

# Maytime Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	128514
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 August 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Toni Hanson
<b>Setting Address</b>	341 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 4UF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8554 3079
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Partnership of Mr John and Mrs Mary O'Mahoney
<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?

Maytime Montessori Nursery is one of three Maytime nursery's located in the London Borough of Redbridge. This nursery opened in 1992 and is situated in a residential area of Ilford, Essex. The nursery operates from a converted house which has an enclosed outside play area. The nursery's opening hours are 07:30 to 18.30, Monday to Friday, all year round apart from bank holidays. The nursery is also closed for one week over the Christmas period. A maximum of 49 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 45 children aged from 11 months to four years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. Children may attend all day or for a variety of sessions.

Children come from a wide catchment area, as many parents travel into the area for work. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who have English as an additional language. The nursery owners employ a qualified manager to be responsible for the day to day running of the setting. In addition there are 11 staff who work directly with the children, 10 of whom are qualified to National Vocational Level (NVQ) 2 or 3. Of these, 11 members of staff are currently working towards early years qualifications ranging from NVQ 2 to NVQ 4.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, clean and hygienic environment. They benefit from the nursery's effective procedures and staff's good hygiene practices; these help to ensure children remain healthy. Most staff have completed relevant, paediatric first aid training and know how to deal with accidents appropriately. Accident records are reviewed regularly and used to identify common issues. Staff then take action to reduce the risk of future accidents. Nappy changing routines are hygienic. Staff wear disposable gloves, wash their hands after changing each child and cleanse changing mats thoroughly with an antibacterial spray. A good standard of hygiene is maintained throughout the nursery. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene. Photos of children washing their hands are displayed in the bathroom to remind children about this important hygiene routine.

Staff have a secure understanding of children's individual health requirements and work closely with parents to make sure children receive the health care they need at nursery. Healthy eating for children is promoted through topic work and discussions at mealtimes. Children's meals are cooked from fresh ingredients on the premises, they tell staff that the cook's food is 'delicious'. Menus are nutritious, balanced and contain healthy options such as fresh fruits for snacks and carrot sticks for tea. Children's individual dietary and religious food requirements are fully respected and met. Older children are able to serve themselves at mealtimes, this enables them to develop personal independence and learn to meet their own needs. All children are offered drinks regularly during the day. Older children have access to cups and jugs of water and can help themselves to drinks when they are thirsty.

All children benefit from daily opportunities to be active, explore, test and further develop their physical skills both indoors and outside. This helps them to develop a positive attitude to exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The attractive, well-resourced outdoor play area is used every day to allow children to play outdoors in the fresh air. Umbrellas are provided to ensure children have access to the outside play in all weathers. Older children participate enthusiastically in music and movement sessions that help them learn to move their bodies in different ways. They join in with the lively actions to the 'hokey, cokey' song. Older children confidently ride trikes and scooters and use climbing and balancing equipment with skill and confidence. Pre-school children use a wide range of small tools and equipment with increasing accuracy and skill, such as different sized paint brushes, pencils, glue sticks, knives and forks. Younger children benefit from a separate outdoor play designed to meet their needs, where they can safely roll, crawl and begin to walk. Indoors they excitedly kick, squirm and roll in the ball pool. Staff's careful planning of the children's day ensures all children have opportunities to be active and to rest or sleep. Cots are provided in the younger children's baserooms. Mats and child-size armchairs enable older children to comfortably rest during quiet activities such as story time.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in an inviting, safe and child-centred environment. The premises is brightly decorated and appropriately maintained. Although the nursery environment is made welcoming through the use of colourful posters, photographs and displays of the children's work, many of these are placed at adult eye level which makes it difficult for children to see and enjoy

them. Staff organise the layout of the setting effectively and make best use of the space available to allow children to move freely, safely and independently around the provision. Children are well protected and kept safe as staff are vigilant about safety issues and use risk assessments well to reduce possible hazards. Children practise regular fire drills and all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities if an emergency evacuation becomes necessary.

Good quality, age-appropriate furniture and play resources are provided throughout the premises. Children access toys easily as these are placed in low-level labelled boxes and in open storage trolleys, allowing them to independently find the play equipment they need. Nursery equipment is checked and cleansed regularly to ensure it remains in good condition. Children benefit from a broad range of safety measures, for example stair gates and fire extinguishers. Young children learn simple rules that keep them safe when playing, such as holding on when climbing onto play equipment. Older children learn how to keep themselves safe. They know they must walk up and down stairs carefully and are clear about nursery rules, such as not running indoors.

