



# Daisy Chain Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122645
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Joanne Lindsey Caswell
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Lukes Hall, New North Road, South Park, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8LZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Daisy Chain Montessori
<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 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?

Daisy Chain Montessori Nursery is a privately owned nursery, which has been registered since 1999. The nursery operates from a single storey period building in a residential part of Reigate, Surrey and has sole use of the premises. Children have access to an entrance area, a large hall, toilet facilities and an enclosed outside play area. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 08:00 - 17:30, 50 weeks of the year. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time.

There are currently 65 children, aged from two to four years, on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A total of seven staff work with the children. Of these, five staff hold recognised early years qualifications. The nursery combines traditional early learning teaching methods with the Montessori philosophy.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and take an active part in helping to prevent the spread of infection. They recognise the importance of hand washing routines and clearly understand why they must keep their hands clean. This is particularly evident as children help to prepare the fruit snacks at snack time and children confidently talk about why they must have clean hands when handling food. Children help to wipe the tables before snack time and lunch time, helping them to understand the importance of a clean and hygienic environment. Staff carry out appropriate cleaning routines and ensure the nursery is maintained to a satisfactory standard. There are effective routines in place during nappy change and toilet training routines to prevent the spread of infection. For example, staff wear disposable gloves and aprons and ensure the changing mat and potties are cleaned thoroughly between use.

Children have many opportunities to develop their physical skills. They play outside throughout the year and staff ensure that children are dressed appropriately. This enables children to benefit from fresh air and daily exercise. Children enjoy active games, such as playing with the parachute, and develop their movement and co-ordination as they dance and use apparatus such as the trampoline, balls, hoops and beanbags. The organisation of some outside play routines is not always fully effective and sometimes prevents children from moving around freely.

Children's dietary needs are met very well. Staff have a clear understanding of each child's individual needs and work closely with the catering company to ensure that all children's food preferences are met appropriately. Children enjoy healthy, wholesome and nutritious meals and benefit from relaxed and sociable meal times. This helps children to develop positive attitudes towards eating. Children enjoy healthy snacks such as fresh fruit and take an active part in helping to prepare the fruit. This helps children to develop a keen interest in food and learn about healthy eating. There is very good provision for children to access drinking water throughout the nursery session, enabling children to access drinks when they are thirsty.

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

The provision is good.

The premises offer a bright, welcoming and child-orientated environment. Space is used very effectively inside to offer children ample room to move around freely and safely and access a very good selection of high quality play materials and learning resources. All equipment is stored at low level and staff carry out regular checks to ensure it is safe for children's use.

Children are supervised whilst using the toilets and the front door is secure, preventing children from leaving the premises unsupervised. Effective arrangements are in place to ensure children's security. Only senior members of staff are permitted to open the front door and visitors are fully supervised at all times. This contributes towards promoting children's safety.

Risk assessments are effective within the inside environment, although they are not always used regularly and updated to cover the outside area, particularly after the recent storm. Although staff are taking remedial action by ensuring children access the outside area safely after the damage to the front fencing, further checks are not fully effective. For example, the smaller side area has not been assessed to identify how many children can play outside safely. As a result, children are currently playing in a very small area and arrangements have not been suitably made to restrict the number of children playing in this area at any one time. Consequently, some outside play times are very over-crowded and prevent children from moving around freely.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe as staff give clear explanations. For example, whilst playing with chopsticks, as part of the role play Chinese restaurant, staff give gentle reminders as to why children must be careful and play safely to prevent injuries. Children develop an understanding of emergency evacuation procedures as staff and children regularly undertake unannounced evacuation drills and a designated 'place of safety' has been identified. This helps children to learn appropriate routines to keep themselves safe.

Children's safety and welfare is fully promoted as all staff have a very good understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection. Staff undertake appropriate training and are familiar with appropriate procedures to follow, should they have any concerns about a child in their care. All relevant documentation and information is available to support children's care and welfare needs. This ensures that children are fully protected at all times.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and extremely settled within the nursery. They develop very positive attitudes towards learning as the Montessori curriculum offers children many opportunities to explore, experiment and investigate. Younger children benefit from the company of the older children and all children play very happily and co-operatively together. All children develop very good skills in independence and become increasingly competent in taking care of their own needs. The nursery environment is extremely calm, homely and relaxed and all children enjoy very close relationships with their peers and the staff. This enables all children to feel secure and settled.

