

East Lane Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY222681 |
| Inspection date | 18 May 2007 |
| Inspector | Jennifer Devine |
| Setting Address | 128 East Lane, Wembley, Middlesex, HA0 3NL |
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| Registered person | Mrs A Pajpani |
| 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?

East Lane Montessori is run by a private provider. It opened in 2002 and operates from three rooms within a community centre in Wembley, in the London borough of Brent.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:30 to 15:00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged two to five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs five staff. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development Partnership in Brent and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well being are well promoted within the setting. They are cared for in a warm and clean environment where levels of hygiene are well maintained. Children are learning about the importance of good personal hygiene and are aware of the importance of washing their hands at appropriate times. Staff take steps to reduce the risk of cross infection such as ensuring children do not attend if they are unwell. Most staff hold a valid first aid certificate which enables them to confidently deal with any medical emergencies. Accident and medication records are well maintained. However, not all children's parents have given their written consent for emergency medical treatment and this compromises children's welfare in the event of an emergency occurring.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of fruit with water or milk to drink. They can independently help themselves to a snack or drink throughout the morning. Parents provide a packed lunch for their children to eat at mid day, which is healthy and nutritious. The registered provider works together with parents to ensure they are well informed about healthy options. The nursery stores the packed lunches in the refrigerator to ensure they remain fresh and consumable. Children sit at the table for meal times and eat in a relaxed and social atmosphere. Children learn about healthy eating when covering topics on foods. For example, recently they made a display on Indian vegetables, pulses and spices and gained an awareness of the nutritional content of these foods.

Children enjoy regular fresh air and exercise which contributes in their good health. They enjoy playing in the garden which is generally well organised to enable them to extend their physical skills. They confidently run around and develop an awareness of space around them. They thoroughly enjoy making a bridge from large wooden crates where they can move underneath and climb confidently onto the top of the crates, jumping and landing safely onto the grass. They enjoy riding tricycles around where they steer and navigate around objects with ease. Children are developing good fine motor skills and hand to eye coordination during activities such as when they use pencils to draw, use play dough implements to roll and cut and when pouring jugs of water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The staff provide a warm welcome to the children and their parents. The setting is clean, well maintained and attractively decorated with displays of children's artwork. The arrangement of the resources and equipment means that children's independence skills are well promoted, they are also able to move around safely and freely. For example, low level storage units at children's height enables them to choose and access resources easily. Overall, resources are in a good condition, apart from some tricycles which are old and worn.

The children are well supervised due to the good deployment of staff. The staff are either seated at activities with children or are close by to offer support when needed. Staff are aware about safety within the setting. Daily risk assessments are carried out to ensure all areas remain safe. The premises are secure and kept locked to prevent any unwanted visitors gaining access. Parents are asked to sign their children in the register on arrival but sometimes the register is inaccurate and this compromises children's safety in the event of an emergency situation.

Children practise fire drills regularly which helps them gain an understanding of fire safety issues. Records of fire drills are well maintained as required.

Staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of signs and symptoms of child abuse and understand the reporting procedure to follow if concerned about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, content and secure within the nursery environment. The nursery follows the Montessori philosophy and younger children are provided with very good opportunities to explore and investigate a wide range of interesting activities. All children are developing their independence as they choose an activity from the low level shelves and then when they have finished they are learning to tidy away afterwards. Children also have access to a range of imaginative play resources such as when playing in the home corner where they use the working play microwave or washing machine. Younger children are developing their friendships and play well together, sharing and taking turns. Children make good progress in their social skills as the staff provide a caring environment which teaches children the importance of being kind and considerate to each other. They ensure children are kept well informed about nursery events and welcome visitors, taking time to introduce them to the children and explaining the purpose of the visit. This results in the children being confident and self assured. Older children provide good role models to the younger children as they offer help and guidance with activities, often inviting them to come and play a game. Younger children particularly enjoy the sensorial Montessori equipment where they investigate and explore. For example, a child spends time carefully pouring water from one jug to another, then uses the sponge to soak up any spills.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching is good. Children benefit from a well balanced curriculum because staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They have a very good knowledge of incorporating Montessori teaching methods into the curriculum. Planning of the curriculum is linked to the stepping stones and identifies clear learning intentions for individual children. Staff are currently developing individual portfolios where children's progress is recorded and the next steps of learning are then identified. Staff provide a good balance of adult directed learning and allowing children time to play alone. They are skilled in extending children's vocabulary by asking open ended questions to make children think.