Children are protected from harm as staff have a clear understanding of their role with regards to safeguarding the children in their care. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures, and know the different types of abuse and possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk. The building is secure and there are effective procedures in place to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children. Parents are required to provide photos of friends and family who are authorised to collect children. Children's safety is ensured around people who have not been vetted, for example visitors are supervised at all times and sign in and out of the provision. Appropriate systems are in place to recruit, appoint and induct staff who are suitably qualified, experienced and vetted.

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

The provision is good.

Settling in procedures work well and help children work out what the new experience of attending nursery is all about. Children's key workers work closely with parents to ensure children are settled gradually and at their own pace. This allows children to build positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children are greeted warmly as they arrive and are eager to begin to play. Younger children are well supported by staff who have a secure knowledge and understanding of child development and know how to support young children as they begin to learn to play and co-operate with others.

Children enjoy a wide range of play experiences that allow them to develop new skills. Babies explore rattles and activities, squealing with delight as they make the lights flash and the musical toy play. They snuggle up to staff and enjoy looking at books, pointing to the pictures and talking about what they see. Children use their hands to explore the interesting texture of water, wet sand and playdough. They paint colourful print pictures using their fingers and potato and apple slices. Staff encourage children's early communication skills, responding appropriately to the noises and gestures babies make. They listen and pay attention to what the two-year-old children say, giving them time to talk about things that interest them. Toddlers begin to join in with simple rhymes, including 'twinkle, twinkle little star'. The children laugh with delight as everyone gets a round of applause for 'good singing'. Regular observations of young children's individual achievements, linked to the Birth to three matters framework are made and staff use these effectively to help guide the planning of activities and help children make progress in their development.

Since the last inspection, staff and parents have worked hard to improve the outdoor play area for children. A secure, separate area for babies has been created to allow them to enjoy being active outdoors. A well-resourced imaginative play house has been developed for older children. This is currently the 'Maytime cafe' and children busily prepare and serve 'dinners' and 'snacks' to staff and their friends. Large, outdoor board games encourage children to count and the plastic letters display on the magnetic wall promote discussions about letters in children's names. Children benefit as good use is now made of the outdoor area to help children make progress in all areas of their learning and development. Staff enjoy seeing children's excitement as they get ready to go outside to play.

## NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and recognise how young children learn and develop new skills. They make good use of time, space and resources and provide an inviting learning environment where children enjoy playing and learning with others. A broad range of interesting and enjoyable activities and play experiences are planned and provided, these cover each of the six areas of learning well. Children are keen to learn and concentrate for extended periods at activities that interest them.

Children's communication and early literacy skills are developing well. They confidently talk to staff and each other and are keen to speak and share their ideas in group situations. Children are given good support to participate in discussions and are listened to carefully. They talk about events that are important to them, such as a recent trip to a theme park. Children listen with interest and pleasure to stories, songs and music. They name the animals and characters in a story book and enjoy debating why the lion cub should not have wandered off on his own. The comfortable book area allows them to independently enjoy looking at books. Children have good opportunities to practice and improve their hand/eye coordination as they complete threading pictures and fasten the buckles and buttons on wooden dolls. Although they have free access to writing tools and materials, such as paper, pencils, crayons and scissors, children generally do not write for a purpose through play. For example, they do not use note pads and pencils to record their customers 'appointments' in the 'Maytime salon'. Many children show very good pencil control, confidently writing their own names on their art work, forming recognisable letters that are generally correctly written.

Children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills are developing well. They confidently count when joining in with number rhymes and songs. Older children use mathematical language naturally and appropriately through play, for example sorting and identifying the 'tallest' and 'smallest' pegs in their peg game. Children have frequent opportunities to name and recognise basic shapes and colours. They solve problems of shape and size as they turn the pieces of the large fire engine puzzle until they fit and the picture is complete. Children design and build using construction kits, making 3D triangle 'hats' to wear and show to the staff and their friends. Children explore everyday information and communication technology through using the nursery computer, and as they use the push button telephones and tills in the role play areas. Children explore the natural world through discussion and topic work. They grow flowers from seeds, nurture chilli plants and use small watering cans to water plants planted in their outdoor gardening area.

