

Children of the World Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	108466
Inspection date	23 January 2008
Inspector	Aileen Ewins
Setting Address	St Edwards Parish Centre, Dorset Road, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 3BA
Telephone number	01753 833771
E-mail	
Registered person	Children Of The World Montessori 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?

Children of the World Montessori School opened in September 1999 and operates from Saint Edwards Parish Centre in Windsor, Berkshire. The premises comprise of a large hall with adjoining rooms, which include a kitchen, and a further room used by the children. There is also a large outdoor play area. The school mainly serves children in the local area and is registered to receive nursery education funding.

The provision provides full day care for children aged 2 years 6 months to 5 years. It opens Monday to Friday during school term times only and for 40 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 09.00 until 15.30 and children can attend for either a full day or a half-day. There are currently 60 children on roll, which includes 57 funded three and four year olds. The setting has systems in place to provide support for children with special needs, and currently supports six children for whom English is an additional language.

There are seven full-time staff who work with the children; six of whom have recognised Montessori and Early Years qualifications and one who is working towards a Montessori

qualification. The setting receives support from a Foundation Stage advisor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are taught healthy routines at the Montessori school. Children have opportunities each session to go outside in the secured garden area to play. If the weather is bad children take part in music to movement sessions within the large hall. Children understand to wash their hands before and after eating, before cooking activities, after using the toilet and after messy play. Unfortunately children only have access to one child sized toilet but in times of emergency the staff toilet is used. Children are aware to wipe runny noses and to dispose of the tissue after.

Children are looked after by staff who all hold paediatric first aid qualifications. Staff document accidents and medication well and these are acknowledged by parental signature. Parents give parental consent for emergency treatment/advice should the need arise. Parents are also aware of the sickness policy within the school and children stay at home if suffering from sickness or diarrhoea.

Children are very independent at snack time and help to carry jugs of water over to the snack tables, which are cleaned by staff before snack time. Children sit with staff and are offered water which they pour for themselves. Children can then choose from a range of fruit which includes pears, oranges, banana and apples. Children are given half a piece of fruit to enjoy whilst they sit talking to one another and staff members. Parents provide lunches and are reminded to provide healthy foods. Staff are aware of individual children's dietary needs and allergies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe at the Montessori school as staff ask visitors to sign in to record attendance and the door is locked whilst sessions are in progress. The school is welcoming to children, parents and visitors. The entrance hall displays information to parents and leads off to the toilet areas and the main hall is spacious, light and airy. There is a further small teaching room and kitchen area. Children self register with name and photo cards on arrival. The teaching rooms are set up when children arrive and children can access their resources most easily. Many displays are in place and children delight in seeing their art work hanging from ceilings by pegs and string; attached to walls and cabinets throughout the hall. Displays of children's work covers many themes including families, families around the world, culture and religion, maps of the world, aeroplanes, musical notes to name but a few; and is of a very high standard. Space is utilised well and children have many child sized tables and chairs for their activities.

Fire and emergency evacuation procedures are displayed in the entrance/foyer area; with fire drills practised regularly. Thorough risk assessments are in place; however, daily written checks are not made on either the indoors or outdoors of the setting.

Staff are well aware to safeguard the children in their care and although only two members of staff have completed child protection training, the remaining staff are about to commence a

course shortly. Staff are aware to document any concerns however; and are aware to protect themselves from false allegations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and settled during their time at the Montessori school. Children access the resources easily and readily. Children are confident in their play and happily move between Montessori resources such as puzzles, pictures, beading/threading/pouring and measuring. Staff are on hand to help children should they need it and also to make assessments and observations as children play. Children confidently put on art aprons when painting; using scissors enthusiastically cut off their page and hang up their picture to dry. Children happily play in the home corner with one another and form friendships as they play. Children use plates and cups, food items, rolling pins and other kitchen equipment in their imaginative make believe play.

Children are offered extensive opportunities for model making and design work. Walls and cabinets display children's work throughout the hall and children contently talk about topics that have been covered; which includes recycling, cars and aeroplanes, space, home life, fruit and healthy eating and living around the world. The main hall leads off to the annex room and children move around both rooms and the various activities happily and sensibly. Photographs are available for parents and children to view in the foyer which show children playing in the home corner; visits to Syon Park, White Waltham organic farm and Bird World; cooking, sports day and playing with one another during the day.

All the children join in with a cooking activity which blends comfortably into themes for the week. Children develop self esteem through taking part with this large group activity which is successfully put into place by the organised staff overseeing the children. During circle time children eagerly call out the day of the week, the month and discuss the weather. Children delight together when playing outside in the secured and large garden area attached to the school; and at the end of the session children are exceptionally considerate to one another as they say goodbye to staff, shaking hands with each as they leave.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are taught by staff who have a strong knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the Montessori approach. Information is offered to help parents to extend their children's learning at home. Long term plans are put into place during the middle of the year with short term planning being carried out weekly for the following week and based on children's current interests and the areas of learning within the Foundation Stage. Detailed evaluations are made and all staff continually assess and observe the children. Parents are given daily books which detail progress and also their work for at home which includes learning letters, sounds and words. Development books are also maintained to record how children progress. An emphasis for progression and observation is on the whole based on the Montessori approach, but is currently being plotted to record children's progress within the areas of learning. Staff are aware to continue this practice in order to recognise children's next steps for the early learning goals.

Children are confident in their grasp of language. Children take part in regular phonic sessions and can easily recognise sounds. Staff ask children lots of open questions which in turn encourages conversation. Children readily discuss topics they are looking at, for example a child

explains about a recent aeroplane incident which ties in with a recent topic on aeroplane travel. Children choose books to take home to read with parents and have opportunities to sit in the quiet areas to look at books with friends or alone. Children happily join in familiar songs and action rhymes. Children use the writing table and many can write their own name. Children are given pens, stickers, glue, scissors and paper to use independent of staff assistance.

