



# Holly Grange Montessori Nursery Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY275469
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Barbara Christine Wearing
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<b>Registered person</b>	Holly Grange Montessori Nursery Limited
<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?

Holly Grange Montessori Nursery opened in 1999. The nursery operates from five rooms in a converted detached house in the Edgeley area of Stockport. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery serves children from a wide area.

There are currently 64 children from eight months to four years on roll. This includes 14 children in receipt of funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round, except for a week during the Christmas period, the last week of August and all bank holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

There are 14 staff who work directly with the children; 10 of whom have a relevant childcare qualification and four who are working towards a qualification. The nursery also employs four support staff.

The principles of the nursery are based on the philosophies of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Information about the philosophy and curriculum is provided for parents.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean, well maintained premises. Therefore, they are protected from the spread of infection and cross contamination. Staff maintain high standards of hygiene as they follow the nursery's comprehensive policies and procedures. These include a cleaning rota, nappy changing procedure, health and safety policy and ensuring that children use their own, clearly labelled cups and bedding. Children become highly skilled in keeping themselves healthy as they are involved in daily routines, such as sweeping the floor and cleaning the tables before and after meal times and as staff and pictures demonstrate to children how to wash their hands thoroughly. Children are well taken care of in the case of illness as staff follow the effective medication and sickness policy.

Children enjoy a healthy, balanced diet. They are offered highly nutritious, freshly prepared snacks and meals and access water throughout the day. All children enjoy sociable mealtimes. Babies develop their independence as they feed themselves using fingers and appropriate utensils and are given support as necessary by the sensitive staff. Children develop an understanding of healthy eating through general discussions, activities and books and stories. After reading a book children are keen to state that they like vegetables and that they are good for you. Staff work closely with parents and are, therefore, aware of and cater for children's individual dietary and health needs.

Children of all ages benefit from daily opportunities for physical play both indoors and out throughout the year. During the warmer months children engage in a wider variety of activities outdoors including planting and caring for plants, using small wheel barrows and rakes and building with large wooden bricks and sand. External organisations run groups within the nursery that develop children's large muscle skills and coordination and their understanding of the importance of exercise and a healthy lifestyle.

Staff working with babies and young children ensure that their emotional well-being is fostered. They are affectionate and attentive, sensitive to their needs and follow their individual routines as discussed with parents.

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

The provision is good.

The nursery offers children a bright, clean, airy and safe environment. Children develop high levels of independence as they safely access the range of resources and materials available to them. These are of excellent quality, are well presented and in many areas of learning provide children with a huge variety of resources to develop their skills. All children use lots of natural resources. Younger children use some conventional toys, such as pull-a-long toys, musical and electronic toys. As they become older more specific Montessori materials are introduced alongside every day objects that develop children's learning in all areas. Younger children have ample space to fully explore and extend their chosen activity and develop their crawling and walking skills. However, on occasion older children are not able to extend their play fully as the floor area is restricted. Staff and children re-arrange the room to accommodate group activities that are planned or that children request.

The risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff carry out regular risk assessments and follow clear procedures, including the collection of children, outings and fire evacuation. All necessary fire, gas and electrical checks are carried out and staff supervise children closely. Children develop skills to keep themselves safe. For example, they hold on to a rope as they walk to the outside play area and staff discuss the importance of being safe in the car park. They have also had a visit from the local road safety officer.

Children are protected from harm as they are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant, experience, knowledge and skills. The setting has a child protection policy that is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, however, it is not sufficiently detailed. Staff are aware of their individual roles with regard to safeguarding children and parents are informed of the setting's responsibilities.

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

The provision is good.

Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to plan for the younger children. They are skilled in observing children and evaluating the play sessions. This information is used to inform the next short term plan and children's individual development records. Staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of each child's stage of development and progress, however, they are less clear of the next steps they intend to develop for individual children. These are often recorded in the daily diary or evaluations but are not easily accessible for each child.

