



Lilliput Montessori Day Nursery (Coalville)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223230
Inspection date	16 January 2007
Inspector	Dianne Lynn Sadler
Setting Address	Railway House, Hotel Street, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3EQ
Telephone number	01530 815888
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Registered person	Lilliput Day Nurseries 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lilliput Montessori Day Nursery is one of four nurseries run by Lilliput Day Nurseries Ltd. It opened in 1999 and operates from a converted hotel near the centre of Coalville in the district of North West Leicestershire. A maximum of 66 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 07:30 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 79 children on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and have arrangements in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 15 childcare staff based at the nursery. Of these 11 hold recognised early years qualifications, including Montessori training, and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for appropriately in a clean, tidy environment. They stay healthy and thrive because staff follow effective policies and procedures which reflect current environmental health and hygiene guidelines. Procedures, such as staff wearing aprons and gloves when dealing with bodily fluids and using anti-bacterial spray on tables and nappy changing mats help reduce the risk of infection. This is further promoted by children not wearing outdoor shoes in the nursery rooms. Children are learning to understand and are becoming aware of good health and hygiene practices, which are promoted through the good support and guidance given by the adults. For example, older children brush their teeth after lunch and all children are learning the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating.

Children benefit from a varied range of nutritious meals, with mostly fresh produce being used, including fresh fruit and vegetables. Children also enjoy fresh fruit at snack-time three times a week. This ensures they are adequately nourished. Children can access drinks throughout the day and are given a choice of drinks at mealtimes and snack-time. Most use their own individual drinking bottles. There is a well written menu displayed for parents and the dietary needs of children are discussed with parents and recorded well, ensuring that children have their needs met appropriately.

All children are able to rest or be active according to their needs. The designated sleep areas in each room ensures children can sleep undisturbed and quiet areas in each room enable children to relax and select quieter activities such as reading a book. There are plans for all children to have daily opportunities to go outdoors and benefit from fresh air and exercise. On wet days, when children do not go outdoors, they enjoy opportunities to be active and promote their physical skills indoors. Older children have access to the dining area and the babies enjoy playing in the ball pool and throwing and catching balls. Older children also enjoy opportunities daily to practise their physical skills using the 'Topstart' programme, using imaginative play resources such as bean-bags in the shape of rabbits and enjoying new and exciting activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and mostly safe indoor and outdoor environment, which helps them feel secure and comfortable. The buildings entrance is kept very secure, with the use of a close circuit television camera and children are well supervised at all times. Effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children are kept safe. For instance, if a different adult is to collect a child, the parent gives details of the adult and an individual password is used. However, the risk assessment of the building and outdoor play area is insufficient. It is not carried out on a regular basis or dated. It does not identify all hazards. The risk of low-level windows being opened to gain fresh air has not been identified or the inappropriate use of

footwear, specifically by the older children. As a result children's risk of accidental injury is not minimised.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe equipment and play resources, appropriate to meet their different needs. Many resources are made of natural materials and all are easily accessed by children. For instance, books are displayed on a low-level shelves and baskets containing items linked to the Montessori teaching method are all stored at children's level, therefore developing their independence. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. Older children know to walk and hold the rail as they climb the stairs up to their play room. All children practise the emergency evacuation procedures and know they have to put their chairs under the table to prevent children tripping over them.

Children are protected from harm because staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in child protection and are aware of what action they are required to take if they had a child protection concern about any of the children. However, children's welfare is compromised as the written child protection policy is insufficient. It has not been updated and does not include an appropriate procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff. It is also not shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle and are confident in the setting due to appropriate support from caring staff. They enjoy their time in the nursery and are developing positive relationships with both adults and each other. Children benefit from a stimulating and interesting environment in which they are happy, content and secure. Their self-esteem and confidence is successfully promoted by seeing their work displayed throughout nursery. Children are involved in a wide range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and learning.