Children's attitudes to learning are very positive, they are highly engaged and motivated throughout their time at nursery. The children spend extended periods of time concentrating on their chosen task. For example, two children sat looking at books together in the book corner. They were totally engaged and studying the pictures of a fire engine book and were able to talk and share their knowledge. Children have very good relationships with each other and adults. They show kindness and consideration to each other as they play together. They thoroughly enjoy playing games as a group and understand about sharing and taking turns. For example, when playing a game children wait patiently for their turn and understand about giving others a chance to think and only helping them if they ask for help. Children are highly confident speakers and engage in conversations with each other and adults. The children are developing self confidence and esteem as they make valuable contributions and express their own thoughts at circle time. Children are excited and talk eagerly about plans for the nursery's forthcoming fifth birthday. Children are thinking about songs they would like to sing and what

party clothes they are planning to wear. Children have very good opportunities to develop their early writing skills, as a result many of the older children are writing recognisable letters and are able to clearly write their own names. However, there are limited chances for children to extend their writing by labelling their own work or writing captions on displays as currently they are all written by staff. Staff are very knowledgeable in teaching children letter sounds and linking this to words. Children play the 'I can build simple words' game where they think about the letters needed to make a three letter word and sound out the letters. Children are developing their number and problem solving skills as they participate in a wide range of activities. Children confidently count on their fingers up to 10 when singing number songs. Older children are beginning to understand the order of numbers as they play games where they line up number puzzles. Children use Montessori beads to learn about simple addition and subtraction, and mathematical language such as more or less than. During circle time children use words such as clockwise and anti clockwise when deciding who is going to start the 'hello' song.

Children are keen to explore and investigate the environment, they enjoy using the magnifying glass to look closely at insects or other things of interest. They use a range of programmable toys such as floor pixies and are beginning to use the digital camera with confidence. They take interest in the local environment when they go out on short trips to the shops and look closely at features such as public telephone boxes and bus stops. As a result children's understanding and questioning skills are further developing. Children have good opportunities to develop their knowledge of colour and shape whilst painting at the easel. Although they do have good opportunities for being involved in creative art work this tends to be for a purpose such as for a wall display and everyday creative art activities is limited. Children thoroughly enjoy singing and often choose to sing on their own to the group. They use their imagination to express their ideas during play and re enact favourite stories such as 'Red riding hood'. Staff use this imaginative play to bring in other learning such as talking to children about 'stranger danger' with the wolf.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is of a good standard and appropriate for their age. Children have a good understanding of the behavioural expectations of the nursery and share and take turns. They are learning to be respectful to each other and to be aware of each others feelings. Staff have a great deal of respect for the children and give them time to think and share their thoughts. They are aware of individual children's needs which promotes children's happiness and security. For example, children are not expected to sit down for circle time and can choose to play in the adjoining room. Children are provided with a good range of resources that reflect positive images of diversity, such as puzzles, books, maps, globes, and artefacts from different countries. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in various celebrations such as for Diwali and Eid. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The setting has a clear understanding of the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery works closely with parents and any outside agencies to offer appropriate support when needed.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff welcome parents into the setting, they make themselves available to exchange information and learn about the children and their routines. Children benefit from this good partnership because it ensures their needs are known to staff. Parents are encouraged to book times to discuss their child's development at regular intervals where

records of achievement and portfolios are shared. Parents are very active in the nursery setting, they are willing to help out with organising social events and are in the process of developing a newsletter to be published regularly. Parents' comments indicate they are very happy with the care and education that their children receive from the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision is well managed, organised and resourced. Children's welfare is safeguarded because robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are deployed appropriately and work well together, having clear roles and responsibilities. Most policies and procedures are implemented effectively to promote children's care and well being.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and Montessori curriculum, which has a positive impact on the achievements of the children. The owner/manager has sound leadership qualities and she ensures her staff receive support. They receive regular supervision and are encouraged to attend further training to enhance their knowledge and skills. The owner/manager keeps up to date with relevant changes by attending conferences, training and meeting with the early years advisory team on a regular basis. Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the nursery education offered.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the nursery has made improvements in the care and education the children receive.

Staff have developed their understanding of child protection issues through attending training and this ensures children's welfare is maintained. Accident records are clearly maintained and all fire exits are clearly identifiable, which protects children. The flexible organisation of the routine allows children to complete their play or re visit an activity if they wish. The opportunities for children to use climbing equipment has been developed by providing large wooden crates which the children can build and climb onto. A number of new technological toys have been recently purchased which encourages children to find out about how things work and children take part in various activities where they can record mathematical findings such as when they measured and recorded their hand spans.

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

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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 written parents permission is obtained for emergency medical treatment for all children
- ensure the register of attendance is accurately maintained with children's times of arrival and departure

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):

- continue to develop the assessment methods used for recording children's development (applies to care also)
- develop ways to include children's own labels or captions on displays
- enhance the opportunities for children to experience a greater range of creative art activities

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