



## Caterpillars Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 110247

**Inspection date** 06 February 2006

**Inspector** Claudia Padfield

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**Registered person** Angela Louise Pagett

**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](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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Caterpillars Montessori Nursery School opened in 1996. It operates from two rooms in Hartley Witney's village hall and has the use of an enclosed outside play area. The group serves the needs of families in the area and the intake reflects the local community.

The group is registered for 26 children aged from 2 to under 5 years although children are usually aged 2 years 6 months before being offered a place. There are

currently 39 children on roll. This includes 31 funded 3 year olds and currently 11 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions, mornings, afternoon or all day. The setting has systems in place to support children with special needs and has participated in the Index for inclusion. They also have systems to support children with English as an additional language .

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 9:30 to 12:30 and 12:35 to 15:30 Monday to Friday. A holiday club operates during the summer holidays for a period of time.

There are nine part time staff work with the children. All have early years qualifications. The setting receives support through the Pre-School Development worker.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are learning about staying healthy through good routines. They have many opportunities to practise these skills, such as hand washing before and during a cookery activity. Children understand why this is necessary and eagerly identify why they might need to re-wash their hands due to germs once the activity has started. Children are independent in the bathroom and older children will provide the younger ones with help if required.

Children develop good co-ordination and enjoy opportunities for physical exercise in the garden. They are able to change their shoes for boots and put on coats, gloves and hats, knowing that this will help them keep warm. The children clearly enjoy the space and equipment outside moving with confidence and selecting toys and equipment of choice. Staff plan and provide a range of suitable challenges to meet the varying needs of all children who attend.

Children have access to drinking water and help themselves as they require. Through topic work and discussion children have a growing awareness about healthy eating. Children make choices during snack time about the drink and fruit they wish to eat, they serve themselves and enjoy sitting in a relaxed and sociable setting with friends, sharing news and events in their lives. High levels of parental involvement ensure children's needs are met.

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

The provision is good.

The premises are warm, welcoming and attractively laid out to create a child orientated environment, where the children can play freely and safely. Staff minimise the risks of accidental injury to the children through daily risk assessments and safety checks which are carried out inside and outside the building. For example children practise emergency evacuation procedures and staff evaluate how the children

respond. Procedures such as these ensure that children are learning about staying safe throughout each session. This is further developed by the good staff role models. Children tidy away chosen activities before moving on to another and understand the expectations from staff regarding the numbers who are able to participate with a particular activity, such as the computer or the building areas and negotiate taking turns co-operatively.

Children have a good range of high quality equipment and have many opportunities to self-select activities, which meet the required safety standards. Staff plan for each child's learning and ensure these are age and stage appropriate. Regular communication with the parents ensures the children are cared for in a safe and stimulating environment.

Children are well protected by staff who have an awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. Clear policies and procedures are in place and systems ensure that the children's welfare is paramount.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children clearly enjoy the time they spend in the nursery, they settle quickly to their chosen tasks arriving happy and eager to participate in the range of activities available. Children are confident, articulate and demonstrate high levels of concentration. Children achieve well due to staff's excellent knowledge regarding their development and their ability to provide a range of stimulating and exciting challenges within the session. The children develop good relationships with their peers and staff, initiating conversations and involving adults in their play. For example children discuss the flavours of the cakes as they skilfully weigh and prepare the ingredients and pretend to cook them. Staff are sympathetic and sensitive to the individuality of all the children who attend. Children feel valued and show high levels of self esteem they confidently greet the staff in the morning and shake hands.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are keen to participate in all activities, they keenly follow the presentation of a new activity by staff, and then they eagerly enjoy practising the activity themselves. They show high levels of concentration and an eagerness to get the task right. Children ask questions and anticipate the outcome of an action with confidence and skill. Their learning is further fostered through the skilful questioning by staff and role modelling of desired behaviour.

The children have a growing understanding that print conveys meaning and recognise their names in the morning before selecting a peg. Children love books and visit the book corner throughout the sessions. Children role play and will read a story to friends pretending they are the teacher showing the pictures and expecting the other children to listen quietly while they role play at being the teacher. Staff extend these experiences by providing dual language books and invite parents to

come and read in that language. Children are learning about the wider community through topic work and enjoy the opportunity to celebrate other festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Children have many opportunities to count for a purpose they use the number rods with a growing understanding and during daily routines the staff provide many opportunities to count and add on or take away. They are able to correctly name many shapes in English and French. Many children have an excellent grasp of French understanding the teacher and replying confidently in French throughout the French lesson, once they have exchanged their English head for a French one. They then enjoy the action of changing back once the lesson is over.

Through planning the staff provide the children with an excellent balance of adult and child led activities. This enables children to develop at their own pace and ensures children with special needs have the same opportunities to flourish. Staff are committed to providing an inclusive environment and actively evaluate how systems could be improved to promote good outcomes for all. Staff know the children extremely well and give children many choices throughout the session about activities they wish to complete and how they wish to do it.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children show an excellent attitude towards one another; they are confident self assured and flourish in the nursery due to the skilful interactions with staff. Children gain a good understanding about the wider community, through topic work and visits from the local people of interest. The staff have excellent systems in place to support children with special needs they have completed "The Index for inclusion" and actively support the families, through regular updates, observations and communication with any outside agencies that might help. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is very good they are eager to participate, polite and require little or no support to say please and thank you. Staff have a high expectations and ensure consistent boundaries are in place to develop the children's understanding of right and wrong.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. An excellent partnership contributes significantly to the children's wellbeing. Staff actively seek information from the parents. They use many mediums to ensure all parents are updated and informed about the children's activities and progress. Parents receive e mails, memos and staff verbally update. Clear information is presented about the Montessori principal and all children have clearly defined learning intentions which are carefully planned and evaluated

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The care of the children is greatly enhanced by the quality of organisation and leadership and management. Comprehensive and well written documentation support the staff team who are committed to providing quality care and education for the children. Robust systems are in place to recruit and train staff. Well planned deployment of staff ensure the children receive high levels of adult interaction.

The staff are approachable and professional in their day to day dealing with the parents. They keep detailed and accurate documentation in order to promote the children's well being. There is excellent two way communication between the parents which ensures continuity of care. As part of the organisation staff training files lack regular updates this makes assessing the areas covered by each staff member difficult.

Leadership and management are outstanding. All staff have a very good knowledge of the Montessori principals and most hold a related qualification. These ideals are applied confidently and complement the Foundation Stage curriculum well. Comprehensive evaluation of each child's development ensures staff can plan for their next steps in learning and track the children's achievements closely. The team work together well and attend regular training, staff meetings and support each other extremely well during day to day routines. These systems benefit the children's learning outcomes immensely.

Clear policies and procedures support the staff in working in partnership with the parents. There are excellent links with home which enable the children to settle and flourish. The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide..

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery were requested to review and update documentation, good progress has been made and policies and procedures ensure the children's wellbeing is paramount.

Through topic work and visits from people of interest children have many opportunities to use multicultural resources. The staff ensure a selection of bilingual books are available in the book corner and labelling in various languages has been introduced. Staff are supporting bilingual children by learning the meaning of key words and phrases. This is aiding the transition from home to nursery.

Snack time is a leisurely event where children have good opportunities to make choices about what they eat and drink. Children enjoy spending time talking with friends and staff about important events in their lives. This enhances the children's opportunity to feel part of the community.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 outstanding.

## **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 documentation to support staff training and development is up to date.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)