



Queens Park Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY242933
Inspection date	05 December 2006
Inspector	Dinah Round
Setting Address	155 Richmond Park Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH8 8UA
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Registered person	Alison Catherine Toms
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Queens Park Montessori Day Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from the ground floor of a private house, close to Bournemouth town centre. The nursery uses the Montessori method of teaching and offers full day care. The accommodation provides three separate play rooms for the different age groups and a sleep room. An office and staff room are located on the first floor. Children have access to an enclosed outside play area.

The nursery serves the local area and is registered to provide care for 29 children aged from four months to under five years of age. There are currently 58 children on roll. Of these 13 children are receiving nursery education funding. The nursery opens five days a week from 08:00 to 17:45, for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special needs and children for whom English is an additional language.

There is a team of 12 staff who work directly with the children, including the owner who is supernumerary. A cook is also employed. Eight members of staff, including the owner, hold early years qualifications and three are currently undertaking training. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene through the daily routines and show good independence as they use the facilities. For example, children use the step to wash their hands before eating and dry them on disposable paper towels, and older children brush their teeth after their lunch. Clear measures are put in place to protect children from the spread of infection. The nursery owner seeks advice from the Health Protection Agency and infectious children are excluded for a period of 48 hours. Hygienic nappy changing routines are followed by staff, such as, the provision of and a separate nappy bin, plus use of disposable aprons and gloves. Clear medication and accident records are maintained, however, parental permission to seek emergency treatment is not in place for all children. Many staff hold first aid certificates and the first aid resources are easily accessible, which supports them in the event of an emergency.

Children learn about keeping healthy through a variety of topics and activities linked to the local 'HEY' project. They looked at diet and exercise, and made posters about food that is good for them. Children are provided with healthy snacks of fruit and crackers, with drinks of water or milk. A hot nutritious lunch is cooked on the premises, such as, tuna pasta followed by apple crumble and custard. A vegetarian option is available, staff are aware of children's individual dietary needs and make sure these are adhered to. The babies feeding requirements are fully discussed with parents and staff make sure that any bottles provided are labelled and stored in the fridge.

Children have regular fresh air and exercise. They use the outdoor play facilities on a daily basis and the babies are taken on regular local walks. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through access to a wide range of large and small equipment. For example, they use the pedal bikes with good control and co-ordination as they negotiate round the painted road on the tarmac playground. Children use many different tools through the activities to successfully develop their fine motor skills. For example, rollers and cutters with dough, glue sticks, paint sponges, scissors, pencils and pencil sharpeners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept secure due to the effective measures in place to protect them. Staff are clear of the procedures, the external doors are kept locked and an entrance buzzer is used. This makes sure that children are protected from un-invited visitors and cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Appropriate safety equipment is in place such as, radiator covers, safety sockets and a gate preventing access to the kitchen. However, there are no risk assessments carried

out on the premises or for outings to highlight potential risks to children. Systems in place to monitor sleeping children are not sufficiently thorough in checking their safety. Termly fire evacuation procedures are practised with the children, although, limited records are maintained.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through planned topics, such as, learning the 'firework safety code'. Staff provide gentle reminders to children about safety during the activities, for example, asking a child not to throw the bricks into the basket when tidying up. Children of all ages are able to move around their room freely and with confidence as they choose their activities. Toys and equipment are well positioned in low units and open boxes to encourage children's independence. They have access to a wide range of good quality resources suitable for their age and stage of development.

Staff have a sound understanding of their role and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They are aware to report any concerns to the designated child protection officer or senior staff. Clear records are maintained of any visitors, existing injuries and adults authorised to collect children. This contributes towards protecting children. A child protection policy is made available to parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and secure in the welcoming environment created by staff. They are provided with a good range of play provision and activities to support their development. Staff make use of the Birth to three matters framework to plan activities and to monitor younger children's progress and development.

Babies individual routines are followed well by staff who organise activities around their sleep and feeding times. Staff incorporate interesting play experiences for babies to explore and use their senses. For example, they explore paint as they do finger painting on Christmas calendars and delight in feeling the different items from the Treasure box. They enjoy joining in the actions of the 'ring-a-ring of roses' rhyme and tapping sticks to the music tape. Staff are attentive to the babies individual needs and interact in a warm and caring manner, which makes children feel settled and content.

Toddlers' independence is promoted well. They are encouraged to do things for themselves, such as, feeding themselves at lunch time and selecting their own activities. Staff provide sensitive support and ensure children are kept occupied and interested. Children thoroughly enjoy taking part in the 'Sticky Kids' music and movement session. They have lots of fun as they jump, march, and clap their hands to the music, then stretch tall and curl small.

Pre-school children are provided with a broad range of enjoyable activities that promote learning in all areas and encourage them to develop new skills. They benefit from positive relationships with the staff and each other. Staff are friendly and caring, and have a good knowledge of how children learn through play. Children show good independence as they select their own resources from around the room, and attend to their personal care.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's learning and development is promoted well by staff in all areas. This is due to the staff's good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and clear understanding of what they intend children to learn from the activities. Staff plan a wide range of interesting topics that provide children with fun learning experiences. For example, during a recent 'construction' topic, children observed buildings under construction in their local area, built and created their own houses and enjoyed using construction tools in their role play. Although, the full opportunities to enrich children's learning by incorporating first-hand experiences is not always explored.

Staff apply effective teaching methods to promote children's learning. They motivate children so they are keen to try new experiences and ask questions to encourage children to think. Children's progress is successfully monitored through on-going observations and assessments by their key workers. These are recorded in the children's personal folders, with achievements clearly linked to the areas of learning.

