



Datchet Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY340398
Inspection date	22 November 2006
Inspector	Jean Williams
Setting Address	Datchet Cricket Club, Riding Court Road, Datchet, Berkshire, SL3 9JW
Telephone number	01753 544352
E-mail	mbgillygee@aol.com
Registered person	Datchet Montessori School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Datchet Montessori School has been registered since 1996. It has recently changed owners. The Montessori School is registered to care for 26 children from two to five years of age. There are currently 31 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The setting serves families from the local surrounding areas.

The Montessori School operates from Datchet Cricket Club close to the centre of Datchet village. The group have the use of one large hall. There are toilets off the main hall, as well as a kitchen, which is out of bounds to the children, and storage space. There is a small enclosed garden and the children also have the use of part of the cricket field for out door play.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions run from 09:30 until 13:00 with an extended day facility available to 15:00.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

There are currently five staff members employed to work with the children. The group has a Montessori ethos and two of the staff hold a Montessori qualification. A visiting dance teacher attends the setting on a weekly basis and the children have access to regular computer lessons.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff carry out effective daily routines which mean that the children benefit from being cared for in an environment where the risks of the spread of infection are minimised. Children are learning the importance of following good personal hygiene routines and are given clear explanations about germs, from the staff. All the staff team hold current first aid certificates. There are systems in place to record accidents and the administration of medication, although some entries in the accident book do not include all of the required information and are not always signed by parents.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating and are offered crackers, dried and fresh fruit at snack time each day. There is a choice of milk or water offered, children pour their own drinks. Drinking water is also readily available throughout the session for children to help themselves.

Children are able to stay for lunch and bring food supplied by their parents. Snack and meal times are sociable, relaxed affairs where children sit and talk to one another. They are joined by staff and are well supervised. Staff members are thoroughly informed of the children's individual dietary needs.

Children are learning about the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air. They participate in daily outdoor activities which help to develop their co-ordination and skills, for example, when joining in with the parachute games and playing football. Children would, however, benefit more from the outdoor sessions if they were planned and there were more resources provided, so that there is more purpose to the time they spend outside.

The staff plan time for physical indoor exercise, when the children have good opportunities to use the equipment to practise their balancing and climbing skills. There is a visiting dance teacher who attends the setting on a weekly basis. Children enjoy their dance lessons and are developing a good sense of rhythm and spatial awareness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from attending a nursery school where they and their parents are given a warm welcome by the staff team. Parents are invited into the building to settle their children. The premises are light, bright and clean with the children's artwork attractively displayed on the

walls which gives them a sense of ownership and belonging. As a result they enter the nursery school confidently and happily.

Children are able to move freely and safely around the setting and the outdoor play area. There is a small enclosed garden used in the summer as well as part of the cricket field. In the winter the garden area becomes too boggy so the children make use of part of the cricket field. Staff are vigilant in carrying out regular daily checks of the outside area to ensure it is safe and clean before the children go outside to play. Risk assessments are also carried out regularly on all areas of the building used by the children to ensure that they are safe and free from potential hazards. The door to the playgroup room is kept closed during the session; late arrivals and visitors knock at the door to gain entry. Whilst there is an emergency evacuation procedure in place and regular fire drills are carried out, they are not recorded in sufficient detail. The fire blanket is not fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions which could prove hazardous if there were a fire.

Attendance registers for the children and staff are well maintained and up to date, a visitors book is also in place.

The playgroup is well equipped with good quality furniture and resources that are safe, clean and well maintained. This enables staff to make flexible arrangements within the room. Children move confidently around the room, selecting their activities from the wide range of resources and equipment available. All of the resources are stored and presented to enable the children to make their own choices and decisions about their play. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children opportunities to actively engage in floor or table top activities, as well as enjoying time to relax and share books in a comfortable area.

Children who attend the setting are safeguarded because staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and the reporting procedures to follow for child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the setting happy and confident. They are eager to learn and have formed close relationships with members of staff and their peer group. Staff know the children well and have built up good relationships with them and their families. The children settle quickly, making independent choices of activities from the wide range of resources. They engage in their chosen activities to a high level and show persistence such as when building towers out of Duplo or stickle bricks. They participate eagerly in planned activities, for example, they enjoyed decorating Christmas Stockings and making the pine cones sparkle. All children are well supported by the staff in their play and development.

