children learn about different cultures and beliefs through very well planned topic work. Children are provided with a variety of mediums for creative play. However, freedom to explore these independently is not a regular occurrence. Children enjoy musical sessions and sing songs from memory, which are familiar to them and their peers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the pre-school because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context of each child. Children's behaviour is good. Staff support younger children in sharing and taking turns. They have high expectations and set boundaries for all children, which help them, learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children's understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the pre-school resources and each other.

Children have extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities and visitors to the pre-school. For example, the staff team encourage the children to learn about other countries and cultures of their peers. Parents and grandparents are also invited into the pre-school to share their expertise with both the children and staff. This supports the children's learning, awareness and helps to bring the information together and alive for all of the children. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The pre-school staff have experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. This means they are able to adapt activities to ensure all children are included. Close liaison with parents and other agencies, for example the Local Authority Inclusion Team, ensures children's needs are planned for and worked towards.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding and consistently contributes to the children's well-being in the pre-school. Children benefit from excellent relationships between their parents and staff these help them receive consistent high quality care both individually and as a group.

Parent's views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before a child starts at the setting. The setting provides parents with regular newsletters, and together with the very informative notice board keeps them abreast of current events and the policies and procedures relating to the group. The partnerships with parents effectively ensures that parents are involved in their child's learning, they receive very good information about the educational programme and are kept well informed about their children's progress and achievements. They receive a very informative report every term and are also encouraged to record information about their child under the Foundation Stage headings which then contribute to their child's report. This highly effective system ensures that the report reflects the whole child both at home and within the pre-school setting and acknowledges parents as children's first educators. Parents are invited to regular evenings where their children's progress is discussed with key staff and their work looked at.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation throughout the pre-school. Knowledgeable staff understand and follow the setting's suitable policies and procedures to promote children's well-being, supporting them to develop their potential. All the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and is regularly reviewed. Children are ticked in and out on the register however, the actual arrival and departure time for each child is not recorded.

The setting has a secure recruitment procedure, which ensures suitable staff are employed. Generous staffing levels ensure children build effective relationships and develop a positive approach to the learning experiences provided.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are good. Staff are led by a pro-active manager who communicates effectively with her team and listens to their ideas. Involvement in staff meetings allows staff to contribute ideas and feel valued. There is an appraisal system and the management supports staff who wish to embrace training opportunities. Staff are deployed so that children are well supported both indoors and outside. The team constantly review their practice to ensure good standards are maintained. This ensures that teaching methods and children's learning are well monitored.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the daily register shows the actual arrival and departure time for each child
- develop the risk assessments to ensure that they include action plans that identifies actions to be taken with timescales.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide children with opportunities to create independently with a variety of mediums

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk