

# Market Harborough Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY339004   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 12 June 2007   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Hazel Christine White  |
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| <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?

Market Harborough Montessori Nursery has been operational since 2000 and was registered at the current location in 2006. It operates from a purpose built mobile in the grounds of St Joseph's R.C. Primary School in Market Harborough. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week during term time from 9:00 until 13:00, Monday and Friday and 9:00 until 16:00 from Tuesday until Thursday. Children attend for a variety of sessions and a parent and toddler group operates on Monday and Thursday afternoon. All children have access to a safe and secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children on roll, of these 35 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves families and children in the local community and surrounding villages. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are welcomed and supported.

The nursery employs six staff. Of these, five including the manager hold appropriate Early Years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. Staff receive support from a teacher mentor from the local authority Early Years and Childcare Partnership.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are actively and consistently learning about hygiene through the staff's good example and practice. They inspire the children's interest through discussion and by providing equipment to encourage their self-help skills. Children know the importance of hand washing and are independent in their personal care. Children's health is satisfactorily safeguarded through the setting's policies and health records, however, consent for emergency treatment or advice has not been obtained from parent's. As a result children's safety may be compromised. The first aid box is properly stocked and readily available and some staff have current first aid certificates.

Children are well nourished because they are provided with packed lunches which have been prepared by their parents. They are offered milk, water and a good range of fruit, raw vegetables and healthy options such as bread sticks for their snacks. Children are skilful at pouring their own drinks and serving food. They wash their own cups and plates after use and help to clean tables. Children are learning about healthy eating through practical activities, for example, they take part in topics connected to the food they eat and then discuss which is the healthiest option and why. Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents and ask questions about children's allergies. This information is displayed for easy reference.

Children are given frequent opportunities for physical play and exercise, they use the outdoor area in all weathers to develop and refine a variety of physical skills. Children climb equipment and practise balancing along painted lines on the ground. They demonstrated good spatial awareness and skills in running and using wheeled toys.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, safe indoor and outdoor environment which is suitable for the purpose. The room is well ventilated, brightly decorated and prepared before children arrive. Examples of the children's creative work are attractively displayed around the room. Children enjoy independent access to a good range of toys and equipment, which is kept clean, safe and in excellent condition.

Staff are aware of possible risks to children's safety and have taken positive steps to remove hazards. As a result children are able to play safely because potential dangers have been minimised. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe, for example, by practising balance and co-ordination when carrying drinks and by returning toys and equipment to the right place after playing, therefore reducing spillage and tripping hazards. The transport topic enhanced children's knowledge of road safety and the importance of using zebra and pedestrian crossings. Children participate in fire evacuations which take place periodically.

Children's protection from abuse and neglect is promoted through the staff's secure knowledge of signs and symptoms which may cause concern. The manager is aware of her responsibilities regarding referrals and follows the settings policies, however, they do not include the procedure to follow if allegations are made against staff, therefore this may compromise children's safety.

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

The provision is good.

Children settle and become confident in the setting. They are greeted on arrival and are made to feel welcome by staff. They are familiar with the routines and quickly make themselves busy. Children separate well from their parents and carers. Older children befriend younger children to help them to develop a sense of belonging. Children are able to engage in a stimulating and well-balanced range of activities and experiences, which helps them make progress in all areas of development. The staff have a sound knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and actively support the children in their decisions and choices, helping them to become independent and competent learners.

Children's language and thinking skills are enthusiastically promoted through general conversation and through the frequent questions asked of them by staff. Their confidence and self-esteem are enhanced as staff listen carefully to their responses. Social skills are developed as they are encouraged to take turns in speaking and listening, particularly at circle and snack times. Children demonstrate good table manners and behave in a socially acceptable manner.

Children have formed good relationships with their peers and adults. Interaction is excellent and staff are calm, courteous and responsive to the individuals they care for. Children are encouraged to think through processes and problem solve. For example, a child counting 'number sticks' had too many in one compartment, she was helped to re-count them and realised she had one to many in another box.

Children have some learning and play opportunities outside of the setting. They visit the local community in connection with topics. Children have designed stained glass windows after visiting a church and experienced outings to the fishmongers, the bakery and supermarket.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning of funded children is good. Children are interested and motivated to learn and participate eagerly in activities, many of which are child-led. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and are competent with its implementation. Activities have clear learning outcomes and observations and assessments are completed, however, they do not identify the next steps of children's learning or inform future planning. Staff make good use of time and resources. Children are familiar with routines and they have specific times for snacks, lunch, free play and outdoor time. The challenges set for children are appropriate for their level of understanding and ability. Staff sensitively intervene in children's play to support and extend learning. They manage children's behaviour effectively and provide them with good strategies to help them learn to manage their own behaviour.