Children are busy, interested and happy. Staff are skilled in their interactions with them, they give children appropriate challenges for their stage of development and talk to them in a cheerful manner, giving lots of praise and encouragement. When children choose colour recognition activities staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of each child's skills and extend the activity appropriately, enabling children to match, recognise and name colours. They ensure that the emotional and physical needs of babies are met and take spontaneous opportunities to develop their learning. For example, while waiting for lunch they point to their noses, eyes and fingers and sing familiar action songs. Babies enjoy freely choosing from the excellent

range of toys and resources and use all their senses as they explore. Staff are quick to respond to their verbal and non-verbal communications. Children are sociable, they welcome each other in the morning and count the number of children who are present. Children develop their language skills as staff chat to them, ask questions and share books, stories and pictures. They engage in some role play situations, for example, using a toy phone to chat to their mum and dad and using a pencil and pad to take a message. However, opportunities for children to extend their imaginary role play are limited. The amount and accessibility of resources enables children to practise their skills, consolidate their learning and become increasingly involved in their chosen activity. Children develop excellent fine motor and colour matching skills as they transfer different coloured pom-poms to their matching bowls using small tongs.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are highly skilled and engage in purposeful interaction with the children. They have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and are very effective at recognising and recording relevant and meaningful observations of children's progress towards the early learning goals. These are used when evaluating weekly plans, writing children's individual daily diaries, records of achievement and annual observation records. Next steps for children are recorded on the evaluation sheets of the weekly plans and within the daily diaries. However, these are not immediately accessible for individual children. The planning weaves the Montessori philosophy with the Foundation Stage curriculum, providing activities that stem from children's interests and that are meaningful to them. Children develop skills at their own pace as their activities are self-chosen and uninterrupted. Therefore, they are busy and show high levels of concentration. Children regularly revisit activities, allowing them to practise, consolidate and to be successful in their learning.

The atmosphere is calm with children exhibiting a high sense of self-control. They have fun in a sociable environment. They demonstrate an awareness of appropriate codes of behaviour, for example, using 'excuse me' when talking to both adults and other children. Children have many opportunities to develop their self-help skills, such as giving out the cutlery, napkins and serving food at meal times. Children initially work independently in their own 'work space' which is demarcated through the use of place mats. Partnerships and groups form spontaneously as children ask each other if they can join in. Staff interact positively with children who request their support or to extend an activity and learning opportunity. Children are confident. They express their feelings freely and are able to describe how others may be feeling when looking at picture cards of children in various situations.

Children have unlimited opportunities to develop their communication and thinking skills and are encouraged to ask questions. For example, during story time about a child not liking peas, one of the children asks if peas is all she has, the member of staff encourages the children to think about what else the child may have already eaten. The children enthusiastically make various suggestions. Children practise linking sounds to letters through planned activities and as they access a good selection of available resources. Some children write their names on their pictures, naming the letters correctly. Writing opportunities are provided for within some activities and children do practise making marks spontaneously when copying adult's activities. For example, pretending to do the register and writing daily diaries. However, resources for these are not readily available for children to adapt for their own purpose.

Children count and use mathematical language spontaneously during 'work time'. They develop an understanding of number, recognition of numerals and shape, measure and pattern through the many high quality resources. Staff demonstrate an interest and skill in developing children's learning in this area and support children well to ensure that the maths resources are used to their full potential, in a way that meets children's individual needs. Children have many opportunities for exploration and investigation of the natural world. For example, pouring liquid from one jug to another using a sponge to absorb any spillages, locating and matching air, land and sea on globes to pictures and jars containing the elements and hatching butterflies. Children develop their design and making skills as they use a variety of wooden building bricks and make paper fans. They have consistent access to glue but not to other joining materials. Children have the opportunity to gain computer skills and are confident and skilled at using technological equipment, such as changing the music in the CD player and controlling the volume.

Children demonstrate excellent fine motor skills as they handle tools, such as pincers, chopsticks and rolling pins. They enjoy opportunities to develop their coordination and large motor skills and benefit from regular physical play sessions run by an outside organisation.