Staff use activities to tie in to the areas of learning. For example whilst taking part in a cooking activity, the letter of the week, which was C; and the number of the week, which was eight, were used and children chose one of the other to make for their biscuit shape. Children discussed letters starting with C; recalled the ingredients used for making their dough; counted to eight and discussed which creatures had eight legs.

Children have many opportunities to play outside in the garden and use many resources, which include bicycles, tricycles, hoops, balls, climbing frames and sit on cars for example. Children also take part in movement to music sessions indoors, yoga sessions and dance; and learn new skills while discovering musical instruments. In summer months children take part in sports day.

Children have many opportunities to further develop their knowledge of mathematical words, number and shape. Children have a strong awareness of adding and taking away, shorter and longer, sequencing, number patterns and shape. Children also use the computer for educational games confidently, without supervision. Children have an understanding of the wider world, for instance they learn about how families live in other countries, learn both French and German, discuss holidays abroad and discuss one another's culture. Children have made visits into the community, such as Bird World.

Children develop confidence and self esteem. They form warm relationships with one another and the staff. Children play well together and develop imaginative play, for example moving the chairs to form a train and letting passengers on. Children help one another and show an awareness of thinking for themselves, becoming independent in their own care and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well at the Montessori school and have respect for themselves, each other and the staff who care for them. Children are listened to. Children are aware to move around the room sensibly and move on from activity to activity without fuss. Children are offered praise for their achievements and when they do or say something nice or kind. If children do act inappropriately staff speak to them quietly explaining why something is not right to do.

Children are valued and staff are aware of their individual needs. Staff are good role models which impacts on the children. Children are offered awareness of other cultures and religions and show an understanding of the wider world which surrounds them. Montessori resources are designed to aid children if they have particular needs or difficulties as well as helping more able children to develop fully; children therefore are given insight into positive images of society in respect of disability, age and gender. Resources are very hands on and tactile. The school supports children for whom English is a second language and these children are provided with extra support as needed.

Staff and parents form warm relationships and parents have positive comments to make about the school. For example praise is given to how children settle easily and enjoy their time spent with staff; how feedback books at the end of the day are appreciated; how the focus is on the

individual child with excellent support given by committed staff. The notice board in the foyer/entrance hall gives lots of information to parents. Parents are also made aware of the policies and procedures of the school. Regular newsletters are sent out.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is fostered. Children have a sense of right and wrong and treat each other and their surrounding with respect. Children develop emotionally and personally; are confident and happy. Children are offered insight into the wider world in which they live and have an awareness of the various cultures which exist around them.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are made aware of the curriculum and the Montessori aims. Newsletters are sent regularly to parents to help them help their children further whilst at home. Child development records are shared with parents and staff have knowledge of children's likes/dislikes and starting points through discussion with parents when children commence at the school. Each day parents receive a feedback book which briefly describes what children have achieved and their well-being throughout the session. Parents are invited to take part in their children's learning and development through such events such as sports day or the summer fun day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy, confident and settled at the Montessori school. Staff are organised, efficient, experienced and caring in their approach. Staff have strong relationships with each other, the children and the parents. New staff are interviewed, vetted; with references and checks taken up. All staff have Montessori qualifications or are about to complete their training. Staff are deployed well and some are given particular responsibilities which aid their development. Registers are taken for both morning and afternoon sessions. A system is in place to note when children arrive or leave outside the session times. However, actual times are not noted. A rota is maintained of when staff are due to work, however their attendance is not confirmed on the register.

All necessary policies and procedures are set in place and include, for example, health and safety, equal opportunities, behaviour management, settling in, trips and outings and confidentiality. The school displays its certificate of registration, public liability insurance and ensures parents are made aware of the role of Ofsted. Fire drills are practised often. Accident and medication records are completed as required. Children's personal records are stored appropriately and contain all legally required information. Parental consents, as necessary, are in place.

The quality of the leadership and management is good. Two managers/owners are in role and see their work as working within the team with the business side of the school being conducted outside of session times. All staff work together and support one another well. Each classroom has a class leader and teacher. The expectations of staff are centred around the needs of the individual child. The owner/managers see themselves as good role models who influence practise by advising staff, having regular discussions and by ensuring all staff share the same philosophy.

Strengths of the Montessori school are seen in good relationships with staff, children and parents and positive attitude. The provision is aware that stronger links with the wider community would be a bonus. Since the last inspection the provision feel that key issues have been met and future plans include, as always updating materials and ensuring everything in

good working order; and ongoing training staff. Staff are well qualified within the Montessori approach and have a strong knowledge of Birth-to-three and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning for the long term is carried out in middle of term for the next term and weekly plans prepared each Friday; with plans displayed for parents.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the Montessori School was set just two recommendations. These were to first ensure the complaints procedure includes Ofsted's contact details. The setting has met this recommendation in that Ofsted's contact number is relayed to Parents in case they should wish to make a complaint. Complaint forms are also available to parents should they wish to ask for one. Parents are aware of the role of Ofsted. Secondly, to obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical attention/treatment in their absence. This has been met in full and details of written consent are held on file for each child to give consent for staff to seek emergency treatment or advice if need be. Children are therefore kept safe due to these recommendations being met by the provider.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required Ofsted or the provider 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):

- devise a written checklist for checks made on resources and equipment inside and outside the provision to back up the risk assessments already in place
- ensure the times of children arriving late or leaving early are recorded and that staff attendance is recorded in the register on a daily basis.

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 the good practice recently set in place to identify children's next steps within the early learning goals.

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