Children are happy, confident and motivated. They quickly settle and are keen to get involved in the play opportunities provided. They are learning good independence as they self register their name cards, choose activities for themselves and use the toilet and wash their hands alone. Children particularly enjoy being independent at snack time, as they pour their own drinks, choose their snacks and wash up their cups afterwards. Children behave well, they learn how to play positively with others, listening politely and take turns.

Children communicate well, they speak confidently and clearly as they happily chat and share their news with others. They make good use of books spontaneously as well as enjoying the group story time. For example, children show lots of interest and excitement in new Christmas books put out on the shelves. They handle the books with care and enjoy reading stories to others or by themselves. Children have good opportunities to use rhythm and rhyme to link sounds to letters. For instance, they enjoy clapping out the sounds of everyone's name, and join in enthusiastically with the nursery rhymes.

Children are developing a good understanding of mathematical concepts through use of the various Montessori equipment and planned activities. For example, they use the materials to compare the length and height of two items. Children use number during their play, however, opportunities for counting and simple problem solving within the everyday routines are not maximised. Children are learning about size through topics such as, 'big' and 'little', they explore shapes of everyday objects within their environment.

Children learn to care for animals as they take turns to feed the nursery's hamster, they show great interest and they ask questions such as, 'how he gets water from the bottle attached to his cage'. Staff provide clear explanations which generates more discussions. Children explore and investigate the materials and objects on the Nature table making use of the microscope and magnifying glass. They are developing a good awareness of technology as they use the mouse with good control to follow the computer program. Children are learning about a sense of time and place. They show great excitement as they look at photographs of themselves in past and present events at the nursery.

Children use their imagination well in role play, constructing models, creative activities and exploring music. For example, children proudly show off their creations such as, a 'snowman' made from the play dough, or the 'flying house' built from the small lego. Children have good opportunities to use their senses to explore various mediums such as, paint, sand, mud, glue, cornflour, cooked spaghetti, shaving foam.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected, they are greeted warmly by the staff as they arrive in the morning. Photographs and displays of children's artwork around the nursery promotes a strong sense of belonging. Children's individual achievements are acknowledged which develops a sense of pride and makes them feel good about themselves. For example, staff take a photograph of a child with his 'snowman' made from play dough. Staff identify when children need additional support and liaise closely with parents and other professionals, so they work together to meet a child's needs. Children's awareness of other countries, cultures and ways of life is successfully promoted through planned topics and the broad range of resources readily accessible. They celebrate different festivals over the year for example, Diwali, children tasted various foods and created their own Rangoli patterns with chalks. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well. They develop a good understanding of what is expected of them through the staff's clear and consistent messages. Children learn to share, take turns and show consideration for others. For example, they wait patiently during the circle game for their turn to throw their small ball into the bowl. Staff create a positive environment where children receive lots of encouragement and praise.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents are kept well-informed about the provision through the display boards, newsletters and daily communication. Close partnerships between key workers and parents ensures that children's individual needs are fully discussed and children are well supported. For example, settling-in sheets are completed by staff and parents of babies to obtain clear information about their routines and stage of development. Daily diary sheets detailing sleep times, food eaten and nappy changes are provided for parents of younger children. The older children's progress is shared with parents through on-going daily discussions and written reports detailing their achievements through the areas of learning. Parents are encouraged to get involved in their child's learning, they are informed of forthcoming topics and how they can contribute.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a friendly and welcoming environment, where staff make effective use of space and resources to support children's needs. Children's independence is fostered well as they freely select their own resources and activities within the rooms. However, there are no clear systems in place to identify and monitor risks to children during the activities,

outings or when they are sleeping. Staff work together well as a team, the key worker system contributes towards meeting children needs and helps them feel settled and secure.

Documentation is satisfactorily maintained. Various policies and procedures are in place and these are currently being updated. Recruitment and vetting procedures are followed to ensure that newly appointed staff are suitable to work with children, however there is no written policy in place. Children's records are maintained and kept secure, although, written parental consents are not obtained for all children.

Leadership and management is good. The qualified staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and continue to update their knowledge and skills through frequent training. They use their training to implement new ideas and exciting opportunities to improve the learning outcomes for children. Staff are skilful in interacting with the children, as a result, children have a positive approach to the learning experiences provided. There are effective systems in place to monitor and review the quality of nursery education. This includes on-going discussions between the staff, a weekly review of the activities and a focus on future improvements. Staff involve the children in discussions for future topics, and their suggestions are incorporated into the short term planning. Questionnaires are sent out to obtain parents' views on areas for development and future improvement.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve planning systems to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are more effectively covered; make children's assessment records more clear for parents and to up-date and implement a regular risk assessment.

Clear planning systems have been developed which effectively cover all areas of learning and link to the different stepping stones. This provides children with a broad range of learning experiences and opportunities. Children's assessment is successfully monitored through use of post-it notes and clear written records, which are linked to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. This provides parents with a clear record of how their child is progressing.

However, although visual safety checks are completed by staff on the premises no clear risk assessments have been implemented.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made to parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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):

- implement risk assessments for the premises and outings to monitor and identify risks to children, and develop clear systems to monitor sleeping children.
- improve organisation of documentation, develop a written recruitment policy and make sure written parental consents to take children on outings or seek emergency medical treatment are in place for all children

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):

- enhance further children's learning by incorporating mathematical opportunities within the everyday routines, and by providing more first-hand experiences for children.

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