



Oratory Montessori Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	105631
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Elizabeth Juon
Setting Address	10 Lower Britwell Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL2 2NJ
Telephone number	01628 665621setting 07958 456282 mob
E-mail	
Registered person	L G Montessori School Ltd
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?

The Oratory nursery registered in 2000. It is operated from a large house situated in Burnham.

The nursery rooms are set out over three floors. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00, 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 48 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding area.

The nursery employs 11 staff. Of these, five staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three staff working towards a qualification. The nursery employs a cook and administrator.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. The nursery has a certificate of two star rating from the environmental health department acknowledging good standards in the kitchen. Effective nappy changing procedures safeguard children from cross contamination for example staff wear disposable gloves. Staff have first aid training and appropriate accident and medication records are maintained to ensure children's wellbeing. However, there is no written parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment.

Children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices such as brushing their teeth after lunch. Children are aware of their own needs and children over three help themselves to water when they are thirsty. Children's physical development is encouraged in daily outdoor play in the garden and each week the Jo Jingles team guide children through a variety of movements and activities. Children's routines are followed and parent's wishes adhered to with regard to rest. There is suitable bedding to ensure children rest in comfort and safety.

The nursery cook prepares fresh food each day. Children are well nourished and all staff have an understanding of any special dietary requirement children have. The menus provide a range of meals to encourage children to make choices for a healthy lifestyle, such as fruit for dessert. The nursery has been awarded a certificate by the dental health team for promoting 'Smiling for Life' by providing food to safeguard children's teeth.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

In the playrooms children use a wide range of good quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. There is a selection of Montessori equipment easily available, enabling children to be independent in their choice of activity, providing opportunity to explore and investigate.

The playrooms are welcoming to the children with colourful rugs and cushions brightening the area. Displays of posters and artwork liven the rooms and raise children's self-esteem as their work is valued. Children have space to move around freely and develop new skills for example, babies have room to crawl. The large garden is secure enabling children to roam and explore without adult intervention, providing the opportunity to be adventurous. There is a selection of equipment for children to use, mostly in a suitable condition however, the playhouse items are worn and do not encourage children's imagination.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. There are security systems in place for the arrival and departure of the children for example parents use a keypad code to enter and sign children in and out. However, staff are not present to monitor the door and parents let others in to the nursery as they leave. This does not protect children from unwanted visitors. Staff carry out regular risk assessments inside and outside to minimise hazards and ensure the safety of the children in these areas. Children are developing an awareness of how to keep themselves safe for example they line up to walk down the stairs and practise frequent fire drills so children are familiar with evacuation procedure.

Staff are aware of the child protection policies and understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. The policy has current information but does not include the procedure to follow if allegations are made against staff although when asked the staff were able to say what action they would take to protect children. This supports children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery. They generally leave their main carer with ease. Any who are unhappy are helped to gently separate from their parents and given comfort by staff. Staff reassure younger children of the daily routine to help them understand timings for example when their parents will return. Children are confident in their relationships with each other and are able to express their needs to adults who respond positively. Sensitive and appropriate interactions promote children's self-esteem. Children are eager to participate in the range of activities, which staff set out or help themselves from the toys on the low-level shelves. Children aged three and under make independent choices and some show persistence in completing an activity for example a puzzle. Staff working with babies offer continuity of care as a stable team. They are familiar with individual routines and adhere to parents wishes for example, the time and length of a baby's sleep. The staff talk to, hold and play with the children. Children achieve well because the staff use their understanding of early years guidance such as, Birth to three matters to provide good quality care and education to the children. The planning of activities allows for a balance between adult-led and child-led activities so children learn at their own pace. This should ensure that activities meet the individual needs of the children so that each child makes progress. However, the weekly plan is not readily available at the beginning of the week to inform all staff which activities to present. Children's achievements are documented in each child's individual developmental progress file and staff use this information to ensure children progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this well to plan the curriculum. They also have training in the Montessori method of teaching and provide specific experiences to allow children to learn through all five senses. The resources are arranged on low, open shelving and children become independent as they learn to collect their own resources, complete the task and put them away for the next person. The activities are linked to a theme and to a stepping-stone; in conjunction with observations of children and their individual play plans, this promotes children's individual learning. Staff consult children

about what to do enabling children to think and make their own decisions. For example, a variety of boxes and tubes are given to the group to decide what they might make from these items. The children are able to express sensible ideas such as making a penguin, and staff value the decision and help and guide them. Props such as posters of penguins are available so children have an idea about dimension. The task brought the group together in cooperation, they counted how many feet they need, use new words such as beak, decide tubes can be eyes because you can see through them, identify the colour of a penguin and where they live. This enjoyable activity alone provides learning opportunities across the six areas of the curriculum.

Children have good opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination through arts and crafts, role-play and dressing up. Staff provide an environment that reflects the background of the children and the wider community. Children can access resources from the continent boxes such as Australian artefacts and look at displays around the room for example, the Japanese dolls. Children use the computer with confidence controlling the mouse to achieve the task such as, matching pairs. The children cooperate and help each other, shouting hooray when the pair is matched.

