

Start Right Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135400
Inspection date	22 May 2007
Inspector	Malini Parmar
Setting Address	Church House, 1 The Green, London, N14 7EG
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Registered person	Sussan Shahbaz-Mehr
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Start Right Montessori Nursery operates in a church hall in Southgate in the London borough of Enfield. The nursery operates each week day term times only from 08:30- 15:00. The children have access to a main hall which is divided into two parts, toilets and a fully enclosed outdoor area. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time from two to five years of age. There are currently 71 children on roll, of these 51 receive funding for nursery education.

There are 11 staff who work with the children, five of whom hold a suitable qualification to work with children. There are currently several staff working towards a relevant childcare qualification. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language. The group use a blend of Montessori, and Piaget philosophies to support the children's learning. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have useful chances to gain important skills to promote their health and hygiene. Regular hand washing forms part of the routine. Older children know and understand they need to wash their hands because of the "germs". Staff take positive steps to protect children from cross infection. These include, the use of disposable hand towels, and a colour coded cloth system is used for cleaning. Children do not attend if they are ill, as clear information is shared with parents to help prevent the spread of infectious illnesses. Children are assured of receiving appropriate treatment in the event of an accident, because there are sufficient numbers of staff appropriately qualified in emergency first aid. Clear procedures are in place for the recording of accidents and written consent is sought for the administration of prescribed medication. Systems to ensure consent is sought for the application of all common treatments, such as plasters are currently developing.

Children enjoy the wide range of nourishing snacks, which parents are invited to contribute. The clear information supplied ensures children make their choices from a variety of healthy foods. As a result, children enjoy the large selection of fresh and dried fruits, cheese, breads and dips available to them. Staff ensure perishable foods supplied in packed lunches are stored appropriately to minimise any risks caused by contamination to children's health. Although, children can access a drink at all times they are not always reminded to.

Children have regular access to fresh air and exercise to promote their physical development and health. They vigorously pedal bikes and cars, to propel forward and win the race. Children have access to a "tyre ladder" and climbing frame which they use to strengthen their co ordination. They demonstrate a developing awareness of space as they manoeuvre safely around objects and each other. Indoor movement sessions provide useful opportunities for children to hop, skip and jump. Children enjoy showing their physical skills during action songs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and quickly settle in the warm and friendly environment. They move freely and confidently and choose what to play with from the suitable range of toys and resources offered to them by staff. However, not all children approach the low level shelves to make independent selections because the layout of resources on them does not fully promote this. Children benefit from access to many natural resources of sound quality as these are linked to the Montessori Method.

Children's risk to accidental injury is mostly minimised by procedures in place. Children are supervised closely by staff; they are offered sound explanations to highlight certain dangers to them. As a result, older children know and understand how certain actions may injure them. For example, they know it is unsafe to "carry their chairs with the legs pointing out". They wait patiently for staff to escort them to the toilets and are aware of how to evacuate in an emergency. The premises are secure and suitable procedures are in place to prevent unwanted visitors gaining entry. Clear procedures are followed to ensure children do not leave with unknown persons to ensure their safety. Daily checks are made to ensure all potential risks are reduced, the system to ensure all aspects of these checks are completed are currently being

strengthened. Attention to fire safety is given appropriate priority, and staff make sure regular drills are conducted.

Children's safety and well being is adequately safeguarded due to the sound knowledge core staff have of child protection and local Safeguarding Children procedures. There is policy in place and procedure to follow but not all staff are secure in their knowledge of this. Staff are particularly unsure of what procedures to follow if an allegation is made against them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy having fun, and in the main, they are busy enjoying a variety of activities. They are encouraged and invited to play by staff who are warm and sensitive. As a result children build positive relationships with them.

Children aged between two and three years clearly enjoy the range of malleable resources to promote their senses. They delight as they scoop sand to make "volcanoes and cakes" and enjoy the "soft" texture of play dough. Children benefit from the sound support they receive from staff as they enquire about the poster displaying "emotions". They relate their understanding of "happy" as they all laugh together. They participate fully in the songs which stimulates their language. Young children enjoy transferring pasta with a spoon, which builds their concentration and coordination. However, staff have not yet begun to use the Birth to three matters framework to fully plan for the needs of the younger children. This means that the play opportunities are not planned to support their specific individual needs.

Nursery Education.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are generally engaged in a range of interesting practical activities within a friendly and secure learning environment and make sound progress. They confidently approach staff who support their learning and thinking by generally asking useful questions. Children benefit from the developing systems for planning and assessments. They are offered many activities which are linked to a weekly theme. Staff make observations of children's progress, and these are beginning to be used more regularly to identify children individual learning priorities. The process to use these to plan future activities and ensure progress is currently evolving.

