

## Lilliput Montessori Day Nursery (Anstey)

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223229
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jean Suff
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lilliput Day Nurseries Ltd
<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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lilliput Montessori Day Nursery opened in 1994. It operates from adjoining converted buildings with children grouped according to age on the ground and older children on the first floor. There is a self-contained baby unit. The nursery is situated close to the centre of Anstey and draws children from the local area and surrounding villages. There are currently 110 children from birth to eight years on roll. This includes 18 funded three-year-olds and four funded four-year-olds. The nursery has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week, all year round except for one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:00. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. There are 20 members of staff working with the children. Six members of staff have an early years qualification at level 3, four at level 2, and currently two staff are on training programmes. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the Leicestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The nursery's philosophy for care and education is based on the Montessori method of teaching.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to follow appropriate hygiene practices in their daily routines, for example, as staff wash babies hands before eating and remind older children to wash their hands after using the toilet. Through discussion children show they are aware of why they need to wash their hands. Staff give prompt attention to babies and younger children in the event of a soiled or wet nappy and follow clearly displayed procedures to ensure risks of cross-infection are minimised. They pay careful heed to information from parents regarding children's individual health, sleep and dietary needs, so ensuring these are met. Most required documentation to support children's health and welfare is in place, such as accident and medication records. However, parental permission to seek medical advice or treatment has not been obtained which compromises children's welfare in the case of an emergency.

Children across the age range rest and sleep according to their individual needs and parental wishes using bedding appropriate to their stage of development, ranging from cots to floor mats. The welfare of sleeping children is upheld because they are well supervised at all times. The temperature of the nursery is regularly monitored and adjusted as necessary to ensure an appropriate temperature is maintained.

Children enjoy a varied and well-balanced menu of meals and snacks. For example, lunches such as spaghetti bolognese and vegetables followed by fruit flan, and teas such as sandwiches, vegetable crisps and strawberry mousse. Children learn about healthy eating as they choose from a range of fruits at snack time. The setting encourages healthy eating, for example, by making sandwiches with brown bread and providing raw vegetables with tea. Milk or water is taken together at set times and drinking water is readily accessible to children from individual bottles to ensure they remain hydrated and comfortable.

Babies enjoy handling a selection of resources such as cause and effect toys, so helping them to develop their hand to eye coordination. Toddlers and pre-school children develop their dexterity as they ice buns, handle bricks, scissors and glue sticks, or as they make marks on paper.

Babies develop growing control of their bodies as staff encourage them to balance and play games with them that require movement. Babies are able to use resources such as a static climbing frame or baby walker to develop their standing and walking skills. All children play outside daily so enabling them to experience outdoor physical activity. Younger children go for weekly walks to the park enabling them to benefit from outdoor experiences in the fresh air. Pre-school children enjoy throwing and catching balls, playing chase and steering wheeled vehicles in the enclosed garden. They also take part in music and movement sessions indoors. However, at present large physical activities are not planned to offer suitable challenge for older and more able children to extend their skills.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment that is maintained well and suitable for purpose. Space has been organised well to provide separate rooms for children of different ages. The baby unit is spacious, light and airy and consequently babies and young children can

sleep, eat and play together safely and comfortably in a homely atmosphere. The enclosed outdoor play space is regularly monitored, for example, trees were recently cut down to allow for more light and reduce the possibility of twigs and leaves becoming a hazard to children. Inside some resources are stored on a low level which promotes children's independence and decision making.

