

CAROL JANE MONTESSORI NURSERY

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135264
Inspection date	07 August 2007
Inspector	Philippa Clare Williams
Setting Address	80 The Ridgeway, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 8JF
Telephone number	020 8364 4440
E-mail	enquires@caroljanenursery.co.uk
Registered person	Carol Jane Montessori Nursery School Limited
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 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?

Carol Jane Montessori Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from three rooms and an outdoor area of a converted house in London borough of Enfield. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 35 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 17 funded three-year-olds and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.00 until 15.00.

Five staff work with the children, all staff hold level three early years qualifications. The nursery uses the Montessori teaching methods.

The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained environment. Staff follow clear hygiene procedures which protects children's health. For example, they sweep and mop the floors, clean surfaces with anti bacterial spray and talk to the children about washing all the germs away when they wash their hands. Children are familiar with appropriate hand washing procedures and are encouraged to manage their own personal hygiene. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. However, children's health care is not sufficiently protected through the use of shared hand towel when alternative methods are unavailable, such as times of bathroom improvements.

Children's health is protected as the nursery has a sickness policy which is shared with parents. They keep parents informed daily of air quality, which enable them to be prepared if their child suffers from any particular breathing problems. All medical details are recorded including copies of each child immunisation records. Parents give prior written consent for medication to be given, thus ensuring that children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. Children receive appropriate care if there has been an accident because all staff in the nursery hold current first aid certificates.

Staff promote healthy eating by encouraging parents to provide a nutritious foods in children's lunch boxes. Children are offered a variety of healthy foods for snacks, such as dips, vegetables, biscuits, fruit and cereals. All nursery staff have food hygiene training and they are aware of the children's dietary needs. Meal times are an enjoyable social experience for children as they all sit together with staff who chat and assist the less able children. Topics further promotes children's understanding of healthy eating, for example, children visit a farm shop and buy vegetables to prepare and eat.

Children's physical development is very well promoted at the setting as they have access to the well resourced outside play area each day. They climb, slide, balance and use wheeled toys with confidence. Children learn good co-ordination as they throw and catch bean bags and balls. Staff make good use of the outdoor space as a learning environment, using the nature area to look insects and explore the wildlife in the pond. They use one-handed tools and equipment with ease, for example, they competently use paint brushes, glue sticks, chinks and pencils. A flexible routine is in place for the children allowing them to rest on mats in the library if they need to. Staff sit with them while they sleep, ensuring they are well supervised.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from an environment that is bright, welcoming and well maintained. Play areas are decorated with posters and colourful displays of children's photographs and their artwork. The outdoor play is a strong feature of the nursery, the three areas used are safe, inviting and very well resourced. All areas are secure, have safety surfaces and shaded areas. Further plans are in place to extend the outdoor space to include log cabin and vegetable patch for growing.

Close attention is paid to safety within the setting. Children are well supervised at all times which helps them feel safe and assured. Risk assessments are in place covering all areas of the nursery. The environment is well organised, helping children to move around safely and

independently. Additionally, the premises are very secure. There are close circuit televisions in constant use covering the front door and all outdoor areas, electric gates with an entry phone, a coded entry system and all main door have alarms. As a result children are unable to leave the premises unattended. Staff give explanations and reminders to help children learn about safe practices, for example, they remind children to move the cars and tidy toys as they may trip over. Fire evacuation procedures are in place and fire drills are practised on a regular basis. This allows children to become familiar with the systems to follow in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation.

All children have access to a good range of quality, accessible and safe equipment. This ensures that children are engaged in purposeful activities where they can safely choose items themselves which helps to promote their independence.

Children are safe and protected with regard to safeguarding children issues. All the staff have attended child protection training to update and increase their knowledge, awareness and confidence in dealing with any safeguarding issues. Staff are clear about their responsibilities to children and themselves should there be concerns about children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and eager to participate, enjoying their time at nursery. They are extremely comfortable with the staff who interact and support them well during the session. The children are sociable and confident to talk to each other and with adults. Staff's ability to act spontaneously to children's interest ensures that there is always something new to capture their imagination. For example, planning was put aside when a normally quiet child expressed an interest in water when hand washing, alternative activities were provided to explore the flow of water using pipes and guttering. This gives children more time to develop and explore ideas of interest which helps their confidence, progress and enjoyment. Children are developing language skills as they listen to stories and sing familiar songs. They engage in creative and messy activities with adult support and have great fun as they explore the smell and texture of shaving foam.