The staff make clear plans for the indoor activities but there is currently little planning in place for outside play. Children's achievements are noted and there are efficient systems in place to record their developmental progress. These records would benefit from having a clear starting point. Children's developmental progress could be tracked in an improved manner by the introduction of baseline assessment. Children have regular opportunities to play outside, there

is plenty of space for them to run and expend their energy, and they would benefit from the use of more resources during outdoor play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from an interesting, planned curriculum, however, learning intentions are not always identified in order to provide for the children's individual progress. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and are implementing it well. Staff work well as a team and work directly with the children. They provide good opportunities for the children to develop and extend their vocabulary through the interesting conversations that they engage the children in. Staff observe children's development and make records appropriately in their files. There is a very good system in place to evaluate the activities although they do not always record what the children have achieved during the activity. At the present time the evaluation records are not used to influence the planning.

Children have developed very good relationships with each other and familiar adults. They show kindness and consideration to one another when they play together. They have good concentration, and show high levels of engagement and determination to finish their chosen activity or task.

Children are confident to engage in conversations with one another and known adults and are able to speak in large groups. They have wide vocabularies. Children enjoy stories as a group or independently. They know how to use books and understand that print runs from left to right. Children show a clear interest in sounds and letters. They enjoy writing simple words and are able to recognise and write their own names.

Children show an interest in counting in every day situations, such as how many children are present. They are becoming confident in recognising various shapes such as the child who told the inspector that she had drawn an upside down triangle. There are good practical opportunities for children to solve problems, such as when building with Duplo and stickle bricks. Through the regular use of Montessori equipment children have frequent opportunities to match, sequence and compare. Children use mathematical language competently in their every day play, such as more than, smaller than, taller than. Regular cooking activities mean that children are conversant with volume and weight.

Children enjoy nature study and learn about the world in which they live from the planned projects. Through the visiting teacher they have good opportunities to experience and learn computer skills and are proud to see their printed work displayed.

Children have good opportunities for physical play both indoors and outside. They are learning to balance, hop and skip through the weekly dancing classes held by the visiting dance teacher. They also have daily opportunities to run around and play outside in good weather.

There are very good opportunities for children to develop their creativity and imagination when they participate in the various art and craft activities, such as collage and painting at the easel.

They also have regular opportunities to make music with instruments and participate in regular dance and music and movement activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of the children's individual needs and interests and respond to them in a very positive way. Staff have good relationships with the children, they treat them with respect and are proactive in responding to their requests; as a result, they are confident and happy in the setting. The children's behaviour is very good. Staff work as a team, they use positive behaviour management strategies and give the children consistent boundaries. The staff give the children much praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements which helps to build up their self-esteem. Children are learning to take turns and to share; staff encourage them to respect one another. They are also learning to respect toys and the equipment through the regular daily routines of preparing for an activity and putting it away when they have finished. Children learn about themselves and the wider world through planned activities and discussions, such as talking about and acknowledging festivals such as Diwali and Christmas. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

The setting has a designated member of staff with responsibility for Special Educational Needs. There are currently no children attending the setting who need support with learning difficulties.

Partnership with parents is very good. Prospective parents are provided with clear information about the setting. Parents are kept informed about the setting and the planned activities through regular newsletters. The setting displays a notice board outside the front door with the planned activities listed for the week; this means that parents are able to share in their child's learning. All parents interviewed stated that they are very happy with the service that the setting provides.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. The staff team work well together and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The staff group hold regular meetings to plan the curriculum and to discuss the children's progress.

There are good strategies in place to ensure that staff attend regular training courses and they are supported well by the joint managers.

Children have very good relationships with staff, who have completed the vetting procedure to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The policies and procedures are in place and are implemented to ensure that that children's care and welfare is fully promoted. There are good systems in place to ensure records are well documented and kept up to date. The group has firm practices in place which ensure records are retained for the required number of years. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first inspection since registration.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- ensure that the accident records are completed fully and that they are signed by parents
- ensure that the fire blanket is fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions and make sure that records of fire drills are recorded in full
- ensure that planning for outdoor play takes place and provide plenty of resources for children to use

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 that evaluation records state if the planned learning outcomes have been met
- use the evaluation records to influence the planning, to ensure that the next stage of the children's learning needs are provided for

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