

Ladybird Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140432
Inspection date	21 June 2007
Inspector	Anahita Aderianwalla
Setting Address	Sheldon Avenue, London, N6 4ND
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Registered person	Niclar Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 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?

Ladybird Montessori School, has been registered since 1990.

It is privately owned by a Ltd company.

The nursery operates from 1 large room in a Scout hall. It is situated in a residential area in Highgate, in the London borough of Haringey.

There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the group at any one time.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 09:30 to 12:30 term time only .

Children attend on a sessional basis . There are currently 23 children on the roll of these 12 children receive funding for nursery education.

The group will support children with special needs including special educational needs and disabilities.

The group employs 5 members of staff. Of these 4 hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications .

The group receives support from the Local Authority, they are members of the Montessori Association and The Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The provision is good. Children enjoy an wide range of equipment to develop their coordination skills as well as a very good range of activities to promote their physical development through games, outside play and movement to music, contributing to a healthy lifestyle. The children move with confidence and imagination spontaneously hopping or dancing in the room or when playing in the garden, climbing trees, with the support of staff. The movement and dance sessions also help children develop bodily awareness as they learn the benefits of physical activity and appropriate exercise.

Children benefit from good routines put in place by staff, providing them with clean environment which promotes their health in all areas. Children learn through good experiences the importance of good personal hygiene, staff remind them to blow their noses and children independently access the washing area after messy play. Children are protected from infection because the children play in a clean and well-maintained environment. The children access the toilets and wash their hands confidently at sinks that are accessible. The staff use disposable gloves and wipe down the changing mat with antibacterial sprays after nappy changing. A comprehensive range of documentation is in place and the majority of practitioners hold current first-aid certificates.

Children's individual medical and dietary needs are appropriately documented and staff are aware of these. children attending the nursery are able to make healthy choices from a substantial bowl of various fruits and are offered milk and water at snack time. The low table with the tray, child sized cups and small jug of water is inviting for the children, encouraging them to develop good hygiene practices and develop their independence skills, as they pour the water, for themselves.

Regular events such as food tasting and topics include discussions and opportunities for children to taste and find out about a variety of foods, such as the children cutting up their own fruit as part of their "Healthy Eating " topic. The staff take account of the wishes of parents and have a clear record of any allergies or medical condition as well as any dietary requirements to ensure all the children have appropriate and suitable snacks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The provision is good. Children are well cared for in a safe and well-maintained environment. The organisation of age-appropriate toys and equipment means children can move around

safely and freely to independently access available resources from tables and shelves at child height.

Children benefit from a good range of safety measures, for example plug covers, fire blanket and extinguishers and a fully secure outdoor play area. They develop a good awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations. However, the system for recording does not take in the fact the number of both staff and children that attend and cannot assure that all staff and children have taken part. Staff deployment is effective and guarantees children are well supervised and safe at all times. Sensitive reminders, such as requests to remember to use equipment appropriately, are reinforced through praising positive behaviour 'That was very helpful of you to put away the jigsaw, well done', this increases children's awareness of everyday safety in the setting.

Children are protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff show a sound understanding of the procedure to follow with any concerns. They are fully aware of the types of abuse and signs to look and how to handle any concerns. There is comprehensive information for staff on child protection issues to help staff protect the children in their care. However, this is not fully replicated on the parents notice board, as a result parents understanding of the setting's child protection procedures may not be complete.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The provision is good. Children are very confident, settle quickly and select for themselves a favourite activity from the broad range available. Children are very interested and active in their own learning, spending time concentrating on the resources and activities, such as one child writing their name on a piece of paper, and then helping another child to write their name too. Another child is concentrating very hard on doing up the buttons on a dressing up outfit. They are curious and want to play with the resources, playing a made up game with ladybird dominos ,talking about insects on the interest table or explore many of the well thought out resources available to support children's learning inside the setting.

Children are developing good relationships and get on well with peers and adults. They play imaginary games together, racing cars made out of paper they have cut themselves. The children co-operate, working very well together, they organise their own games, such as , two boys, playing a game of dominos and then help each other put the equipment away. They naturally share and readily take turns, with staff rarely having to help mediate disputes. Staff provide good levels of support and children feel secure and grow in confidence with the continual interest and warmth shown by staff.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the nursery. They are motivated learners who show an interest in others and ask questions to further their knowledge. They concentrate well . For example, they participate in a lengthy discussion about insects, and decide to make a collage after their discussion. However a significant proportion of this discussion was adult directed. Children have good self-esteem as a result of the praise and encouragement they receive during sessions. Staff sensitively support children and give them time to complete goals. They understand right from wrong and behave very well at the nursery where they amicably share resources, such as scissors and paper . They develop a sense of responsibility as they help tidy toys away. Their

independence skills strengthen as they pour their own drink of water and help serve fruit at snack time. They have good opportunities to experience a range of different literature in the book area. They independently choose to sit and look at books, magazine cuttings at the interest table. They understand that print carries meaning and recognise their own name cards. They listen attentively to staff during a discussion on insects, and expand their vocabulary as staff introduce them to new words such as, "silky and elastic". Children talk confidently about events in their lives and are extended to use words linked with pictures to spell. For example, a child confidently uses letter cards with pictures to spell three letter words, such as, "man, pig, bin." They have opportunities to mark make but a lack of writing resources in the role play area limits their opportunities to practise writing for a variety of purposes. A French teacher visits the nursery regularly. This contributes to the children's awareness of different languages spoken in the provision.