Staff have a good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan an interesting range of activities and experiences for children. Observations, samples of work and photographs are used to track children's individual learning and staff are beginning to make some use of these to plan for the next step in their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn through play and hands-on opportunities. This is reflected in the varied range of play and learning opportunities planned and provided for the children. Thorough long term and short term plans are used and cover all six areas of learning. Staff observe and evaluate what the children can do, they are beginning to use this information to plan for the children's next stage of learning, although this is not always consistent. The interaction with the children is extremely effective, with staff being closely involved in children's play where appropriate. They talk with children continuously and ask question to reinforce learning and to solve problems. Staff use clear and open questioning techniques which take into account children's age and stage of learning. For example, staff ask children why they think the foot print on the floor is warmer than the others in the shade and how they think

they can get the bean bag down from the roof. Staff make school visits. Comprehensive reports are provided for the school when children move on, linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals, this ensures a smooth transition for children when they leave.

Children are inquisitive and well motivated. They are eager to be involved in the activities provided and they are making good progress in all areas of learning. Children speak very confidently, use a wide vocabulary and ask questions. For example, they ask what is the pump for, what do the pipes do and why do the firemen go down the pole. They confidently make choices about songs they wish to sing and lead the group well. Children show good awareness of their own needs and can manage their own personal hygiene easily and independently because the facilities are easily accessible. Children work harmoniously and experience team work and friendship as they role play with the cars and garage and play shops together, which is fully supported and encouraged by staff.

Children have a good understanding that print carries meaning as items around the rooms are clearly labelled. Children recognise their name as they find their own named place mats at lunch time. Children's handwriting and communication skills are developing well. Some children are able to form recognisable letters and to write their name. Children listen carefully and join in enthusiastically with familiar sections of stories and songs. For example, they know the elements of familiar stories such as, 'What Ever Next', make predictions about the events in the book and enthusiastically sing along to their favourite songs such as 'Bob the Builder'.

Children's mathematical development is promoted well within the nursery. Number is incorporated into everyday routines, such as, counting the chairs at snack time and the number of children. There are many opportunities to develop calculating skills to extend and reinforce their learning, for example, they work out how many are left when singing and acting out ten fat sausages song. They use the computer to do simple addition and subtraction programmes, and count the numbers of girls and boys in the group and add these together. They learn about shapes in different contexts as they play games with bean bags and talk about the shapes during painting and sticking activity and confidently identify a 'crescent' moon shape.

Children are beginning to gain a successful understanding of technology, for example, they regularly use the computers, and interactive toys which they skilfully manage. They especially enjoy operating a robot toy and begin to work out concepts of left, right, forward and backwards. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about their natural world as they have daily access to explore the nature area of the garden and pond and regularly record their findings. They enjoy spending time using a magnify glass to explore insects, newts and tadpoles found in the pond and garden observing the way they move and talking about how they survive. Children show enthusiasm, delight when they find a worm and watch it as it swims in the pond. They learn about animals as they take care of the nursery's giant African snails. Children are helped to appreciate the community through local visits to the farm shop, where they buy vegetables to eat and to 'Pizza Express', where they learn to make pizza. They gain an increasing understanding of the wider environment by following the travels of the nursery bear which are recorded through photographs in a journal.

Children are able to express themselves creatively within the nursery as they paint pictures and have access to a wide range of creative resources. A visiting artist helps children to appreciate art and develop their own ideas in painting and drawing. Children enjoy taking part in role-play activities and use their imagination well to make up stories. For example, when playing in the shop they pretend to buy food, cook and serve it to their friends and staff. They enthusiastically take part in acting out 'five currant buns' song and pretend to buy the buns with their pennies.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are supported very well in the transition between home and nursery, as staff carry out a home visit and staff get to know children over a period of time. Staff sensitively support new children during their settling in visits. Children's individual needs are effectively met as the staff work closely with the parents. Staff get to know the children well, their routines and likes and dislikes and they regularly offer comfort and cuddles to children. As a result children are very settled and relate warmly to staff. Children are helped to develop a strong sense of belonging through displays of their own art work and photographs, individual profile books documenting their time at the nursery and through the setting encouraging children who have left to keep in touch.

