



# Neasden Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137827
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Maria Therese Conroy
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<b>Registered person</b>	Jayasree Sen Gupta
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Neasden Montessori School is privately owned by an independent provider. It has been registered since 1985 and operates from a church hall located in Neasden. A maximum of 35 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 09:30 to 15:00 during school term time. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 43 children on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting supports children who have special educational needs.

The manager and five staff work directly with the children. Three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The school follows Montessori and traditional teaching methods.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing a thorough understanding of personal hygiene as they attend to their own personal needs and wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their food. Information is recorded with parents to identify children's specific health and dietary requirements, which are followed by staff. Accident and medication procedures are in place.

Parents provide packed lunches, which are stored in cool boxes in the hall. They are encouraged to include healthy food and snacks to promote healthy eating. Children enjoy learning about healthy eating through planned activities, such as making fruit salad. They can help themselves to fresh drinking water throughout the day, when they are thirsty. There is suitable furniture for children to sit and eat comfortably; staff sit and eat their lunch with the children, encouraging them to eat their food.

Children have many opportunities for exercise and this promotes a healthy lifestyle. Most days, weather permitting, children play outside where they practise their climbing skills and use wheeled toys. Indoors they take part in group activities, such as the ribbon activity where they eagerly wave ribbons around to classical music. Children enjoy 'walking along the line' to encourage their balance, older children have the additional challenge to hold a bell without it ringing, while they are walking. Children use a range of tools to encourage fine motor development, for example when they thread beads, use scissors and control pencils as they write their name.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is inadequate.

The premises are kept secure and staff monitor entry to ensure that only authorised people have access. Staff are vigilant when supervising children in the main play area, which keeps children safe. Children have access to a range of toys and equipment which are of good quality and are age appropriate. Staff are aware of the risks to the younger children from some of the equipment used with the older children and as a result restrict their access.

Most of the staff are unclear of child protection issues, including when a child arrives with an injury and the procedure for dealing with suspected abuse. The manager is the only member of staff to have attended child protection training, however other staff have not been able to update their knowledge on current child protection procedures. Although a written child protection procedure is in place the staff, including the deputy manager, are not familiar with it and would report everything to the owner/manger to deal with. In addition, there is no procedure in place should a child be uncollected. Therefore children's welfare is at risk.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are settled and happy; they have a relaxed and friendly relationship with staff. The younger children readily go to staff for comfort or reassurance. There is a good level of interaction and conversation between staff and the children and this supports young children's language development well. Children receive encouragement and praise for their achievements and this helps them to develop their self-esteem. There is a varied range of toys and Montessori equipment to support the development and learning of children of all ages. Staff working with the younger children do not monitor the younger children's development, they are not familiar with the Birth to three matters framework and do not currently formally plan activities in line with the aspects. Therefore children's individual developmental needs are not always identified.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals in each of the six areas of learning, due to the knowledge most staff have of the stepping stones. Staff undertake observations, which help to plan for children's next steps on an individual basis and they assess children's progress against the stepping stones. However not all planning is kept up-to-date, the assessments and observations are not always dated, therefore children's individual educational needs are not always evident when planning. Children have access to a suitable range of structured and free play activities, and challenges to older and more able children are generally suitable due to staff's questioning of them during activities.

Children take part in many activities to promote mathematical development. They are confident as they count the beads and match the numerals from 11 to 19. Children take part in practical activities throughout the day, such as counting the number of children present and calculating the date, when they look at the weather chart.

Children are becoming confident as they undertake specific Montessori activities to enable them to string three letter words together, sound them out and match them to the item. They trace sandpaper letters to encourage their ability to form letters and enjoy writing for a purpose when they make a book about the life cycle of a frog. Children enjoy listening to stories and are confident at handling books. There are many opportunities for children to see print around the nursery as activities are clearly labelled.

