

# Happy Days Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137801
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Daphne Prescott
<b>Setting Address</b>	Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0RQ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Margaret Mary Dillane
<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?

Happy Days Montessori School is privately owned. It opened in 1990 and operates from its own building attached to a social club in Wembley Park in the London borough of Brent.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the school at any one time. The school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:30 on Mondays and 09:15 to 15:00 Tuesday to Friday, term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children aged two to under five years on roll. Of these 25 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider community. The school currently supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The school employs six staff, all staff which includes the provider and manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The school subscribes to the Montessori method of education and is a Montessori accredited school.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted as the premises are maintained to a good standard of cleanliness. They gain an effective understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. Children spend time washing their hands after the toilet or before lunch. Staff are available to support the younger children helping them to gain practical skills to turn off the taps without wasting the water. Children's health is protected because staff are well informed about their medical conditions. Some staff have relevant first aid qualifications. Procedures are in place for recording accidents and administering of medication for maintaining good health. Parents are informed of any accidents. However, a parent signature is not obtained to acknowledge the entry in the accident book for the wellbeing of children.

Although the parents supply their child's lunch each day, the school provides their snacks. Children help themselves to easily accessible, enjoyable and healthy snacks at a time suitable to them ensuring children's concentration and learning is not disturbed. They independently help themselves to snack, pour their drinks and staff encourage conversations on the benefits of healthy eating. Parents are encouraged to provide a healthy packed meal and these are suitably stored in a refrigerator until lunch time.

Children are developing well physically as they have the opportunity to run around and generally benefit from outdoor play within a secure environment. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they move with control and co-ordination. Children enjoy running and balancing and they are beginning to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when active. Indoors, they use a range of equipment and practical life exercises to develop competent small motor control. Children pour small quantities of water accurately, clear up any spills and use appropriate tools with play dough.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and child-friendly environment. They benefit from the meaningful organisation of resources linked to the Montessori teaching approach. Resources are safe, well made and of good quality, many in natural materials. Children have good opportunities to exercise their independence by being able to self-select the resources available for them from the open-fronted shelves. Play resources are stored and displayed attractively and appealingly for children.

Children are safe and secure on the premises because the policies and procedures in place are followed by staff to promote children's safety and welfare. The safety of children is important to staff, and any potential dangers are identified and quickly reduced. High priority is also given to making sure children will be safe in an emergency. The fire drill is practised regularly to ensure that all children are taken to safety quickly in an emergency. Staff work directly with the children in the different areas of the rooms and in the garden. Therefore, they are well supervised at all times. Children are learning to keep themselves safe. They learn to carry their chairs safely and staff ensure children understand how to use scissors with care. Staff ensure that the school is well secured and that anyone wishing to gain entry is suitably identified before gaining access. However, not all visitors are asked to sign in and record their arrival and

departure times to further promote the children's welfare. Risk assessments are regularly carried out. This helps staff to ensure that the facilities remain suitable for use by the children.

Children's well-being is also well protected because staff have a clear understanding of their role in relation to child protection issues. They know the indicators of abuse and the procedure to be followed for reporting concerns. There are procedures in place to ensure that staff who are going through checks are never left alone with children.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at school. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the daily routine. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and use the Montessori approach and the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a varied range of activities to enhance children's development. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations; records of children's achievements are presented and shared with parents. Younger children play enthusiastically with a good variety of stimulating toys and resources. They are supported by kind and caring staff who are able to respond to their individual care, learning and welfare needs. Children laugh and have fun as they relate well to the staff. Consequently, they become confident to express their needs and wishes. New children are gently introduced to the routine and eagerly participate once established, as older children are good role models for them.

Children are motivated and engrossed in a broad range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities. They are enthusiastic as they make choices about their activities. Children enjoy exploring different mediums such as play dough, paint, pulses and they use a wide range of appropriately sized tools. For example, they use tongs and spoons to transfer objects from one container to another, thread and sort different objects.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Montessori approach and the links with the Foundation Stage. They understand how children learn and of the next possible steps in their development. Children's written records of assessment clearly identify the progress children are making through the Montessori approach and early learning goals. Assessment is thorough and the information gained used effectively to guide planning. Staff skilfully observe children's efforts and respond appropriately to them. For example, they sit with children on a one to one basis ensuring they can complete the tasks satisfactorily. Children have appropriate chances to reflect on their play and staff support this learning in a positive manner, intervening only when necessary. Staff have high expectations, explain clearly and encourage children to think. They are purposely involved with activities holding their attention. For example, children build their own shop out of wooden bricks and set up the till as they wait for customers. Other children have a great time pretending to drive the bus to the shop, staff encourage other children to become involve and they talk about the things that they are going to buy.