Children up to the age of two are learning to be effective communicators and competent learners. They are developing their confidence to explore their environment and enjoy using all their senses through appropriately planned activities. For instance, they benefit from investigating sensory bottles filled with coloured water and glitter and explore other materials such as wood, leather and sponge. Their communication skills are sufficiently promoted by staff through activities such as story telling, singing, constant conversation and questions. Consequently, babies and young children are learning to use language to communicate and are able to express their needs effectively.

Children aged two to three years in the nursery are settled and play happily with each other. They are beginning to make own decisions, explore and investigate. They confidently move from activity to activity and choose play resources for themselves, successfully developing their independence. They enjoy exploring the different sounds musical instruments make and use them when singing rhymes such as 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'. They sit and concentrate appropriately when tracing shapes and enjoy creative activities in the connecting creative room. They are able to explore with paint, collage, sand and water.

Staff adequately plan activities for babies and young children, and are beginning to link the planning to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff observe and record children's development, which shows the satisfactory progress being made. However, assessments are not used effectively to plan the next steps in children's learning, which compromises their learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Montessori method, which has a positive impact on children's learning, with children making good progress in some areas of learning. However, the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how it links with the Montessori method is insecure and not consistent. This results in children making more limited progress in some aspects within the areas of learning, such as calculation and some children not being sufficiently challenged. Staff have a clear understanding of how young children learn and progress. Consequently all children are included and supported. Staff use a good range of teaching methods to maintain children's interest. Staff know that the children learn better when they are happy and relaxed, they ensure children are well settled before they concentrate on their learning. Staff effectively help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world and there are a good range of resources to promote this. Children are motivated and keen to learn.

Staff plan a wide range of activities under each area of learning. However, planning does not link clearly to the stepping stones and does not give sufficient guidance to staff. Staff do not have a clear idea of the learning intentions for children. Therefore children do not always extend their learning and are not always provided with sufficient challenge. The assessment procedure is satisfactory. Staff observe and record children's development and clearly show the progress children are making. However, assessment records do not clearly show the starting points of children when entering the Foundation Stage, and do not include information gained from parents. Therefore the next steps planned for children may not be appropriate.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff on arrival. They are interested and engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities. Children assume responsibility for their personal care. Their independence is being successfully developed. For instance, they pour themselves a drink when needed from a jug available throughout the session. Children behave well and respond positively to the boundaries set. This results in a calm, caring environment where children take turns and show respect for each other and adults. Children can speak clearly and confidently, sharing their experiences, while others are able to make themselves understood through their actions. They use language for thinking and express their ideas well. For instance, when exploring an oval shape, they exclaim, 'it looks like an egg'. Children benefit from seeing print in the environment and show a good interest in books. They handle them appropriately and enjoy sharing stories with each other. Children recognise their names and are able to link sounds and letters. For instance, children recognise that 'trapezium' sounds like 'trampoline'. Children are developing good writing skills. They know how to form letters and use writing for a purpose. For instance, they write in diaries and make lists in the role play corner.

Children understand and confidently use numbers in their play. They count up to ten with ease and beyond. For instance, they know a pentagon has five sides and count three sides to a triangle. They are also exploring big numbers. Children can count to 16 and some know that 17 follows. Children demonstrate that they understand shape, size and measure. They can name and match shapes such as a trapezium, pentagon and oval as well as triangles, circles, squares and star shapes. When making a line of rods they know which is the shortest and longest and when building a tower they explore big and small. However, children are not using calculation as part of their practical activities and when using Montessori equipment. Consequently, all children are not developing their learning and more able children are not fully challenged. Children develop an initial sense of time and place. They know the day of the week today, yesterday and tomorrow and visit local places of interest such as the sensory park in Ibstock. Children gain sound knowledge of the environment and living things by growing flowers from bulbs and caring for the goldfish. They develop their exploration and investigative skills by going outdoors and discussing the changes that occur because of the different seasons. This is further promoted by exploring the shredded skin of a snake. Children are learning about every day technology. For instance they develop their skills using the computer and use every day items such as scales, mobile phones and compact disc players.