Children's care needs are very well addressed. The younger children are appropriately supported with toilet training routines and there is good provision for children to sleep or have a rest during the day. Children's development is appropriately monitored and staff use the Birth to three matters framework effectively to carry out assessments and regular observations on children. This ensures that children take part in activities which challenge their individual learning and developmental needs appropriately.

## NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are experienced early years practitioners with a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The Montessori curriculum is combined successfully with traditional early learning teaching methods to offer children a wide selection of practical play and learning opportunities. The daily routine activities are utilised extremely well, and particularly strong emphasis is given to promoting children's social, language and mathematical skills. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is closely monitored and staff carry out regular evaluations on activities to ensure children's learning needs are recognised. However, planning records do not clearly reflect the adaptation/extension activities for individual children.

Staff make good use of practical activities to extend children's learning. For example, children learn about the Chinese culture as part of topic work on Chinese New Year, by playing in a role play Chinese restaurant. This enables children to use Chinese resources, such as woks and identify Chinese writing.

The curriculum is extremely well planned and provides children with very good opportunities to develop their social skills. As a result, children develop excellent skills in independence. They show very good levels of concentration and motivation and are keen to succeed. For example, children persevere calmly with complex puzzles. This is promoted well by staff who interact with children sensitively and gently encourage children to try again, leading to children's success. Very good use is made of opportunities within the daily routine for children to take an active part in their learning. For example, children help to prepare the fresh fruit for snack time and staff use this as a very good learning opportunity for discussing the importance of healthy eating.

Children are very polite and kind to one another. They show care and respect for each other and clearly understand acceptable behaviour levels. Older children act as good role models to the younger children. For example, during snack time, an older child reminded the younger children, "We must wait for our friends before we start eating".

Children have very good language skills. They demonstrate a wide vocabulary and converse confidently with staff and their peers. Staff extend children's communication skills effectively by encouraging children to question, use logic and give explanation. Children listen attentively to one another and participate enthusiastically during group discussions. There is good provision for children to develop language and communication through play. For example, children use resources such as telephones to express themselves creatively and develop their vocabulary through conversation. Children develop an understanding of letters and sounds and use Montessori resources, such as sandpaper letters, to develop recognition of phonics. Some children progress to reading and all children develop a strong interest and love for books. For example, children happily sitting round a table looking at books together and discussing stories.

There is very good provision for children to develop mathematical skills. The Montessori resources are used extremely well to enable children to develop an understanding of colour, number, size and shape. Children use many opportunities for counting and incorporate numbers into their play, for example, in the role play restaurant. Children develop an understanding of

number value and use opportunities, such as singing number rhymes, to add on and take away, forming the basis of simple calculation. Children recognise numbers around the room and older children understand how resources, such as calculators, are used for counting. Children develop an awareness of shape recognition and see many examples of shapes in both 2D and 3D form.

Children have many opportunities to learn about the wider world. They celebrate a range of cultures and customs and see many examples of diversity freely displayed and reflected in the nursery environment. For example, as part of topic work on Chinese New Year, children play in the role play Chinese restaurant and use resources such as chopsticks and woks. Children develop an understanding of seasonal change and observe the weather each day. There are good opportunities for children to use the computer and play with battery operated resources, such as remote control toys and calculators. This enables children to recognise how things work.

The very good range of Montessori resources enables children to develop dexterity and manipulation. For example, children use resources for pouring; they handle tweezers, tongs and spoons for transferring and manipulate tools such as clothes pegs, buttons, scissors and fastenings. Children use art and craft and writing resources competently, enabling them to develop good hand/eye co-ordination and mark making skills.

Children's art work reflects their own creativity. The display of children's self-portraits exhibits children's freedom of expression. Children access a wide selection of creative materials, enabling them to create their own pictures. There are good opportunities for children to handle different textures, such as dough, water and cornflour, enabling children to explore using their senses. Children enjoy musical activities and enthusiastically take part in songs and rhymes.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children have excellent levels of self-confidence. They feel totally at ease in the staff's care as they understand they are valued and feel listened to. Children talk happily about their favourite things at nursery and are extremely proud to show their work. This results in children having extremely high self-esteem and motivation to learn and succeed. All children are welcomed into the nursery and their achievements and progress are continually celebrated. Staff and children enjoy celebrating each other's birthdays and all children take an active part in sharing in special days. Staff have an extensive knowledge of each child's individual needs and ensure that personal requirements are consistently met in all areas of nursery practice.

