



# St Mary Magdalen Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	509699
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Rowena Ann Bentley
<b>Setting Address</b>	61 North Worple Way, Mortlake, London, SW14 8PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8878 0756
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Elizabeth Jean Maitland
<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?

St. Mary Magdalen Montessori Nursery School has been registered with the present owner since 2000. It operates from three rooms in a church hall in Mortlake. The nursery school serves the local area.

The group are registered for 40 children aged between two and under six years. There are currently 42 children aged from two to five years on roll. This includes 17 funded three-year-olds and 15 funded four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group currently supports six children who speak English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs are welcomed and supported, although there are no children currently on roll.

The school opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are from 9.15 to 12.15, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and from 9.15 to 14.45 on Thursdays.

There are 13 staff employed to work with the children. Four staff are full time and nine are part time. Of these, seven hold early years and Montessori teaching qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The school uses Montessori teaching methods alongside the Birth to three framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's well-being is well promoted as they are cared for in a clean environment where staff follow good hygiene procedures. Children learn the importance of hand washing at appropriate times and are encouraged by easily accessible washing and drying facilities. There are good procedures in place to sustain levels of hygiene and prevent the spread of infection. Staff are knowledgeable about children's health needs and relevant records and documents are in place. Staff receive first aid training and as a result children receive prompt care if they have a minor accident.

Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the session. They enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks which take into account their individual dietary needs. Through well planned activities children are beginning to learn about healthy eating and what foods are good for them.

Children enjoy a variety of physical activities which contribute to promoting good health. They enjoy fresh air and exercise daily in the outdoor area where they can run, jump, climb and play games. The outdoor area is used to extend the curriculum outside and staff are aware of the value of physical activity. Small groups of children are taken for walks into the local environment for example nature walk or to watch the trains. In addition to this children participate in well organised ballet, yoga and music and movement sessions. Children are developing fine motor skills as they confidently use resources such as scissors, stapler, glue, paint brushes, cutters, tongs and tweezers.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they are well supervised by staff. The school is welcoming to children and parents with notices for parents in the entrance and pictures and posters displayed at child height. The school is spacious and well organised so children can move around freely and play safely. Risk assessments are carried out to the premises indoors and outside to minimize hazards and ensure children's safety. The school is well equipped and warm although there is a lack of heating in the toilet and nappy changing area and as a result children's welfare and comfort is not fully supported. The staff are vigilant about fire safety and regularly practise fire drills. Consequently children know what to do if they have to leave the building in an emergency.

Children have access to a good range of resources and equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children can reach toys easily and make choices. Activities are set up carefully so they are appealing and attractive to children. There are procedures in place to ensure equipment is well maintained and safe. Effective systems are followed to ensure children's safety as they arrive and depart. Staff position themselves at the door to make sure children are collected by a known adult. Children are learning to be aware of safety as they play, for example an adult gave a gentle reminder to a child as she pushed past another, smaller child. Children learn about safety in the wider world as visits from the road safety officer teaches them how to cross roads safely and be aware of traffic.

Staff have good understanding of child protection issues and know the procedure to follow if they are concerned about a child in their care. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

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

The provision is good.

Children are eager and enthusiastic as they arrive at the nursery school. They are encouraged to explore and experiment and make choices about what they do. Staff use the key worker system effectively and know the children well, consequently they are aware of each child's stage of development and they help them to progress. A good range of suitable and stimulating activities are provided. The curriculum is planned effectively using Montessori teaching, Birth to three framework and the Foundation Stage to promote good outcomes for children.

Children and staff relate very well to one another. Staff know the individual needs of the children and respond to them for example a two year old child who could not settle in the group at story time was occupied in the home corner. Children confidently approach staff for help and support. They share experiences during circle time and are learning to listen to one another. Staff display good listening skills and provide a good role model for the children.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Activities are effectively planned and evaluated and as a result children are making good progress across the six areas of learning. Plans for the current week, term and year are displayed and clearly link to the Early Learning Goals. Staff make observations and record children's progress on their individual profiles. Good use is made of a digital camera which means a photographic record is added to children files.

