

# Stanmore Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY283545
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Naomi Brown
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. 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?

Stanmore Montessori opened in 2004. It operates from the Micklem Hall, Church House Cottage in Stanmore. The setting is a single storey building with access to a large outdoor area. It is situated within walking distance of Stanmore station and bus routes, parking restrictions operate in the area. Parks and shops are easily accessible.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 26 children from two to five years of age. There are currently 37 children on roll, this includes 21 funded children. Children attend each day. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days per week during school term time. Sessions are from 09.30 to 12.15 and 13.00 until 15.00.

Four full time and two part-time staff work with the children. Three staff have recognised early years qualifications, either Montessori or National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. One staff member is working towards a Montessori qualification. The setting has links with the Early

Years Childcare Partnership (EYCP) and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The setting follows Montessori teaching methods and the Foundation Stage of Learning.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is adequately maintained as they are offered a range of freshly prepared foods to meet their nutritional needs. Children enjoy eating a range of fresh fruit, vegetables and dips at snack time. Children are able to access regular drinking water which ensures their hydration needs are met.

The areas used by children are clean and hygienic to protect children's health. A suitable sick child policy ensures that children are protected from cross infection. This is shared with parents so that they are sure of the exclusion zones in place to protect all children in the setting. Staff in the setting use anti-bacterial sprays to clean all surfaces which promotes children's health. Children take part in a suitable hand washing routine to protect them from germs, before eating and after toileting.

Children have regular opportunities for physical play as they are able to use a large outdoor space which has suitable large scale equipment to develop their large muscle skill. Smaller equipment enables children to develop small muscle skills as they manipulate a range of cutters, threading beads and construction equipment.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and relax within premises that are clean, well maintained, warm and welcoming to the parents and children. They benefit from the staff having an appropriate understanding of safety issues and the need to take positive steps to prevent accidents. For example, staff are well deployed and premises are secure, socket covers are fitted to exposed points. Practitioners help to keep children safe in the nursery and outside in the garden area because they understand and comply with health and safety requirements.

Children enjoy their play in a safe environment where staff use visual risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. However, risk assessments are not recorded, and consequently this does not allow the setting to identify future hazards, and minimise them. Children play with a range of safe, age-appropriate, good quality toys. They are kept clean and maintained in suitable condition.

The children's welfare is safeguarded because the experienced practitioners have a secure understanding of child protection issues. Their well-being is actively promoted.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy reading stories and playing games, both independently and as a group. Displays around the setting are bright and child orientated with lots of children's work to increase their sense of achievement in their projects. Staff are attentive to children's needs and question children thoughtfully about their games and activities to extend their thinking. Staff have set

manageable goals to children which are worked towards, underpinning their good developmental progress.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress as they learn and play in a well resourced environment. Children have access to a good range of equipment that fully covers the six areas of learning. The setting works to the Montessori method of teaching but manages this well so that the Foundation Stage Curriculum is covered by aspects of the approach. Children's physical development needs are fully met as they are able to play on large scale equipment in the outdoor area. Children's small muscle skills are enhanced as they manipulate a wide range of equipment including play dough cutters, Russian dolls, puzzles and construction toys. Children have access to a well-stocked book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. These books, as well as questioning by staff, help to develop their good communication and language skills. Children have access to a range of numbers and staff take many opportunities to introduce number recognition in activities. Children are able to confidently count to 10 using a range of resources including beads, food, pegs and cards. Children are able to recognise a range of numbers on number strips and are confident with simple calculations. Children are able to use a range of simple technology, operating the computer in the setting with skill. Activities are linked to resources and are planned imaginatively, for example children discuss the growing process using a hyacinth that they have then observed.

Plans cover the six areas of learning and reflect the Montessori method within the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Staff are aware of the requirements of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how to develop their curiosity and imagination. Evaluations are in place for activities, however they do not fully inform next steps for learning. It is difficult to see how the individual sessions are planned with regard to meeting individual children's next steps for learning as the targets set for them are not focussed towards the Early Learning Goals. Assessment processes for individual children are complicated and this makes it difficult to evaluate how well children are progressing towards the Early Learning Goals.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a sense of belonging and are valued as individuals. For example, children talk happily about themselves and people that are important to them such as their families and older siblings. Children are developing a positive attitude towards others and gain an understanding about the wider world and the community through planned activities such as acknowledging different celebrations, outings and having access to a suitable range of play resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The individual needs of all children who attend are met well. The nursery has adequate arrangements to care for children with learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities, although none currently attend.

Children behave well and benefit from lots of praise and encouragement. Staff use appropriate strategies, according to the children's age and stage of development to help children learn right from wrong. Older children help in the setting, and negotiate with younger children and take responsibility for their own behaviour. This fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents provide appropriate and relevant information about their children to the staff and staff give daily feedback to parents about their child's day. This helps to provide children with consistent care between home and nursery. Parents receive adequate information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and there are informal and formal systems in place for staff and parents to share information about children's individual progress and development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by an established staff team who are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the setting. This helps them to meet the needs of the children who attend. However, on the day of inspection the setting was unintentionally minding outside of their conditions as they were caring for a child who was older than their conditions allow. Subsequently the setting breached the conditions of their registration. This has the impact of invalidating their public liability insurance which has an impact on all staff and children in the setting. However, systems are in place to ensure that the setting meets the required ratios and plenty of staff are employed on a daily basis to ensure that numbers are covered in the case of staff sickness. This ensures that children's needs can be consistently met. The manager has written a range of policies and procedures that meet the needs of the setting. However, these do not consistently reflect current best practice guidelines and this impacts on the setting's ability to promote the best needs of children at all times. Staff have opportunities to take training courses throughout the year and this promotes their ability to improve their practice to the benefit of children who attend. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The manager has employed staff who understand the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how to progress the children in their care. Staff are all able to take part in planning for nursery education which allows a broad range of suitable activities to be designed. Activities are evaluated, however, it is difficult to see how these evaluations are used to improve planning for future activities to improve opportunities for children. Resources are well organised to ensure that they cover a range of activities and experiences to enable children to progress well.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection no recommendations were raised. However, since the last inspection the staff at the setting have continued to undertake further training to enable them to develop their practice. This has a positive effect on the continuing safety and achievement of children who attend the setting.

## **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 satisfactory. 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):

- update all policies and procedures to ensure that they reflect current best practice guidelines
- update written risk assessments

#### **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):

- Simplify the evaluation process for individual children to ensure that children's progress can be clearly monitored

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)