Children demonstrate extremely high levels of courtesy and respect for one another. They are polite to each other and have excellent social skills. This is particularly extended well through nursery topic work, as children have excellent opportunities to understand the importance of valuing one another. For example, at Harvest time, children take an active part in collecting for the underprivileged and children have recently shown interest in the setting up of a nursery in Ghana, following a staff member's visit. This has enabled children to recognise the needs of others and become aware of diversity within society. As a result of this, children' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There is strong support in place for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff are totally committed to working cohesively with parents and any external agencies in order to support all children's needs fully.

Children's behaviour is consistently very good. All children co-operate and negotiate with one another extremely well in their play and throughout the nursery routine. This enables children to play happily together and results in an extremely calm, happy and harmonious environment. Children have an excellent understanding of acceptable behaviour levels and this enables them to successfully resolve their own differences, with minimal intervention necessary from staff.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff utilise all opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning. For example, some children take reading books home to enable parents and children to share reading and enjoy books together. This helps to strengthen the partnership between home and nursery and enables children to see nursery staff and their parents as equal partners in their learning. Written information regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum and nursery activities is clearly displayed for parents' reference and events such as open days, sports days and parents' meetings are organised to enable staff and parents to regularly discuss children's progress. This is in addition to the daily contact staff and parents utilise to share and exchange information on children's learning and care routines.

There is an extremely welcoming environment for parents and very good strategies for sharing information. For example, staff are committed to obtaining parents' feedback and value all information. Parents value the strong and stable staff team and praise the warm, caring ethos within the nursery, commenting on how this has helped their children to settle quickly and enjoy their time at nursery. Extensive information is obtained from parents when children first start at the nursery, enabling staff to fully understand each child's personal needs and developmental progress. This helps staff to recognise children's 'starting points' in their learning and enhances the nursery's assessment procedures, ensuring all children are challenged appropriately.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff working with children have been suitably vetted and checked. Staff have a very good understanding of the National Standards and ensure that staff deployment is consistently effective to meet appropriate staffing ratios. The staff team is strong and all staff work together extremely well, offering a diverse range of skills. All staff are committed to children's happiness and welfare and ensure on-going improvements of the nursery through effective self-evaluation.

The daily routine is mainly organised effectively. The nursery is extremely child-orientated and offers children a spacious, welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Nursery sessions are organised well to allow children plenty of time for exploration, active learning and child-initiated play, combined successfully with adult-led activities and rest periods. However, the current organisation of children during outside play time is less effective and inhibits children from playing and moving around freely.

All regulatory documentation is in place and contains all necessary detail. Policy documents are made available to parents and information regarding Ofsted is displayed. All children's records are stored confidentially and securely.

The leadership and management are good. The nursery provider is present at the nursery each day and takes a full and active role in the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Regular evaluations are carried out on all areas of nursery practice to ensure all elements of the curriculum are appropriately addressed. Evaluations are also used effectively to identify any further areas for development. All staff have access to additional training and support is in place for unqualified staff to undertake a recognised qualification.

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

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

At the last care inspection, four recommendations were raised. These related to policy documentation. Staff have addressed all these issues. Policy documents have been reviewed and all include necessary information. All documents are available for parents' reference, enabling parents to understand the routine procedures. Parents' consent has been obtained for all children's care routines and provision is in place to ensure children's existing injuries are now recorded. This ensures that all policy documentation supports the care provision and contains relevant information regarding children's welfare.

At the last nursery education inspection, two key issues were raised. These related to the information included in curriculum planning and the information shared with parents regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum. These issues have been partly addressed. Information is now available for parents regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum. This enables parents to take a full and active part in their children's learning. There is still a weakness associated with curriculum planning. Information is not clearly recorded regarding children's individual learning needs, which prevents all staff from understanding how activities need to be adapted or extended to support children's differing abilities.

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

Since April 2004, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted which 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 by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.



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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):

- ensure daily risk assessments on outside play areas are used effectively to enable children to play safely
- review the grouping of children during outside play times to enable children to play outside more effectively and safely

#### 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):

- develop the format of curriculum planning to clearly reflect how activities and learning opportunities will be adapted to cater for children's different abilities

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)