Children's language development is encouraged by staff who question them appropriately and listen to them. They enjoy stories and books independently and in a group. The comfortable and well organised book area is inviting to children and they respond by selecting books and handling them with care. They understand how to turn pages and that print carries meaning. Children learn pencil control, can recognise their written names and are learning to form letters.

Children are learning the concept of number as they count confidently and recognise some written numbers. Counting in everyday language is used appropriately and songs and rhymes help children to understand the meaning of number. Children learn about shape, space and capacity through the successful use of resources and activities such as weighing, measuring

and constructing. Children enjoy a good range of art and craft activities and they are encouraged to explore various materials. They mix paint and comment on the new colour created and make models using dough and clay. Children work together creating large collages, sticking, cutting and painting. Their art work is valued and attractively displayed throughout the school.

Children are developing a knowledge and understanding of the world around them through a variety of activities and experiences. Visitors to the school from the police, firemen and road safety officer help children to understand the role of others in the community. Children learn about living things such as caring for animals, life cycle of insects, growing seeds and planting bulbs. They explore and experiment as they have access to a wide range of props and resources to encourage their imagination and curiosity. However there is limited access to information technology equipment and programmable toys which means children are not fully supported in this area of learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected in a warm and welcoming environment. Effective settling in procedures are in place and as a result children are confident and are developing self-esteem. Children learn about customs and beliefs of others with planned activities to acknowledge various festivals through the year. Resources and displays in the school reflect positive images of diversity. Children who speak English as an additional language successfully settle into the school as staff learn a few words of their language and work with parents to meet their needs. Children with special needs are welcomed into the school. They are supported by staff who involve parents and other professionals and equipment is adapted to ensure children are fully integrated.

Children are cared for within a regular routine by staff who make it clear what is expected of them as a result children are well behaved and co-operative. Children are busy and occupied and therefore do not become bored or disruptive. Staff have a calm and relaxed approach as they show care and respect to the children. This creates a calm and happy atmosphere. Children respond well to praise and encouragement they receive from staff and the way they manage their behaviour which focuses on positive strategies. Children are learning respect for one another, to take turns and be helpful. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from positive relationships between parents and staff. Parents are welcomed into the school to settle their children and information is shared to meet children's needs. Parents are asked for their views by using the suggestion box and discussions with staff. They receive regular information about the school through very well presented newsletters which contain an abundance of photos of the children enjoying various activities. Parents receive details about the curriculum the school follows and children's progress is shared with them. Parents approached on the day of the inspection spoke with enthusiasm about the school and praised the staff for the high quality of the care and education their children receive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The provision is very well organised and provides an excellent range of resources. Staff make good use of the space so children can enjoy a variety of activities daily to include physical play indoor and outside. All required documentation for the safe and effective management of the school is in place. Written policies and procedures are followed by staff which keep children safe and well cared for. Comprehensive recruitment procedures ensure new staff are suitable to work with children.

The leadership and management is good. The staff team are led by a highly motivated and enthusiastic manager who provides a very good role model. She promotes good practice and has systems in place for continual review of service quality to improve the provision through self assessment and seeking parent's views. Staff are encouraged to extend their knowledge through further training. They have good awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum and Birth to three framework. These are used very effectively to support children's learning and development. The staff team meet regularly to plan activities, share ideas and discuss children's individual needs and progress.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last care inspection two recommendations were made in relation to accessibility of the public liability documentation and amending the outing procedure to include use of parents' vehicles. The provider has addressed these recommendations. The public liability certificate is displayed and parents do not transport other children for nursery outings.

Following the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to consider improving the system for recording children's progress by including objectives for the next stage of development and provide more outdoor play space. Children's progress records clearly indicate how children are encouraged to move on to the next stage of development. The outdoor space has been enlarged, renovated and improved.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 the toilet and nappy changing area is maintained at an adequate temperature

#### 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):

- enable children to have routine access to information and communication technology.

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)