Effective use of the indoor and outdoor space, helps children develop their physical skills. Children move confidently, when negotiating their way around the main room and when playing outdoors. Children are able to ride wheeled toys outdoors and throw balls to each other indoors. The imaginative use of the parachute indoors enables them to practise travelling under, over and through successfully. They use one-handed tools competently as they paint their pictures and use scissors for cutting. Children manipulate small construction pieces and play figures with ease. They practise using fastenings such as zips on suitcases and correctly place small keys into padlocks to open them. Children recognise the importance of being healthy when cleaning their teeth after lunch and discussing the changes that happen in their bodies when active. Children enjoy taking part in action songs and have access to different musical instruments. Children are able to express themselves freely through painting and enjoy exploring items made out of natural materials such as wood, crystal and glass. They use their imagination when arranging dried flowers in a vase and when playing with the 'Russian dolls', pretending they are asleep. Children are able to name a wide range of colours competently. They are also learning to differentiate between different shades of colour and some children are able to find the darkest and lightest brick.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children receive care appropriate to their individual needs. Parents share information about children's care needs, preferences and cultural and religious needs, by completing a registration form and a care needs plan on admission. This ensures children receive care consistent with home and are fully included in the setting. However, the information parents receive is not sufficient. Parents receive an informative prospectus, regular newsletters and verbal information about care routines such as nappy changes and food intake. However, the 'Guidelines to Lilliput' document informing parents of the most important policies is not available. Also the complaints

procedure is not sufficient, compromising children's welfare. Although there is a system for recording complaints, not all complaints are listed.

Most children are being made aware of the wider society. Some staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as the wider world. Older children benefit from displays that show maps of the world, flags from different countries and ethnic dolls from a variety of different countries. All children celebrate festivals such as the Chinese New Year.

Clear, concise policies work effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. They enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other, and feel a sense of belonging, which helps them settle and feel confident. All children are warmly welcomed in the setting and children with additional needs are supported appropriately. Staff have a pro-active approach to inclusion. They foster close relationships with parents and other professionals to ensure children's needs are understood and met appropriately.

All children are valued and respected as individuals. Their confidence and self-esteem is being developed well by staff with the use of praise and encouragement throughout the day and by being awarded 'well done' stickers for their achievements. Children understand responsible behaviour and behave well. They take turns, share play resources and show respect for others. Therefore children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The behaviour policy is well written, understood by staff and effective in practice. Therefore, children understand the rules and boundaries and their behaviour is managed appropriately.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways which helps children progress and enables them to make a positive contribution. For example, children bring into nursery items from home such as a snake skin and parents with specific skills, such as an optician, put together a box of resources. Parents are informed about their children's progress and achievements by receiving an end of year report and by being encouraged to look at the assessment records. Parents are able to verbally share information with staff about their child's development observed at home, however, there is no record of this information, therefore the next steps planned for children may not be appropriate. Parents receive some information about the educational programme provided. They know of the themes planned for children and activities offered each day. However, they do not receive information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Consequently, children's development in all six areas of learning is not fully supported at home.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Effective procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff ensures children are cared for by staff who are suitable, qualified and experienced. Consequently children are well protected. Good induction procedures ensures staff are fully aware of nursery policies and procedures to maintain an appropriate standard of care for children. An interesting and stimulating environment is provided and staff are deployed effectively. For instance, adult to child ratios positively supports children's care, learning and play. Some policies, procedures and records are in place, which promotes children's health, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive

contribution. However, not all policies and records are sufficient, effective in practice and shared with parents, which compromises children's safety and welfare.

