



The Oval Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY225655
Inspection date	07 February 2007
Inspector	Janet Sharon Williams
Setting Address	in Vauxhall Park, near Fentiman Road entrance, London, SW8 1LA
Telephone number	0207 735 4816
E-mail	
Registered person	Jane Louise Norwood
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 satisfactory. 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?

Oval Montessori opened in the current premises in May 2002. It operates from a single storey building on the edge of Vauxhall in the London Borough of Lambeth. There are two classroom areas, free art area, home corner area, reception/office, children/adult toilet and washing facilities, mini kitchen and an enclosed outdoor play area.

Oval Montessori is registered for a maximum of 20 children aged two to under five years old. There are currently 21 children on roll, of whom 18 receive nursery education funding. The nursery uses the Montessori teaching methods in line with the Early Learning Goals. The nursery also provide for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The operational hours are from 09.15 - 12.15 Monday to Friday, 09.15 - 15.00 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday term time only.

There are three full time staff members. They are fully qualified in Montessori teaching and early years childcare and education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and welfare is promoted through some good hygiene practices. For example, they automatically wash their hands after visiting the toilet and staff remind the children to wash their hands after messy play. Although children wash their hands before lunch they do not wash them before snack time. Areas used by the children are very clean; staff ensure the premises is cleaned daily.

Children's individual dietary requirements are respected and considered carefully. Special dietary requirements and any allergies are gathered prior to placement. Children receive healthy snacks, such as apple, berries or dried fruit. Lunches are provided by parents and children may help themselves to a drink at any time. Fresh drinking water is available for children to pour their own drink.

Children's physical needs are met through use of the outdoor playground and park where the nursery is situated. They are able to have plenty of daily exercise using climbing apparatus and enjoy running and jumping in open space.

Children receive appropriate treatment in event of an accident as there is a member of staff with an up to date first aid certificate. There are also effective procedures in place for recording accidents and incidents that occur on the premises and outside the nursery hours. Parental permission has been obtained for administration of medication and for emergency medical treatment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright, cheerful environment. The premises and resources are organised very well, space available is planned effectively and there are areas for rest and play. Children have room to move comfortably, are able to access the activities and resources and the setting is carefully planned to maximize opportunities for children to learn. For example, children can independently help themselves to resources from low level shelves, such as puzzles and books, and use their imagination in the prepared role play area.

Most of the necessary precautions have been taken to minimise accidents indoors and out, for example, sockets not in use are covered, toys and equipment are frequently checked before use to ensure that they are safe and in good condition and, all visitors have to ring the doorbell before entry. Fire prevention is good and regular fire drills are frequently practised and recorded

and the park area is thoroughly checked before the children can play and run freely. However, some of the electric heaters are very hot, there is no written risk assessment procedure in place and during outdoor play not all children are appropriately supervised on large climbing apparatus.

Children are protected through the staff's good understanding of the child protection procedure, which is in line with those set out by the local Child Protection Committee. However, they do not include allegations made against a member of staff. This is a breach of regulation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled. They separate from their carers and parents well. Children enjoy attending the nursery, they are content and relate well to each other. They are interested and fully involved in activities, keen to communicate and find things out for themselves. Children play freely and creatively with the activities available, use resources imaginatively and play co-operatively together. Staff interact with the children in a relaxed atmosphere and demonstrate a very good understanding of each child's needs. They interact sensitively with the children and adopt active roles in promoting children's learning and development. They are continuously talking and listening to the children to help them build their confidence and self esteem.

There are lots of good practises. For example, children are able to have a good level of independence and responsibility. They are able to choose activities from the shelves, complete them and tidy them away afterwards without adult input. Children also use their imagination well through the use of a well organised home corner with a good selection of resources and play materials such as, crockery, cutlery, a sink unit with adult type taps and a wide selection of dolls and dressing up clothes. During the summer months, children enjoy a range of interesting and enjoyable experiences through outings to various parks and a city farm. Specialist visitors are booked to attend the nursery, for example, a music teacher and a yoga and dance instructor.

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn. They provide a stimulating environment, well planned activities and make good use of resources. However, activity plans do not positively reflect the Birth to three matters framework. Progress reports are maintained on all children, which also help staff to ensure children's learning and developmental needs are met.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding how of children learn using the Montessori teaching method in line with the Foundation Stage of learning. Written plans are linked to the six areas of learning and make clear what children are expected to learn from activities. The assessment system is very detailed and reflects children's individual needs and makes staff aware of the next steps for each child so they can all support, guide and facilitate their learning. They also make regular observations and record achievements in children's profiles. Progress reports clearly indicate how children are progressing in all areas of learning.