Children are cared for in a generally safe environment where staff take most steps to reduce risks. For example, regular risk assessments and checks are carried out, the premises are secure and an entry buzzer system is in place. Staff vigilantly oversee arrivals to the provision and visitors are required to sign in. However, hazards such as heavy files being placed on shelving directly above where children sleep on mats compromises children's safety. Stair gates are in place in potentially unsafe areas such as at the top and bottom of the fire escape to further protect children. A secure fence encloses the outside area where children are closely supervised at all times. Good staffing ratios are deployed on local trips out in order that children remain safe. Fire prevention equipment is in place and checked regularly. Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe as they take part in regular fire drills so ensuring they know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are well aware of signs and symptoms of abuse and are familiar with the local child protection guidelines for protecting children. The nursery has a written child protection policy which is made readily available to parents at the time they place their child at the setting.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the caring and warm environment. Babies and young children are developing positive relationships with staff. For example, they enjoy times when they can snuggle in with staff for cuddles, play singing games such as 'row your boat', read books or relax and be quiet. Young children benefit from time when they can choose from a selection of resources that are made available so providing them with opportunities to build on their natural curiosity. Staff spend time talking to and playing with children. Children's understanding of language is promoted by staff through constant conversation, questions and individual attention. Staff sit with very young children to talk about their toys and books and prompt them to point or name objects and shapes. Consequently, children are developing their communication skills and are able to express their needs. Older children are familiar with the routines and enjoy opportunities for going outside and coming together as a group for circle or snack time. However, some activities lack challenge and children sometimes become restless if they have to wait or are not fully involved in a group story. The setting uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support their planning of provision for children under three years.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff working with funded children demonstrate a sound knowledge of most aspects of the Foundation Stage and an understanding of how children learn through play and practical activities. Planning for activities covers all six areas of learning and is linked to the stepping stones leading to the early learning goals. Staff provide a purposeful learning environment that is organised to help children to be independent. They use teaching methods that engage children's interest although some activities can be very adult-directed and lack challenge, such as copy writing news. Staff track children's progress

and mostly use the information to guide their planning, although not all aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world or physical development are planned to offer challenge for older or more able children.

Positive relationships are evident between staff and children. Children develop a good awareness of their own needs and a growing respect for the needs of others as they negotiate sharing resources and waiting their turn. Staff know the children well and demonstrate a high level of commitment to their work. They effectively use story telling, outdoor play and role play to broaden children's experience. Staff use ways to develop children's memory and learning skills such as asking questions to encourage recall. They manage behaviour well, with an emphasis on encouraging good behaviour and ensuring that children understand why something is wrong.

Children are settled in their environment and busily take part in activities. They are able to make independent choices from well-labelled play equipment and self-selection areas. They concentrate well and persevere with tasks showing growing levels of confidence. For example, children spend long periods of time in role, taking and collecting animals from the pet shop and vets. They receive praise in their work and play helping to build their self-esteem. Children respond well to the routine changes during the session, they follow clear guidelines and are aware of expectations such as helping to tidy away activities.

Children talk happily amongst themselves and discuss their families and what they are going to do for Halloween. Some opportunities are created for children to engage in mark-making, for example, they use pencils and crayons to write and draw at the free choice area. Older children recognise letters in their name and are beginning to hold a pencil effectively to form recognisable shapes, although children are not always encouraged to take pride and ownership in their work by naming it themselves. This limits learning. Children listen enthusiastically to stories and have opportunities to look at books independently. They are developing knowledge of sounds as they sing whilst they play outside.

Children use numbers in all areas of the pre-school, for example, counting stars on a chart or talking about the date of their birthday and how long they have to wait until that day comes. They are introduced to simple addition and subtraction through number rhymes and they use language such as more, less, taller and shorter in routines and activities. They have good opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts.

Children engage in first hand experiences which help them to make sense of their world. They can recall events that have happened in the recent past and talk freely about their homes and families. They are learning to respect cultures other than their own as they celebrate festivals and try out associated foods. They know about technology and use technological resources in their play. Children enjoy music and can sing familiar songs and action rhymes. They use a variety of role play settings to develop their imagination and enact their experiences. They have good opportunities to respond to and explore their senses, for example tasting and comparing fruits or describing the weather.

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

The provision is good.

