



Lemon Tree Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341292
Inspection date	24 January 2007
Inspector	Rebecca Elizabeth Khabbazi
Setting Address	St Mary's Church Hall, Purley Oak Road, Sanderstead, Surrey, CR2 0NY
Telephone number	0208 651 5061
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Registered person	Lemon Tree Montessori Limited
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?

Lemon Tree Montessori is an established nursery which was registered under new ownership in 2005 and moved to new premises in November 2006. It operates from a main hall and a separate side room in the grounds of St. Mary's church in Sanderstead. There is an enclosed area for children's outside play. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:15 to 16:00, during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 51 children aged from two years to five years old on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff who work with the children. Of these, six hold relevant early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support

from the local authority through an Early Years Advisor, and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children begin to learn about simple good hygiene practices when they line up to wash their hands before they eat, and brush their teeth after lunch. They use the liquid soap provided and dry their hands with paper towels, which helps prevent the spread of infection. Staff follow clear hygiene procedures in most areas, for instance they wipe tables with anti-bacterial spray before they are used. However, there is no written guidance for staff regarding nappy changing procedures, and sometimes hygiene practices in this area are inconsistent. Children are taken good care of if they have an accident or feel unwell as there is always a staff member on duty who has a first aid qualification. Clear systems are in place to record any accidents children have and any medicine they need to be given, which protect children's health and ensure parents are kept informed.

Children benefit from nutritious mid-morning and afternoon snacks, and enjoy helping themselves to slices of fruit and pouring their own drinks of milk or water. Parents are given useful information on suitable foods for children who stay for a packed lunch, and any dietary needs and allergies are clearly displayed for staff reference. All children have daily opportunities for vigorous physical play, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They shriek with laughter as they run around outdoors, enjoying the fresh air, taking a turn on a bike, learning to walk on stilts or to roll a giant snowball along the ground to make a snowman. Indoors, children practise their physical skills as they move their bodies to music, extending their arms and spinning around as they pretend to be a snowflake. They develop control and co-ordination as they learn practical life skills such as managing buckles and fasteners on clothing or carefully pouring liquid from container to container.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and well maintained environment, which is clean, bright and welcoming. Staff spend time setting up the premises before children arrive, and space is well organised so that there is a separate area for younger children and plenty of room to play. Children can easily help themselves to the wide variety of play materials and Montessori resources, which are all kept clean and in good condition. This helps ensure they can play safely.

Staff are vigilant about supervising children at all times, while also allowing older children to take appropriate risks and develop independence, for instance when they use the toilets on their own. Effective risk assessments ensure that potential hazards are identified and addressed, which helps reduce children's risk of accidental injury. Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe when they are gently reminded why they mustn't run inside or climb onto the furniture. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children quickly gain confidence at the setting, and new children are supported sensitively as they become familiar with the daily routines. Younger children have their own separate base area, where they choose from activities and resources that are suitable for their age and stage of development. They enjoy building with bricks, sitting cuddled up with staff for a story, or rattling and shaking instruments in time with a song. Staff caring for children aged under three years old have an understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and combine this with the Montessori method to provide activities and experiences based on children's individual needs. Children throughout the setting benefit from a varied routine that keeps them occupied and stimulated throughout the day.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of how children learn and develop and the expectations for children's learning in the Foundation Stage. They make detailed assessments of children's needs and starting points when they first attend the setting, and use these to plan an individualised programme of activity for each child. Activities therefore help children build on what they already know and can do, and effectively support their progress towards the early learning goals. Children take part in a wide variety of stimulating and interesting activities and experiences indoors, and since the setting moved to its new premises they have also been able to enjoy spending time in the garden. Staff make good use of spontaneous outdoor learning opportunities, such as collecting fallen leaves in the autumn, or helping children make a snowman when it snows. However, they do not currently plan specific activities for outdoor play time and use of the outdoor area has not yet been fully developed to support children's learning across all areas of the curriculum.

Children have good relationships with staff and each other, and are eager to greet their friends at the beginning of the day. They are keen to communicate and they use language confidently to express their ideas at circle time and chat to their friends. Children show an interest in books and stories. Through well planned individual sessions and daily routines such as finding their name, children begin to recognise familiar words and identify the sounds that letters make. Children learn about number, shape, size and measure through practical activities such as moulding the play dough, and when using Montessori materials such as number rods and spindles. They confidently count how many children are here today, and during number songs they work out how many sausages are left when some are taken away.

Children experience a range of activities that stimulate their imaginations. They paint freely at the easel, select materials to cut, stick and create pictures, and explore sound and rhythm in a music session. They dress up as a princess 'from a castle far, far away' or sit down together to make a cup of tea with the tea set. Staff plan regular cooking activities, such as making pancakes, where children note the changes that occur as new ingredients are added to the mixture. Children enjoy project work on topics such as transport, animal hibernation, harvest, or birds, which encourage them to investigate the world around them. They show awe and wonder as the snow falls, exploring the new sensations it brings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and valued as individuals. They take part in a range of activities that help them develop a positive view of the wider world and begin to value diversity, for instance when they celebrate the Chinese New Year or make food for Diwali. Children play with a range of resources that represent different backgrounds and cultures, and staff have created posters to display around the room showing images of the children who attend the setting. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well, as there are clear systems in place for assessing and monitoring children's needs and using outside support as required. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children show high levels of independence within the setting and quickly learn to help themselves to materials from the shelves, pour their own drinks at snack time, and help tidy away the things they have used. Staff gently remind children to be kind to one another, share and take turns. This creates a calm atmosphere where children are familiar with the rules and expectations and learn to work harmoniously with one another.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are kept informed about the setting through the prospectus, notice board and regular newsletters. Staff welcome parents into the setting and are happy to exchange information on a daily basis. As well as this, parents receive written reports and have a meeting to discuss their child's progress each term. They are also given information about topics and suggestions for follow-up activities at home, and children take home books each week to share. This helps ensure parents are fully involved in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Space and resources at the setting are well organised, ensuring that children can move freely and safely, readily access materials for play and learning, and are appropriately supervised by staff. Effective recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by staff who are suitably qualified and vetted, and who have a sound understanding of child development. There are good staff ratios at the setting, which means that children receive a high level of individual and small group attention. Staff work well together, sharing tasks and responsibilities, and they are kept up to date through regular staff meetings. This helps ensure that policies and procedures work well in practice. All required documentation that promotes the health, safety and welfare of the children is in place. There are policies and procedures relating to complaints from parents in place, but these have not yet been updated in line with new requirements.

The leadership and management of the nursery education provision is good. The provider is strongly committed to continual development and provides a clear sense of direction. Effective systems to monitor and review the service provided are in place. This ensures any areas for improvement are promptly identified and addressed. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

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.

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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 complaints policies and procedures are updated in line with new requirements, and are shared with parents
- ensure staff follow consistent good hygiene practices when changing children's nappies

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):

- develop the use of the outdoor area, in order to support children's learning across all areas of the curriculum

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