Children enjoy and benefit from celebrating a range of festivals and cultures throughout the year as they learn about diversity in society. Topics, such as, 'Food from around the World' help children to develop a positive attitude to other cultures. A wide range of books, posters and play resources reflect positive images of families of various backgrounds lifestyles and abilities. This helps children to value and respect differences. Children readily respond and show concern for each other. For example, one child talks with concern about why a child is not smiling, and staff use this as an opportunity to talk about feelings, and about supporting each other when they are upset. Staff teach children simple sign language, children are responsive and are beginning to make use of this in their communication; as a result children are learning to value differences in the community.

The setting has a strong ethos on inclusion. There are good systems in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. For example, all staff are trained in 'Makaton' sign language to assist in communicating with a child with learning or hearing difficulties. Good communication and close links with parents and outside agencies ensures children's individual needs are well supported.

Children's behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Staff are good role models, are respectful in their approach, and talk to children at their level in a quiet, calm manner. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff for their efforts and achievements. They learn important social skills as staff promote the 'caring and sharing' rule of the nursery; children remind each other of this rule. As a result children are polite, share the resources and take turns easily, and show consideration for each other. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents receive very clear information about the setting and provision for nursery education. The welcome pack explains about 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The planning is displayed on the notice boards showing the topics and themes that will be covered each week, which helps to keep parents very well informed about their children's learning. There is an open-door policy for staff to share information with parents on their child's achievements. Parents have termly feedback meetings where staff share assessments of the children's progress and parents are able to contribute to children's ongoing education. The minor weakness identified in enjoying and achieving does not impact on this positive practise, which ensures parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress. Parents speak very positively about the staff, the activities and their children's achievements. Staff work particularly well with parents in engaging and involving parents. For example, they have responded to requests to put in place a programme for 'Makaton' training to enable parents to follow up their children's early skills in signing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff comply with their registration requirements and effective systems are in place for vetting new staff. Staff benefit from taking part in appraisals which give them opportunities to discuss and plan ahead for future training to help them in their practice. Staff work well as a team and communicate effectively through informal discussion plus formal team meetings.

Children are comfortable and at ease in their environment. Staff work hard to provide an interesting, fun and caring and safe environment for children. Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to make a positive contribution through visits in the local community, highly effective partnership with parents and staff reinforcing positive behaviour. Staff interaction is positive, sensitive and appropriate, and thus fosters the children's self-esteem and self-confidence.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well being is in place. Records are very neat, easy to read and confidentially stored.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The nursery reviews the setting's strengths and weaknesses through completing a very detailed self evaluation and by producing an annual vision statement. The setting have been awarded an 'Investors in People' status. Children benefit from the setting's strong commitment to improving and developing the service, Regular meetings ensure that the nursery curriculum is well maintained and the manager and staff continually evaluate and monitor the educational provision. This ensures that children are provided with a good quality and varied education programme. The manager and staff work well together as a team, each aware of their individual roles and responsibilities. They regularly seek advice and support from the local authority.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the setting have continued to make improvements to the quality of care and education children receive at the nursery. At the previous inspection the provider was asked to ensure that the register records children's actual time of arrival and departure. The register now includes specific times of arrival and departure.

They were asked to extend the policy for child protection to include the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. The statement now includes procedures to follow in the event of any allegation, however the manager has agreed to add some further detail.

They were asked to provide opportunities for children to be more involved in the preparing and serving of their food at meal times and to develop their independence at meal times. Children are offered a choice of snacks and breakfast cereals, and have opportunities to pour their own drinks. At recent trip to the farm shop children helped to prepare vegetables they bought for their snack.

These improvements contribute to children's safety and independence.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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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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):

- evaluate procedures in relation to hand washing to ensure children are protected from cross contamination

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):

- continue to develop the system for observations and assessments, so that the next stages in children's learning are identified and used consistently to inform future plans (also applies to care)

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