Children are extremely well motivated and enjoy new challenges. They are developing good relationships and get on well with their peers and adults. They understand the need to share

and take turns when playing together. Children are very independent. They see to their own personal needs such as dressing and undressing, pour their own drink and decide what order they wish to eat their lunch. Children are beginning to understand differences in their lives to others around them. They talk happily about their home life and family.

Children speak very confidently to peers and adults. Their spoken language is developing well. Children are learning to negotiate well and express imagined experiences during a good range of role play situations, for example in the home corner. They talk openly during circle time and use language to explain the items they have bought in relation to the weeks topic, such as the colour or the sound of the item. Children can link sounds and letters. For example, they phonetically link the sounds and letters identical to their own name. Although children enjoy books and listen avidly to stories, staff do not challenge children with open ended questions for them to demonstrate their understanding of the element of the story. Children are confident writers. They have plenty of opportunities to mark make and learn to recognise and write letters during informal and meaningful activities. For example, they write their name on their drawings and pictures.

Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. For example, they are able to identify the number that shows their age and count in sequence up to ten and above. Children learn about addition and subtraction using counters and a number chart, one to nine. Children learn about size, shape and using appropriate maths language through practical, worthwhile activities. For example, they have access to a water jug with diluted coffee and a small container of milk where they pour and measure the fluids.

Children learn about different cultures and beliefs through well planned topic work. For example, they dress up in African costumes, taste Chinese food and acknowledge other countries' festivities and religions. They also learn about animals from around various continents of the world and the animal's body parts using picture cards. For example, children are asked to find the elephant's tusks, trunk and feet. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good and activities and resources encourage them to explore and investigate.

Children benefit from music, they respond enthusiastically during music sessions and they experiment with various musical instruments such triangles and tambourines. They also enjoy participating in singing songs and action rhymes to the playing of a guitar. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. For example, they access the play dough and practise using small tools, such as pastry cutters and knives. Children demonstrate a good sense of space and move confidently during physical activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and have very good self esteem. They are well behaved because they are fully occupied and stimulated. The staff team provide positive role models for the children; they are calm, relaxed and frequently engage in conversation with the children and actively praise and encourage them. Children have many opportunities to develop and practise social skills, playing and learning together in large and small groups. They learn to share and co-operate with each other and adults.

Children with learning disabilities are welcomed into the nursery. They are supported effectively and staff work with parents enabling children's individual needs to be met. Children join in activities due to the promotion by staff of an active inclusion policy.

Children's individual needs are met as staff know them very well and plan activities which are consistent with their interest. Children learn about equality of opportunity through planned activities, for example, acknowledging other festivity events, such as Hanukkah and Diwali. Children also have access to a good range of resources and play materials that reflect race, religion, and culture and, to raise their knowledge about disability, for example, books, puzzles, a selection of cultural customs and dolls.

Children benefit from the positive partnerships the nursery develops with parents. Effective systems have been established to keep parents and carers informed about children's progress. Registration details request important information about children's particular requirements to assist the staff in meeting individual needs. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents feel welcome and staff encourage them to be involved with the child's learning and development. For example, children are asked to contribute or bring something in from home that relates to the weekly topic. There are both formal and informal systems in place for staff and parents to share information about children's individual progress and development. The regular sharing of information enhances children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a happy and relaxed environment as staff have developed a warm and positive relationship with them. There are good recruitment procedures in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitably qualified staff, which ensures children are protected. All of the staff have an appropriate early years qualification. Staff are deployed effectively and implement the nursery routines. There is an induction programme where new staff are given the opportunity to learn about the nursery's policies and procedures. The manager also supports staff to participate in self appraisals.

Most of the mandatory documentation is in place and recommended policies and procedures to ensure children receive appropriate care.

Leadership and management is good. Staff understand their role and responsibility and work well as a team. There is clear communication and guidance, which allows them to provide a stimulating well balanced programme. All staff are fully involved with the planning and the day to day running of the nursery to enhance children's learning and development. This helps them to feel valued. Staff are actively encouraged to undertake training and are supported effectively with good systems in place. For example, they attend further childcare training and development courses. This helps them to reflect, monitor and improve the quality of the care and education they offer to all children. The manager evaluates practice constantly to ensure continual improvement in the outcomes for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision was asked to provide opportunities for children to develop their large motor skills, practice running, hopping and skipping, balancing and space awareness and, provide resources where children can use their imagination in everyday activities and art and craft design. All have been satisfactorily addressed.

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 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):

- improve hygiene standards by ensuring children wash their hands before snack time
- devise and implement a risk assessment policy and ensure child protection procedures include course of action to follow in event of allegations being made against a member of staff
- ensure children are appropriately supervised when on large climbing apparatus
- ensure that the radiators are safe or inaccessible to the children
- ensure written activity plans reflect the Birth to three matters framework

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 children are sufficiently challenged to demonstrate their understanding of stories

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