Children are able to be freely creative and their work is valued and praised. They are taught how to care for the equipment and are skilled in cleaning the watercolour palettes with water sprays and cotton wool after they have finished. Children have limited daily opportunities to develop their imagination through role play. They sometimes initiate role play situations during outside play, such as making the climbing frame into a pirate ship and staff extend these activities with them. However, although children sometimes bring items from home, such as a doll and develop their own play experiences this play is inhibited due to restrictions of the physical environment and available resources. Thereby, hindering children's ability to fully explore and extend this area of play and learning. Children are exposed to a variety of musical styles and often have classical music playing in the background. They also have access to a variety of musical instruments.

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

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence, a high self-esteem and positive self-image. Staff and children treat each other with care and respect and there is a calm and friendly atmosphere within the nursery. A high priority is given to children developing self-control and working within clear codes of behaviour. Children work well within these boundaries and routines and soon become skilled negotiators. Children develop excellent self-help skills and a strong sense of belonging as low level equipment, storage and resources enable them to make choices independently and be highly involved in daily routines. This is demonstrated as children pour their own drinks with appropriate staff support, collect water for painting activities, water the plants and set tables for dinner. Staff observe children and work closely with parents. Therefore, they have a good understanding of children's individual health, dietary, social and emotional needs and religious and cultural beliefs. They ensure that these are reflected and well catered for within the provision. Children learn about the diversity of our society through the positive role models of staff, resources that portray positive, non stereotyped images and as they engage in activities

that teach them about various celebrations and festivals. The children's spiritual, moral and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. There are various effective ways in place for two way exchanges of information regarding children and the provision, thus, maintaining consistency for children. New parents receive an information pack on the setting and the Montessori philosophy. Information regarding the children's day and progress is shared via the use of a daily diary where parents are also encouraged to contribute. Children's individual development is discussed verbally at annual parents' meetings and records of achievement are constantly available with sections for parents to add comments. Feedback from parents is actively encouraged through monthly newsletters. Parents speak highly of the provision. They are pleased that their children are happy to attend, value the warm, friendly staff and the independence and skills that the children develop. Parents feel able to approach staff and any issues are dealt with promptly.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Staff organise their resources, time and daily routine well. As children develop they spend longer at their chosen activity, exploring, practising and consolidating their skills at their own level and pace. Children are based within small groups of between six and eight children and build close relationships with each other and consistent staff. The key worker system ensures continuity and enables good quality recording, assessment and planning. As children develop staff reorganise their rooms and resources in order to continue to meet their changing needs. The effective daily routine enables children to take part in a variety of activities indoors and out and to take part in sessions held by outside agencies. Children also benefit from well organised trips outside the nursery.

Children are safeguarded as they are cared for by staff who have undergone a rigorous vetting procedure. However, there is no system in place to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibility to inform the provider of any changes in circumstance that may effect their suitability to care for children. Children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution is promoted as they work in line with the policies and procedures. The majority of these are well written and comprehensive. However, not all records reflect recent changes to practice, up-to-date contact numbers or sufficient detail. Staff work well together as a team and qualified staff give clear direction to trainees and students. They demonstrate a good understanding of the Montessori curriculum and of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and Foundation Stage. Staff take a pride in their work and of the children's progress and development.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Senior staff work directly with the children and are able to monitor the nursery provision on an ongoing basis. There are good systems in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision and staff show a commitment to its continued progress as they identify and develop areas for improvement. Senior staff are good role models and are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. The manager has a clear vision for the setting with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. Staff have clear goals, attend training

and the setting has regular visits from their Sure Start development workers. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

At the previous inspection the provision agreed to plan and provide more outdoor opportunities for babies. Babies now benefit from spending time outside on a daily basis. They also agreed to review the procedures in place for conducting risk assessments of the premises. Comprehensive risk assessments are now in place for activities and the building and are regularly up-dated, thereby, further minimising the risk of accidental injury.

### **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):

- enhance children's individual records by including their next steps, thereby, making this information more easily accessible for staff and parents (also applies to nursery education)
- increase children's opportunities to further extend their role play (also applies to nursery education)
- devise a system to ensure that policies and procedures reflect correct, up-to-date information and current practices
- devise a system to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibility to declare any changes to circumstances which may affect their suitability to care for children.



### **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):

- provide further opportunities for children to write for a purpose, enabling them to share communication and information within their activities.

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)