Children are keen to communicate with staff and their peers. They confidentially chat to adults and their friends on arrival and want to share their news. Children are self-assured and take the initiative by accessing resources for themselves. Children enjoy listening to stories and are able to confidently discuss aspects of their favourite books. They sing nursery rhymes and action songs during circle time. Children notice a wealth of print displayed around the room such as signs, captions and posters. They are encouraged to link sounds to letters and children recognise their own name as they self-register. They freely access writing resources to draw, write and make lists. This encourages children to notice print and understand writing for different purposes.

Children develop mathematical skills as they learn to count and match during structured and spontaneous activities. They work independently as they grade blocks and cylinders by height and length. Children are learning to recognise numerals and are developing the concept of more or less by good questioning, such as how many more chairs do we need. Sand, water and cooking activities enhance the children's awareness of weights and measure.

Children investigate objects and materials through a variety of experiences. They are skilful in controlling tools and equipment to explore their environment, for example, mixing paints and modelling with play dough. They are developing an interest in the natural world through examining insects in their natural habitat, growing flowers and caring for fish. They discuss what they would find in a rock pool and recreate one in the setting by using sand, water and shells.

Children are able to be creative, expressing their own ideas through music, dance and role play. They learn to tap simple rhythms using musical instruments and freely draw and paint using different forms of media. They have a positive attitude to physical play and are developing their skills and confidence when using wheeled toys and climbing equipment. Children are taught to handle and control small objects, for example, transferring small beads from one dish to another using tweezers, handling scissors, pencils and brushes with good control.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff have an exemplary commitment to equality of opportunity, they recognise children as individuals and as a result children's differing needs are well met. Children learn about the wider world through positive images of diversity that permeate the resources and displays that children see. Children attend from diverse backgrounds and both genders have equal access to non-stereotypical toys and activities. All children are encouraged to take part in all activities to increase their experiences. They access an excellent range of resources which promote race, culture, gender and ability in a positive way. For example, family baskets, dressing up clothes, pictures of various homes, multi-cultural puzzles and cooking activities such as making noodles with vegetables. Children set up shops with packaging from different countries. They celebrate a range of festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. During the 'Children of the World' topic, they learnt some Japanese numbers, were able to sample food and listen to different music. Children listen to poems from India and look at countries on the globe and in an atlas. They are learning to count to five in French and to recite rhymes in German. Therefore they are developing an excellent knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

A comprehensive policy is in place regarding special needs which details how the service will be provided to children with learning or physical disabilities. The very good levels of support ensure that all children are included and receive a great deal of individual attention so that their needs are effectively met.

Staff have high expectations of good behaviour and set clear and consistent boundaries. Children behave extremely well. They are courteous and polite, for example, waiting for everyone to finish before leaving the table, waiting patiently for popular toys. They know that this enables everyone to participate fairly and have a turn. Staff are friendly, supportive role models and as a result children show care and consideration for one another. Children respond positively to praise and affirmation from staff which raises their self-esteem and as a result they are extremely confident and self-assured. Children are exceptionally independent. They manage

their own personal care and confidentially organise their own coat and shoes. Children pour their own drinks, serve snacks, tidy away and wash their plates and cups. They eagerly volunteer to feed the fish, water plants and tidy the book area.

Children thrive as a result of strong continuity of care, this has developed through the first-class relationship that staff have built and strive to maintain with parents. Parents are very warmly welcomed into the setting and are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning by staying to play sessions. They actively fund raise for the setting and organise events such as sports days.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Staff share information with parents regularly, including details about their children's development. A range of good quality information, including leaflets and posters, keeps parents informed about current aspects of child care and education, including information on the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They are encouraged to comment on their children's assessment records and support their children's learning at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are able to explore and investigate as a result of the well-organised use of space, which has been planned to enable them to participate in a variety of stimulating activities. The effective and consistent adult support and the familiar daily routine fosters the children's sense of security.

The children benefit from the good practice of the skilled staff team and the setting's commitment to continuous improvement ensures that staff are kept fully informed of current trends in child care practice. Staff are well deployed and ratios are well maintained to ensure that children receive a good level of supervision. Children's welfare is effectively promoted through the staff's good organisational skills and most records and policies are appropriately maintained and regularly reviewed.

Leadership and management is good. The staff regularly review the provision and the children benefit as a result of the improvements they strive to implement. There is a real commitment to the promotion of quality care and education for young children, evidenced by the continuing programme of professional development. Overall children's needs are met.

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

Not applicable.

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

Since registration 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.

## 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):

- obtain written parental permission to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- review the child protection policy to include the procedures to be followed if allegations are made against staff.

#### 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):

- use the information gained through assessments to formally identify children's next step in learning and use as an aid to future planning.

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)