Children learn about patterns and shapes while playing with puzzles and recognise shapes within their environment. They are confident with numbers and count comfortably to 10 and some children can count to 20 while playing an adding up game. Staff encourage children to develop their problem solving skills ,as children independently use numbers during play. For example, the use of addition as they count the numbers of spots on ladybird dominos, and then begin to make up a game where they are subtracting too. They develop an understanding of technology in the role play area where they play with the till , and a calculator . A computer teacher visits the nursery regularly. Visitors to the pre-school and work on topics, such Diwali ,Hanukkah and the Chinese New Year, help develop children's awareness of diversity and the wider world. Children's physical skills are well developed and they competently use a range of tools when cutting and glueing a good variety of materials and when modelling with dough. Outside they show good balance as they ride scooters and demonstrate a good awareness of space as they successfully negotiate pathways around each other whilst riding a range of wheeled toys. However they do not encourage the use of tools for exploration in the outside area. They have fun whilst involved in creative activities and spontaneously dance to music during the session when the music and movement teacher visits regularly.

Staff have a good working knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They make regular observations of children's learning and maintain records of future learning areas to target for individual children. Staff are aware of children's abilities but assessment records are do not always clearly show children's progress through the stepping stones. However the nursery has recently introduced a new style in record keeping, this has allowed staff to be able to track individual children's progress. Staff set challenging but achievable targets for children to develop their skills during play. They ask relevant questions to make children think and use explanation and demonstration, as appropriate, to further children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The provision is good. Children are very happy in an atmosphere where staff nurture and support children making them feel valued as individuals. The children and the staff show respect, consideration and care for themselves and each other. Staff value children's input, listen to them and respond showing interest and concern. Children's work is displayed and children learn to value themselves and others through planned topics and activities such as the "a Mexican Piñata and celebrations of multi cultures". Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about the diversity through a wide range of planned activities such as making a Chinese dragon on Chinese New Year, and celebrating Hanukkah, Eid and Holi, the festival of lights. There are very good systems in place to support children

with for whom English is an additional language. thoughtful planning helps to make sure all children are included in all activities and receive the support they need to enjoy their time at nursery. Children's behaviour is very good, they share and take turns and have a developing sense of right and wrong. The children have a good level of independence, freely selecting equipment for themselves and taking responsibility for their personal care.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents speak highly of the group and appreciate the care and attention given to their children. Children benefit greatly from parents' involvement in their learning, as the parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how their child is progressing toward the early learning goals. An information sheet is provided and a children's recommended list of books, and songs, are given to complement the curriculum delivered at the setting. Parents have a very comprehensive range of information on the children's activities through notice boards, newsletters and good daily dialogues. This helps staff and parents work closely together to promote children's progress and ensure consistency of care at all times.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation is good. Good organisation in all areas of the provision helps to provide children with a secure and positive environment. staff deployment and a high adult to child ratio means that children are well supervised at all times, supporting their individual needs. The space is used very well to maximise play opportunities for the children.

Staff are well supported by the manager through regular team meetings, and active encouragement to attend a wide range of workshops. Staff vetting, induction training and comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and work well in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare.

All required documentation regarding the care of children is in place, it is appropriately stored with the awareness of confidentiality.

Leadership and management is good .The manager motivates a committed staff team who work well together. There is a shared commitment to early years, which is supported by management and staff who attend regular training to extend their understanding in early years' education. The staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, as well as having Montessori teaching qualifications. Their knowledge about the Foundation Stage curriculum and new use of observations and assessments effectively display how children are progressing toward the early learning goals. These are beginning to be utilised to affect future planning and identify how children will be moved on. The manager works closely with the advisory teacher to monitor the curriculum. The leadership and management have a clear commitment to improving the quality of care and education for the all the children that attend the setting.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve the following; develop a written procedure for lost children; and for nursery education; to provide opportunities for children to develop their climbing skills, and opportunities for children to use musical instruments.

Since the last inspection, the group has a written policy for lost children. This contributes to the continuing safety for children in the setting. The setting has music and movement sessions, and this involves using a variety of instruments, which contribute to the enjoying and achieving of children in the group. The setting has acquired equipment for climbing. This further develops the need for children to stay active and healthy.

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):

- improve the recording of fire drills

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):

- improve resources used for exploration in the outside area.

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