Staff are calm and friendly in their dealings with children, so helping them to feel confident, included and at ease. Children are relaxed in their daily dealings with staff and peers, for example, babies show enjoyment by their facial expressions and gestures as staff talk and play games with them. Children work harmoniously together and are able to exercise choice from a

selection of activities and resources available. Older children are encouraged to develop independence and take responsibility through routine tasks such as putting on their coat and tidying away at the end of sessions. Children behave well in different circumstances, for example, as they sit sociably together at mealtimes and negotiate sharing resources. This is because the staff provide a good role model of positive behaviour, showing respect and concern for each other.

Staff take good regard of information about children's specific care and dietary needs, so ensuring individuality is recognised and individual needs can be met. Children are helped to recognise and respect differences and similarities, for example through listening to stories. They begin to learn about different cultures and religions from displays and through planned activities such as cooking foods for various festivals. Children learn about their local community through visits to the library, a local farm and the school in the same street as the nursery. The setting has experience of supporting children with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff understand the need to liaise with parents and other relevant professionals with regard to such provision. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Prospective parents receive a well-presented prospectus giving information about arrangements for children's care. Opportunities for informal discussion at the start and the end of the day enable staff and parents to share relevant information on children's experiences and activities. Parents of babies and younger children receive written information about the care their children have received that day. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions for future improvement through an annual survey and a feedback section on the nursery newsletters. Staff know children and families well, ensuring good continuity of care for children, and parents are supportive of the setting. A written complaints procedure is in place.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving funded nursery education is good. Information for parents about the Foundation Stage and pre-school activities is available through posters and ongoing informal discussion. Transition is well managed and staff record information about what each child can do at the start of the Foundation Stage so helping them plan activities and experiences that are suitable for the children's stage of development. Parents receive formal reports twice a year, followed by individual appointments with staff where they discuss children's progress and further educational and developmental needs. The nursery welcomes parental involvement and occasionally invites parents into the setting on a formal basis, for example, to join their child for breakfast to enable them to share the same experiences.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. Children's care, learning and play is promoted through the sound organisation of the nursery. Children are protected by appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures. They are cared for by suitable staff who participate in ongoing training to ensure they have the required up to date knowledge for the post they hold. There are clear induction and appraisal systems in place ensuring that staff develop an understanding of the nursery's philosophy, policies and procedures. The setting is organised to maximise play opportunities for children. Different areas of learning allow children to move around and make choices and children are familiar with the nursery routines. Comprehensive documentation is in the process of being updated to reflect current thinking in early years care and education. The recently appointed manager ensures a range of policies and procedures mostly work in

practice to support staff in meeting children's individual needs. However, clear permissions to seek emergency medical advice or treatment are not in place.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. Recent changes of staff within the pre-school room mean roles and responsibilities are in the process of being redefined. However, staff working with pre-school children are well supported by the manager and the owner and children make progress because all staff are working towards clear aims for the delivery of nursery education. Staff have undergone professional training, for example, in areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are keenly involved in what they do and are committed to delivering good quality care and education for children. Staff respond to feedback positively and welcome support from the local area mentor teacher.

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

At the last care inspection the setting was required to ensure that staff keep abreast of future developments in early years and that any improvements and changes are suitably embedded into practice. Staff have attended training and policies and procedures have been revised to take account of current developments in early years. This requirement has been met therefore children's care and welfare is enhanced.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was required to develop staff knowledge and confidence in the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. They were also required to ensure that plans cover all aspects of the stepping stones consistently and that learning intentions are clearly taken from the assessments of children's progress, so that appropriate methods are used to teach children and ensure that children, particularly four-year-olds, are sufficiently challenged. This requirement has been partly met in that required planning is now in place. However, recent staff changes mean that current staff are not necessarily fully trained or confident in their delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Further recommendations with regard to varied teaching methods and provision that ensures appropriate challenge for all children have therefore been raised.

### **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 by 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 satisfactory.

## 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 written parental permission is requested to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- take positive steps to ensure that hazards to children are minimised.

### **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 planned activities and opportunities within everyday routines to provide sufficient challenge for children to extend their learning (this also applies to care)
- develop and use varied teaching methods that help all children to learn effectively.

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)