Children share positive friendships with one another as they learn to share and take turns. They develop sound levels of concentration as they persist with their chosen tasks, such as when they dress their dolls, or sequence numbers. Children clearly enjoy changing their shoes for outdoor play but opportunities to strengthen their self help skills and increase their independence are sometimes missed. As a result, they do not receive regular chances to serve their own snack, or label their own work. They happily make their choices from the activities offered by staff, but do not always approach the low level shelves to make independent choices.

Children talk freely and openly, as they describe simple events in their lives as well as their family and friends. They enjoy books and look through these with interest, some children respond enthusiastically during the interactive story sessions. However, the size of the whole group story times means that not all the children listen. As well as the "letter sound" of the week, children learn to link sounds to letters during individual activities with staff, as they are encouraged to notice "r" for rabbit through their play. Children ably identify shapes proudly naming "circles and squares". They count confidently up to 10, and more able children are

supported to sequence up to 15 using specialist Montessori materials, such as beads and boards. Children strengthen their fine motor movements as they sort, handle and successfully thread small and large beads, to make a "necklace". Children control the popular computer mouse well as they eagerly use it to match objects on the screen. They explore the continents on the globe and some successfully point out their names, and enjoy sharing their knowledge of how, "panda bears" come from "China". Children enjoy making patterns using the hole punch but opportunities to regularly use other exploratory resources are infrequent. Children benefit from accessing the easel at all times, as a result, they paint freely to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. They use a variety of textures, colours and shapes to make their "rain forest" collages. They delight as they rub their crayon over the stencil and the "lion" appears. Sometimes, however, staff's eagerness to help support children means that art and craft activities are over directed, and children's experiences are not fully enhanced by the use of pre cut templates. Children enjoy using the props in the imaginary play areas to mimic their observations of the world, they often use all the props around them to enhance their play. As a result, they freely express themselves as they become more engaged in their play sharing their understanding and much laughter with their friends.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and enjoy respectful relationships with adults and one another. They receive useful chances to learn about differences and develop a positive view of the wider world. Many festivities are celebrated throughout the year. Children are able to consolidate their understanding of these by using the sufficient range of resources promoting equality which are integral to the environment. Children delight as they recognise the festivities depicted in the puzzles they build. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children receive sound levels of praise and encouragement for their achievements to boost their confidence and enhance self esteem. In general children are well behaved, and are learning to manage their own behaviour. As they receive some useful explanations to support their understanding. Occasionally, however, during the whole group times children do not always respond positively to staff's request.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory which contributes to children's wellbeing, development and progress. Parents report they are pleased with the setting. Children's needs are documented upon entry including their likes and dislikes. They are invited to settle their children at the nursery and are supported during this process. Newsletters and notice boards ensure parents are made aware of how children spend their time at nursery. Parents are invited to attend consultation meetings when they can speak to staff about their child's learning and development. In addition, they receive detailed reports throughout the year. They receive useful information about the nursery, including about the six areas of learning and this is available in many languages. Although, children receiving funding benefit from these systems, opportunities to ensure parents can participate fully in their learning is evolving to ensure children's individual learning priorities are securely known and shared. Parents have access to the regulator's details should they wish to raise any concerns and there is a procedure in place to support them. However, this is currently being updated to ensure the required detail.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

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

Children benefit from an evolving organisation which values the ideas of staff to meet their needs. Staff work closely together to ensure the smooth delivery of the daily routine. All mandatory records are in place and there is a set of policies and procedures to promote the welfare, health and care of the children. These are currently being updated to ensure the required detail. Staff are generally effectively deployed to ensure children receive secure levels of involvement for their care and learning. There is an action plan in place to ensure at least half of the staff team have an appropriate childcare qualification.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Children benefit from a staff team that work hard to promote their progress and development. The provider and deputy work closely together to monitor and review the practice, this in the main, is done through meetings and the use of informal observations. As a result, they have some knowledge of the setting's strengths and weaknesses and have identified some areas for improvement. However, children do not benefit from a clear assessment of how fully their needs are met within the programme because systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision are being developed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection four recommendations were set. These were to ensure the safe storage of packed lunches, ensure records are maintained appropriately and accident, incident and existing injury records were distinguishable, and stored inaccessibly and securely. In addition, the group agreed to develop staff's knowledge of child protection issues.

The group have made significant progress in addressing these. Children's lunches are now stored appropriately to ensure the prevention of cross contamination. Records are now securely stored and recorded separately to ensure accurate detail. Core staff have developed their knowledge of issues surrounding child protection. However, this remains an area for development because not all staff are secure in their understanding of safeguarding children.

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):

- strengthen staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children and ensure they have a secure knowledge of procedures to follow in the event an allegation of abuse is made against them
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under three, for example through the use of the Birth to three framework to enable them to plan and provide a suitable range of activities for the younger children
- ensure all the policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the provision contain the necessary detail.

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 planning systems to effectively use assessments in order to consistently identify children's individual learning priorities and use these to inform future plans
- provide children with consistent chances to develop their self help skills and increase their independence
- ensure a rigorous system to monitor and review the strengths and weaknesses of the group and the educational programme is in place.

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