Children enjoy being in each other's company and demonstrate this by playing cooperatively together for extended periods. They are learning about taking turns and sharing. Children are curious to explore newly set out activities, and to show their handiwork to others with pride. They enjoy the social experience of eating together and sharing personal experiences with each other while they have snack and lunch. Children are developing an extensive understanding of

number, reading and writing through activities and equipment which are designed to build on what they know and challenge them to explore further. They have good opportunities for developing writing skills, and are beginning to understand that writing has meaning. For example, several children write their own name. Children recognise their names and display them on their art work. They count regularly in a variety of practical activities and routines. For example, children are assisted to count up to 20 as they measure tables with a measuring tape. They talked about how long the table is and happily go off to find other furniture to measure.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted. Children have the opportunity to use information and communication technology by operating simple programmable resources. They also learn about nature through project work on the life cycle of a frog, and particularly enjoy digging in the garden and watering plants. Children enjoy a demonstration of the qualities of magnetism and quickly understand what is magnetic as they test different objects within the classroom. They are captivated whilst exploring the properties of the water and soap whilst washing up their cup or dish after snack. Their knowledge and understanding of the wider world is developed through activities covering the main festivals from other countries. They also learn about different parts of the world through using maps of different continents and discussion. Children manipulate pencils, scissors and glue spreaders with skill, as well as developing large motor movement through balancing games both indoors and outdoors. However, older and more able children are not offered daring and challenge in their physical play, as large apparatus to develop climbing is not available.

Children show excitement when singing familiar songs, and join-in enthusiastically with action rhymes. They have a lovely time as they actively take part in music and movement sessions. They are learning about the different instruments' played in an orchestra and the sounds that the different instruments' make. They listen carefully to the music, closing their eye's as they pretend to play the violin with great interest and feeling as they move their bodies in time to the music being played. Children benefit from good opportunities for creative play. They explore colour and texture and they particularly enjoy and benefit from the free access to the creative resources. They use paper, scissors and sellotape and other materials to express themselves and make complex design through their art and design. Children's work is respected as staff encourage children make their own envelopes to store their cuttings.

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

The provision is good.

Children understand their own needs and begin to respect the needs of others. They respect each other working alone on their work mats. Behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Children are confident, self assured and can work and play well on their own or with others. They can freely discuss their emotions with an adult and each other. Staff are accomplished and sensitive in their management of children and their behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are treated as individuals by being allowed time to progress at their own pace, for example, finishing their meal without being hurried. They are also valued and respected by staff, and given appropriate praise and encouragement to enhance self-esteem and confidence. Children with English as an additional language are supported within the school. They settle well because staff ensure that they find out some basic words in the child's first language.

Children are learning about the world in which they live as they have access to resources that promote positive images of different cultures and varying needs. They learn about festivals and traditions celebrated in the local and wider community. Children with learning difficulties

or disabilities are welcome in the school. Staff have a positive attitude towards this area of childcare. The manager is aware of her responsibility as a service provider to act in the best interest of a child. Staff, parents and external agencies work together to meet each child's requirements. There is a secure system to quickly identify children's needs and ensuring they receive appropriate support strategies.

Children benefit from the friendly interaction between staff and parents. Detailed information about the school and the service it provides is available for parents. This includes the policies and procedures. Parents complete a developmental document which is used as an induction for the children. Verbal information is exchanged daily with parents. Regular newsletters are produced, and an information board is displayed to keep parents informed of any events.

The partnership with parents and carers in relation to nursery education is good. They are provided with information which explains the care and education that is provided for their children. In addition, parents are informed about the activities the school is working on to enable them to reinforce the learning intentions at home. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. The key worker scheme ensures parents have a full discussion about their child's progress during the parents' evenings. Parents commented that they are very pleased with the school. They are very happy with the care, education and the progress their children are making.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The provider and manager is committed to the promotion of high quality childcare through encouraging staff to attend relevant courses to increase their knowledge and skills. Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation throughout the school. Staff are well deployed in the school allowing children to receive appropriate adult attention. They ensure that all children are happily engaged in purposeful activities. The manager meets with the staff each morning, to discuss the day ahead. Therefore, staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities and focus on the needs of the children. They also meet regularly to discuss strengths and areas they wish to improve, which helps benefit the children.

Most of the required documentation is in place to support children's health, safety and wellbeing. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, thus ensuring that children are protected and cared for by staff who have knowledge and understanding of child development. Children benefit from the positive and proactive approach of the staff as they have a long term commitment to the school. Children's individual records are maintained and shared with parents, which ensures the appropriate care is provided. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to ensure that a special needs policy is developed and is shared with parents and staff; that the ceiling of the store room cupboard and staff toilet area is well decorated. The special needs policy has been improved which ensures children's individual needs are met. The store room cupboard has been decorated to provide a warm environment for children.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to provide opportunities for children to explore form and space in two and three dimensions during creative activities. Children have good opportunities to explore different materials to design two and three dimensional shapes and they particularly enjoy and benefit from the free access to the creative resources.

### **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 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 parents signatures are obtained against entries in the accident book
- ensure that all visitors sign in and record details of arrival and departure times.

#### **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):

- strengthen the programme for physical development to provide greater challenge for older and more able children.

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)