Children are learning about people who help them in the community as they look at the role of the police, firefighters and postman. They are learning about the environment through planned topics, such as the seasons, and looking at the different parts of a tree. Children enjoy constructing using different types of materials, for example Lego, junk modelling and wooden blocks. Children have the opportunity to use technology, as they use the programmable toy 'pixie' and battery operated microwave.

Children are learning to become independent as they choose their activity from the low level equipment, which is easily accessible. They are becoming confident as they learn to fasten buttons and poppers and pour water from the jug. They carry small containers of water from

the display area to the table confidently. Children share and take turns, as they use the equipment.

Children enjoy creating using paint, sand, play dough and clay. They take part in role play as they dress up as doctors and nurses, they fry eggs on the pretend cooker and enjoy playing musical instruments. Children sing enthusiastically as they march around in a circle singing "the grand old duke of York". They are confident as they stand in front of their friends and sing a song about the days of the week.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about the lives of others in the wider world through planned topics such as when they look at the continents. They take part in celebrations for a variety of festivals throughout the year for example Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas. Children with special education needs are supported in the setting, and staff liaise with parents and outside agencies to plan appropriate activities to support children's development. Children for whom English is a second language have some support from staff who speak their mother tongue.

Generally children behave well and play cooperatively together, sharing and taking turns. Staff are generally good role models for the children and use positive strategies to manage their behaviour. Most staff give them praise and careful explanations to help them understand what is expected of them and why. Children know simple rules such as tidying away.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff liaise with parents regarding the care of their children and their wishes are respected. Parents have access to information about the nursery including Montessori methods, routine and policies and procedures. However, they do not receive information on the Foundation Stage curriculum, therefore they are not fully informed about the curriculum their children follow. Children are able to share and talk about the activities they have completed with their parents, because the staff send home their work for parents to see. Parents and staff have regular verbal exchanges of information regarding their child's progress, however there are no formal meetings in place unless there is a specific reason. Although parents have access to the complaints procedure, the contact details are not up-to-date and therefore it may delay parents in making a complaint.

Parents are happy with the provision and they comment that staff are approachable and when asked for advice in supporting their children's particular interest, staff have been helpful in providing suggestions for that area of development.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a spacious, well organised environment, which encourages children to become independent. Toys and equipment are stored on low units making them readily accessible

to the children who can make decisions about their play. Staff make appropriate use of the premises to support children and provide a well-equipped outside area.

Most of the policies and procedures are in place however the recruitment procedure is not fully up-to-date, the complaints procedure has not been updated and there is no procedure in place if a child is uncollected.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff work closely as a team and are clear on their roles and responsibilities. They meet regularly to discuss topics as well as the children's progress. The majority of staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, however due to limited additional training, this does not fully promote children's learning. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, however this is not fully effective as it does not identify areas for improvement or staff development. The setting works in partnership with the local authority to enable them to improve the quality of education being provided.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection the nursery were asked to improve in a number of areas. They were asked to keep a written record of visitors and staff hours of attendance, this is now in place and ensures that ratios are maintained and that the time that visitors are present is recorded. They were also asked to monitor the temperature of the hall, this has now been completed and additional heaters have been installed to ensure the temperature is appropriate. In addition it was identified that risk assessments were not undertaken, these are now in place which minimises the hazards available to the children.

As part of the education inspection the nursery were asked to improve in the following areas. They were asked to increase the opportunities to use their imagination and express themselves through role play, select materials and be spontaneous. This has now been implemented, children have access to a variety of role play materials, they can self select some creative materials. They were also asked to improve the records to show clearly the progress children make, this has been implemented in the form of assessment against the stepping stones and detailed written leaving report which ensures that parents can see clearly the progress their children are making.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the Nation Standards.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that all staff are aware of child protection issues and are able to implement the policies and procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff.
- devise a procedure for uncollected children.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### 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):

- ensure that all staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and stepping stones.
- develop systems for giving parents information about the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- review systems for planning and assessment to ensure they are kept fully up-to-date and improve the systems used to monitor practice.

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