

Fountain Montessori Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY347905
Inspection date	13 July 2007
Inspector	Kay Williams

Setting Address	St Margarets Parish Hall, Rectory Lane, Edgware, London, HA8 7LG
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Fountain Montessori Pre-School opened in 2007. The setting operates from a church community centre in Edgware located within the London borough of Barnet. A maximum of 39 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08.45 until 14.45 during term time and also offers a holiday play scheme between the hours of 09.00 until 15.00. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently eight children aged one to three years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well being is effectively promoted. Children are developing a firm understanding of good personal hygiene. Tissues are strategically placed around the room and children help themselves to them when they need to wipe their hands or blow their nose. Children benefit from the clear hygienic procedures which staff implement. For example, tables are thoroughly cleaned and table cloths are used in order to create a hygienically clean area for children to enjoy their lunch.

Children are encouraged to make healthy choice about the food they eat. They enjoy a nutritional midmorning snack of melon, grapes and apple juice. They are fed according to their dietary needs and the snack board advises parents what food the children have eaten each day. Children bring their own packed lunch to the pre-school. Staff work effectively with parent to ensure that the children are given a healthy, balanced lunch and that the food is kept cool with the use of ice packs. All children enjoy independent access to drinking water as they pour their own drinks from the water cooler.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to play and exercise in the fresh air. The newly refurbished garden provides children with opportunities to ride bikes, climb ladders and slide down slides. They are able to use the garden all year round and may choose between in or outdoor play during warmer weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

children are settling well into this newly established pre-school. Staff implement a gradual settling in procedure which serves the children well. Consequently they are able to part from their parents happily and are establishing positive relationships with Staff. Staff make the children feel welcome as they greet them with enthusiasm. Children are developing a firm sense of belonging as they know where to hang their personal possessions, identifying their own space by their name tag and the photograph of themselves. The premises is fitted with CCTV and children's arrival and departure is safely monitored. However, children's safety is potentially compromised as fire evacuation procedures have yet to be practiced and accident records are not consistently completed.

Children are able to enjoy independent access to an appropriate range of play material. They help themselves to a variety of age appropriate resources including art materials, role play equipment and a comfortable book corner. Resources are new and therefore in good condition. Staff have established hygienic cleaning routines whereby furniture and equipment is cleaned thoroughly and regularly checked to ensure that it is safe for children to use.

Children are well protected as staff understand their duty to protect children in their care. Staff recruitment procedures are robust, ensuring that all staff are appropriately vetted and suitable to work with young children. Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and effective procedures ensure that appropriate action is taken should they become concerned about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time spent at the pre-school. They have fun as they sing together during circle time. Songs such as 'jelly on a spoon' make the children laugh as they 'wobble' their bodies to the words of the song. Staff have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and use this along with the Montessori philosophy to plan an effective curriculum for younger children. Activities are varied, interesting and age appropriate. Staff are getting to know the children well and are establishing an effective assessment system for monitoring children progress starting with what the children already know.

Children are able to select resources for themselves and are trusted to use fragile equipment such as a china tea set. Their independence is strengthened as they learn to put resources away once they have finished with them. Younger children are able to sort equipment by matching the corresponding photographs while older children are learning to recognise the written text that names the equipment.

Children enjoy robust physical play as they develop and strengthen their muscles in the garden. They climb and slide with increasing control. They are able to co-ordinate their movements well as they play with the parachute. Together they turn the circle of fabric to the tune of the 'wheels on the bus', first one way and then the other. They are learning to take turns and share fairly as they play pass the parcel, delighting in the price that they win as they tear off the paper. Children are becoming competent learners as they learn to make sense of their world. A variety of role play opportunities, effectively support this and children are very excited that they have dressed up in their 'special clothes' because they are having a party. Children are developing good relationships with their peers, 'see you Monday' they confirm as they wish each other good bye. Children enjoy books, they listen attentively to the group story and take advantage of the comfortable book area as they use books independently. Children's fine manipulative skills are effectively challenged through a range of activities which teach them to thread, cut, pour and transfer. Creative opportunities are less effective as children's art work tend to be adult lead.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well behaved. They are learning the difference between right and wrong. At the end of circle time staff ask them to remember the best way to play with friends as they set off to choose something to play with. Children respond, suggesting that they can hug each other if they want to but they must not hurt each other. Children are learning to take turns as they use the slide. Staff remind them to make sure that the last person is clear before they slide down, in turn children co-operate well. Children are developing a positive sense of self worth as staff praise their efforts and create a good sense of fun within the setting.

Children are treated with equal concern. Staff are getting to know the children well and consequently are able to meet their individual needs appropriately. Children are becoming increasingly aware of their own culture and those of others. At their party they eat food and listen to music from around the world. Resources which reflect cultural and social diversity form an integral part of their play.

Children benefit from the good relationships between staff and parents. Parents speak highly of the setting and are actively encouraged to become involved with their child's care and

education. They are kept up to date with children's achievements as staff share their development progress portfolios with them. Notice boards and news letters keep them well informed and practical information is shared daily. For example if children require more nappies or sun block then a note advising parents accordingly is hung on the children peg.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable in the setting as the space is well organised. Their security is strengthened because the staff ratios are high and the environment is child centred. The key worker system works effectively, especially when settling new children into the pre-school. Daily routines flow smoothly. The newly established staff team are enthusiastic about their role and are committed to extending their knowledge through training and regular team meetings.

Policies and procedures are detailed and carefully collated, although some have yet to be fully implemented. For example parents are not offered sufficient information regarding the settings complaints procedure. Children's personal records are well maintained and stored confidentially in a locked cabinet. Records of attendance are accurate and include the times of children's arrival and departure.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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

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.

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 that parents are informed of all accidents
- ensure that fire drills are practised regularly

- allow children more opportunities to engage in creative activities which are not over directed by adults
- offer parents appropriate information regarding how they may contact Ofsted should they wish to make a complaint

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