Children have frequent opportunities to be creative. They join in loudly and enthusiastically with familiar songs and rhymes at group time. Children have regular access to musical instruments and participate readily in a concert for parents once a year. They enjoy weekly ballet lessons.

Children explore and talk about the different textures of chalk, paint, dough and glue as they make models, draw and create collage pictures. They use recyclable materials to create detailed house models. Children use their imaginations well through role play; they wash, curl and plait the dolls hair in the 'Maytime Salon', charging their unsuspecting customers extortionate prices of £100 per visit. In the 'Maytime Hospital' children diagnose dolls ailments using stethoscopes and an otoscope, making them feel 'all better' with 'yucky' medicine and cuddles. Children are engaged purposefully throughout their time at nursery and have very good opportunities to learn, develop new skills and have fun.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and included fully in the life of Maytime Nursery. They are treated with care and respect and have regular opportunities to explore the world they live in. Children's confidence and social skills are promoted well. Staff are good role models, encourage care and concern for others and use positive methods to manage children's behaviour. In response children's behaviour is very good. Good manners are valued. Children often say 'please' and 'thank you' naturally and receive praise for this. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are praised for 'good listening' and for lining up nicely, ready to go outdoors. Children take on roles and responsibilities readily within the group, such as putting away toys when they have finished with them and helping to clear away resources at 'tidy up time'.

Children become aware of their own and other's needs through discussions with staff and themed activities about themselves and the wider society. They bring in and display photos of themselves and their homes as part of the 'where we live' topic and talk about different styles of clothing as they dress up. Children learn about a variety of cultures and different traditions through topic work. They discover other languages through French lessons, dual language posters and bilingual staff. Children explore their local community as they walk to a local care home, delivering brightly decorated parcels of food during their harvest festival celebrations. They enjoy regular visitors to the nursery including a police officer, dentist and road safety officer. The nursery's positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. Staff are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children. An appropriately qualified and experienced Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with parents, staff and other professionals to ensure children are included in all activities and receive the support they need to make progress.

Children benefit from the nursery's commitment to working in partnership with parents. Staff's relationships with parents are friendly and professional. The effective key worker system ensures children are settled and secure and parents are kept up-to-date with their child's care and progress. Appropriate formal and informal systems are in place for parents and staff to exchange information regularly, including newsletters, twice yearly parent meetings and discussions with staff at the end of the day. These help provide children with consistent care between nursery and home. Although an appropriate complaints procedure is in place for parents to use if they have concerns about the care of their child, a system to record any future complaints has not yet been fully developed.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive useful information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning when their child starts nursery. Parents are well informed about the activities and experiences their child is involved in each day through regular newsletters and displayed curriculum plans. Children's achievements are discussed at parent meetings and parents can access their child's

records at any time. Activity planning letters help parents further support their child's learning, by suggesting activities they can provide at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is promoted well through the good leadership and management of nursery. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and work positively together as a team. The nursery's policies and procedures are known and implemented appropriately; this promotes children's care and well-being. All the required documentation, which is required for the efficient and safe management of the nursery, is well organised, comprehensive and stored securely. Although the management team are aware of the regulations they must meet relating to complaints, a system for the recording of complaints has not yet been fully developed.

Procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff ensure they have appropriate qualifications and experience and are secure in their knowledge of child development. The provider takes up the required criminal record bureau checks for all new staff and renews these every three years for established members of staff. Adults who have not yet been fully vetted are never left unsupervised with children. Formal systems for monitoring staff's on-going health status and suitability to work with children are still in the process of being developed. Children benefit as staff are supported appropriately by management both formally and informally through daily discussions, the monitoring of staff practices, staff meetings and appraisals. These are used appropriately to ensure staff have frequent opportunities to further develop their childcare knowledge and teaching skills through training. Consequently, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection, staff working with the younger children have attended training in the Birth to three matters framework. This has helped staff further improve the play opportunities provided for this age group and monitor the developmental progress of the youngest children. Written information for parents has also improved. Curriculum plans are now displayed for parents to see and parents are provided with regular newsletters informing them about planned topic and events, so they can become involved in their children's learning.

## **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.

## **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):

- improve systems for the recording of complaints
- further improve recruitment procedures, to make sure that there are more formal systems in place to monitor the on-going suitability of 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):

- provide more opportunities for children to practice their pencil control and early writing skills through play.

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)