In general, there is a commitment to improving staff's knowledge and practice, which helps to broaden children's experiences and contributes to the quality of care provided, although training in 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage has not been fully accessed. The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff working with funded children are motivated and have developed a supportive team approach, aiming for good quality education for all children. The senior staff offers good guidance to less experienced staff and is committed to improving nursery education. For example, the improvements made since the last inspection ensures children are now making good progress and have more positive opportunities in their creative development. However, the overall monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education provision and quality of teaching is not sound. The strengths and weaknesses have not been identified and no clear direction has been set. This compromises the improvements in the organisation of nursery education and the outcomes for children.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to improve children's opportunities to access fresh drinking water, ensure children in the baby room benefit from going outdoors and ensure the written behaviour management policy is fully understood and implemented consistently by all staff. Successful improvements have been made in all these areas. All children now access drinking water throughout the day, most using their own individual water bottles and there are sufficient plans for children to access the outdoor play area regularly. This positively contributes to the good health of children. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively and consistently, which ensures children behave well and understand the rules and boundaries.

The nursery also agreed to improve the quality of children's individual care through the implementation of a key worker system and 'Birth to three matters'. Adequate improvement has been made. A key worker system is now in place, with staff understanding the needs of children, ensuring they receive appropriate care consistent with home. There are plans in place to implement 'Birth to three matters', with the deputy accessing training and reviewing systems for planning and assessment.

The nursery agreed to complete a comprehensive risk assessment of the building and outdoor play area, identify all hazards and minimise all risks. Limited improvement has been made. There has been one risk assessment completed since the last inspection. However, it is not dated and does not identify all hazards, which compromises children's safety.

Nursery Education

The nursery agreed to improve opportunities for children to be creative in art and design and be able to work for their own purpose using a range of different materials. Also to improve the current planning, observation and assessment systems by following the guidance for the Foundation Stage in order to implement individual learning programmes for children. Some

improvement has been made, but there are still some areas requiring further attention. Children now successfully access creative activities within the play room on a daily basis and are using their imagination in art, craft and role play situations. Staff are observing children's development adequately, and are planning their next steps in learning. However, the planning and assessment procedures are not sufficient, compromising children's learning and progress and resulting in some children not being sufficiently challenged.

The nursery agreed to improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and further develop curriculum evaluation to ensure any weaknesses are identified and addressed. No improvement has been made in these areas. The staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage is insecure and inconsistent. The system for evaluating the nursery education and quality of teaching is not sound. The strengths and weaknesses have not been identified. This results in children not being sufficiently challenged and making limited progress in some aspects of learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints regarding the staff's management of children's behaviour, suitability of staff, deployment of staff to adequately supervise children and meet their individual needs, the complaints procedure and parents sharing information with staff with regard to the children's individual needs. The complaints related to National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 3: Care, learning and play, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 11: Behaviour and National Standard 12: Partnership with parents and carers.

On 22nd March 2006 an investigation was carried out and actions were raised to improve practice. Insufficient response was received from the provision detailing what action had been taken and after a second visit, a compliance notice was issued in relation to National Standard 11: behaviour, National Standard 12: Partnership with parents and carers and National Standard 2: Organisation. A further visit was conducted to discuss actions taken and the registered person remains qualified for registration.

On 24th April 2006 an investigation was carried out and one action and one recommendation was raised to improve practice. A satisfactory response was received and the registered person remains qualified for registration.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure the risk assessment of the premises is conducted on a regular basis, dated and identifies all hazards and minimises all risks
- review and update the child protection policy and ensure it includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- ensure a record of all complaints is maintained
- demonstrate how all policies and procedures are effectively shared with parents.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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 children to develop mathematical knowledge and understanding regarding calculation
- improve the current planning system to show the learning intentions of children and links to the stepping stones
- further improve children's assessment records to clearly show attainment on entry into the Foundation Stage and information gained from parents
- ensure parents receive information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and are informed of their children's progress
- demonstrate how the provision for nursery education and quality of teaching is monitored and evaluated effectively to improve staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and ensure all children are sufficiently challenged and making progress in all areas.

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