



Casa dei Bambini

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY297374
Inspection date	07 July 2005
Inspector	Judith Reed
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Registered person	Hartley House Montessori 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

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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?

Casa dei Bambini is one of three settings run by Hartley House Montessori Ltd. It opened as a day nursery in 2004 and is situated in a privately owned building in a residential area of Winchester. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. Sessional and full day care is offered all year round, Monday to Friday from 08:00-18:00.

There are currently 41 children aged from 6 months to 5 years on roll. Of these three

children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with special needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine staff. All members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

It is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and adopts the Montessori method of teaching.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children follow effective procedures for good health and hygiene. Staff ensure good hand washing procedures are followed before meals and snacks and children begin to learn about keeping themselves healthy. Older children are able to access toilets independently and also change their shoes with minimal support.

Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water and enjoy fresh fruit snacks during both mornings and afternoons. Meals are well balanced and take account of the individual and cultural needs of all the children. Breakfast and high tea are available for those children who require them. The experienced and knowledgeable cook prepares and serves food from the kitchen area. Parents provide food and bottles for babies which are stored appropriately in the nursery. Children learn to tidy up after themselves and confidently clear the tables after having food, often wiping clean the tables.

Children enjoy many opportunities to play outside in the garden as well as taking regular walks to the local parks. The small outside play area is used to good effect and children benefit from the range of activities available. Children climb into the play castle and have fun playing peek a boo with staff. Children ride on tricycles or scooters along the path; kick and throw balls; play in the sand pit or water tray and grow beans and herbs in the raised beds. They learn about the local environment through regular walks to the park adjacent to the nursery, and trips to a park further into the town. Children also benefit from weekly dance and music sessions. The teacher ensures children move their whole bodies to the music and learn about the changes in their bodies when they take exercise, for example being aware of being "out of breath".

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are secure and confident in the well organised environment. They enter confidently and begin to learn routines concerning changing shoes and hanging up bags and coats safely.

Most children help themselves from a wide range of Montessori equipment which is stored on accessible, low level shelves around the room. Children learn to be independent, help themselves and tidy away equipment after use. Babies and younger children are encouraged to try various activities including painting and messy play. They are also able to observe older children and follow their guidance, for example sharing lunch tables. Children's work is displayed around the nursery and is also available to take home. During outings a staff ratio of one adult to every two children is maintained and details of all children taken out are held by staff, as well as in the nursery. Staff take all necessary steps to keep children safe at all times and encourage children to be aware of their own safety.

The manager has an understanding of child protection procedures and other staff have applied for training in this field. Children's welfare is safeguarded at all times and staff are aware of their professional duty to protect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are busy and well occupied during their time at the nursery. They take part in a wide range of activities and self select from the extensive choice of Montessori equipment available. Children also benefit from a programme of additional activities such as music and dance classes as well as cooking. Children build good relationships with other children and the small number of older children currently attending work well as a group, supporting one another. Babies enjoy many varied experiences including regular outings to the local parks, music, painting and water play sitting in a paddling pool. Caring and experienced staff ensure they are making connections through their senses as well as exploring and discovering the world around them.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress because staff have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals and the learning environment offers a wealth of learning opportunities. The trained and experienced staff use the Montessori philosophy of following the child and encouraging independence. They support the children's developing self esteem as well as concentration skills. The well prepared environment encourages children to choose an activity from the shelves and carry out the task to the best of their ability. Most children are motivated and choose their own activity moving regularly from one area of learning to another. Staff observe and encourage children and ensure regular recording and assessment. All children have individual learning plans and staff encourage them to challenge themselves and develop their skills.

Children are eager to learn and confident to try new experiences such as dance with a new staff member. They listen carefully to stories and observe pictures, counting items on the page when requested. They look at books independently and "read" the pictures discussing their choice with their friends. Children experience mark making in a variety of ways. They recognise shapes and use circles, squares and triangles for printing and painting. They play counting games together taking turns, and

supporting one another. Children experience the world around them on the frequent outings and in the garden. They enjoy planting and growing grass in pots and beans in the raised beds. Children observe items through a magnifying glass and join in group activities of floating and sinking. They do not currently have opportunities to use a computer or programmable toys. Children are creative in their play and use their imagination when playing with the toy farm and animals or dressing up. They make pictures and build models from various media, mixing paint to make secondary colours.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and learn to respect one another, the staff and the equipment. Good behaviour is praised and encouraged. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff build good relationships with parents and invite them to parents evenings every term. They discuss children's progress together with their individual learning plans. This enables parents to support children's learning and development at home. Informative notice boards for parents are displayed in each room. Parents talk to staff when children are dropped at nursery and information is entered in the day book. Parents are welcomed into nursery at any time and often stay to play with their children, or feed them. The overall quality of partnership with parents and carers is outstanding.

Children with special needs are well supported within the nursery and staff link with outside therapists to ensure suitable progress is enabled. The staff meet regularly with special needs coordinators from the local early years partnership for advice and training.

Children learn about cultures from around the world through resources, artefacts and posters displayed. They benefit from using instruments from around the world and hearing different sorts of music. Children look closely at globes and maps, and staff support their learning the names of continents and countries around the world.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The premises are well organised and space is laid out to maximise play and learning opportunities for children. Staff are well qualified to care for children although they acknowledge that further training in some areas would enhance and consolidate their practice. New staff receive appropriate induction and quickly learn procedures within the nursery. The deputy organises training sessions for all staff to ensure good practice at all times. Staff reflect and evaluate each session alongside planning. They receive annual appraisals as well as support from a peer mentor. The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding.

All required documentation is in place. Staff ensure recording is accurate and parents are kept informed concerning their children.

Staff ensure that children's individual development is planned and monitored. They use their knowledge of Birth to three framework as well as the Foundation stage to enhance children's development. They care for the children and enjoy working in the nursery. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Staff were required to write a policy for sick children and one for uncollected children. These policies have been made available to parents and are included in the Parent's agreement and Parent's leaflet.

Staff were also required to ensure that children were safe in the rear garden and the gate was securely bolted. Staff always ensure the garden gate is securely bolted when children are playing outside in the garden so children remain safe and secure at all times.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- improve and consolidate staff knowledge of child protection, special needs, and behaviour management

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):

- provide opportunities for children to use ICT and programmable toys

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