Children are friendly and helpful. They tidy away, set the table and fill the water jugs. They are developing useful social skills and staff act as good role models for the children. Children use a range of small equipment with increasing dexterity and for the correct purpose such as, the hole-punch. Outside they are developing physical skills such as running and hitting the ball with a bat. However, the planning to improve gross motor skills does not provide sufficient challenge for children. The garden is not used to its full potential to enable children to for example, create their own challenges, balance, construct, roll and manoeuvre around obstacles. The children are able to attend a yoga class each week and each day quietly follow the circle on the floor while listening to calming music. This improves their control of their body and listening skills.

Effective use is made of time and resources during the session to include aspects of all areas of learning giving children opportunity to learn numbers, recognise letters and sounds, enjoy books and sing and dance. Children are improving their emergent writing skills and can recognise their written name.

Staff use a variety of teaching methods to help children learn, they ask questions that make children think. The key workers use an effective system to observe, monitor and record children's achievements in their development files, and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging as staff warmly greet them on arrival. All children are fully included in the nursery routine and positive interactions between staff and children are apparent throughout the day. Children develop an awareness of other cultures and traditions through planned activities and a good variety of easily accessible toys and resources, which promote positive images of the wider world such as artefacts from the continents of the world.

There are effective procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities although none currently attends the nursery.

Children's behaviour is good. They are beginning to learn what is right and wrong, have good manners, take turns and cooperate. Staff reinforce positive behaviour management with praise and encouragement and routines such as the good morning song when children acknowledge each other in the group. Children are beginning to learn valuable social skills such as sharing. They work co-operatively in small and large groups listening and helping each other when they are playing games. The staff provide good role models by being kind and friendly and children respond well to them.

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

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff actively seek parents' views about their child's interests and complete child profile forms before the child starts at the setting. This contributes to the children's well-being at the nursery and continuity of care. Staff ensure parents are kept informed on how their children are progressing and developing through regular daily feedback, reports and meetings such as bi-annual individual parent appointments. Parents receive written information about the setting and the Foundation Stage curriculum; they have access to policies and procedures, newsletter and a range of information on the notice board. Parents are invited to attend annual events such as the summer outing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are sufficient staff working with children to ensure their welfare and wellbeing. Effective vetting and recruitment procedures ensure children are protected and cared for by staff with a good knowledge and understanding of child development. However, the procedure to monitor access to the nursery in the morning is insufficient to ensure children's safety from people who are not vetted. Children's care and learning benefit because the staff team continue to update their knowledge and skills attending training workshops such as Birth to Three Matters. Strategies are in place to ensure that minimum staff qualification levels are met.

Children's care and enjoyment is enhanced as the premises are well organised and there is sufficient time for children to complete their self-chosen activities. Indoor and outdoor space is set out to provide appropriate play and learning opportunities for children. The adults are attentive to the children's needs and provide a child-friendly environment. This contributes to children's enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting.

The operational plan works in practice and record keeping systems promote children's health, safety, welfare and individual needs. However, the present registration system does not provide a clear indication of staff who work in the room, nor is it completed as children enter the room to provide an efficient roll call in an emergency. Documentation is regularly reviewed to be in line with current regulation, although some information is missing from the child protection policy and medical record.

Leadership and management of the setting are good. Staff members are aware of roles and responsibilities and key worker systems ensure children's individual development is fostered. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and Birth to Three framework and put this into practice to benefit the children. Systems to evaluate the provision and children's progress are successful. Consequently, there is sufficient planning and the activities have a proper focus. Management has a clear direction, systems to monitor and evaluate the nursery education and staff performance. This ensures staff are proactive in making changes that have a positive consequence on children's development. Staff maintain children's developmental records and include photographic evidence of children's achievements. These are used to inform future planning to meet children's individual needs. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Care inspection the provider was asked to record incidents and children's arrival, give parents the regulators details and practise the evacuation drill.

The provider has put systems in place which show evacuation drills, incident records and Ofsted details are provided to ensure the wellbeing of the children. Parents record the times of arrival and departure of their children and to further improve this system the provider intends to mark the children in as they enter their base room. This will ensure an accurate record is kept to safeguard children.

At the last inspection of nursery education the provider was asked to provide more opportunity for children to understand other cultures and beliefs, develop early writing skills and improve mathematical thinking through everyday activities.

The provider has greatly improved the provision for nursery education and children are able to extend their knowledge of the wider world and cultures other than their own through displays and planned activities. There are materials for mark making readily available and simple sums and calculations are undertaken in everyday activities and using the Montessori equipment which, enable children to improve their skills.

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.

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):

- obtain written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice and treatment
- improve the procedure for monitoring the front door to protect children from unwanted visitors; update the child protection policy to include a procedure to follow if allegations are made against staff
- improve the registration system to record children as they enter the room and to include staff present in the room

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):

- improve opportunities for effective physical development in the outdoor area by planning activities that provide appropriate physical challenges to increase skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement.

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