

Small World Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133393
Inspection date	21 November 2007
Inspector	Sheena Bankier
Setting Address	89 Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX1 5NA
Telephone number	01865 326660
E-mail	smallworldmontessori@mail.com
Registered person	Small World Nursery Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 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?

Small World Nursery is a privately owned Montessori setting. It opened in 1990 and operates from a converted barn and a bungalow. The nursery is situated in a rural area of Kennington, Oxford. A maximum of 70 children aged under eight may attend the setting at any one time. Children can attend full or part time and for out of school care. The nursery is open from 08.00 to 18.00 for 49 weeks of the year. Children have access to a large secure enclosed outdoor area.

The nursery offers funded nursery education sessions to children. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs thirteen members of staff as well as support staff, including a qualified cook and a cleaner. Most of the staff have undertaken Montessori training or hold Montessori qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery provides excellent quality food which is fresh and mainly organic. This is freshly prepared daily on the premises by a qualified cook. The children are involved in preparing fruit and vegetables which develops their understanding of healthy options and increases their confidence to try new foods. Children's individual dietary needs are met extremely well, for example, halal meat and vegetarian options are provided. Staff understand the children's individual dietary needs and children's preferences for portion size is respected. Plenty of food is cooked which ensures children are able to have second helpings if they wish to. Children sit together in small groups at tables for meals and snacks promoting and developing their social skills.

A clean and hygienic environment is provided, the nursery has an indoor shoes policy and the children and staff change their shoes on entering the building. Staff wear gloves and aprons appropriately, such as when serving food or changing nappies. Information is clearly displayed about cleaning routines and procedures in all areas. Children overall learn about good hygiene, as they regularly wash their hands, although at times this is not always consistent in all areas of the nursery. This results at times in children handling food and drinks with unclean hands. Children learn about a healthy lifestyle and taking care of themselves, for example, eating healthily and brushing their teeth. Children benefit from fresh air and physical activity. All the children spend time outside, such as going for walks, visiting the woods, using the large garden which has appropriate equipment, although the older children lack challenging resources in the garden.

Parents provide information to the nursery regarding their children's health needs, such as allergies and medical conditions. Staff are well aware of these and attend to these needs effectively. Accident and medication records are in place and completed in line with requirements. Most staff hold current first aid certificates which enable them to attend to children's minor injuries appropriately. This ensures children's health and well-being.

There is no individual consent from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice for children. This puts children's good health and well-being at potential risk.

Children are able to rest and sleep as they need to. This provides children with time to relax and restore their energy through the day. The babies are provided with secure routines as they follow their own home routine for sleeping and feeding. Staff work closely with parents regarding all aspects of young children's care, such as toilet training. The younger children gained independent skills at an early age, for example, the babies and toddlers drink out of small open glasses at snack and meal times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. The premises are secure and the doors are kept locked. Appropriate safety equipment in place, such as socket covers and safety gates. Staff have a good awareness of how to maintain a safe environment, such as tidying up and cleaning up spillages. There is an evacuation plan which is practised with the staff and children. This ensures they are confident in the procedure. Children learn about keeping themselves safe

through discussions and staff explanations. The older children and those who attend the out of school provision have learned about road safety through the 'Footsteps' road safety awareness programme. This promotes their safety whilst outside of the nursery. Staff closely supervise children indoors at all times. Sleeping children are supervised carefully either directly or with a listening monitor. However, children are not always well supervised outside in the garden over the lunch time period and the required ratio of staff to children is not well maintained. This means children's safety is compromised.

The baby unit offers a 'home from home' environment as the children have access to several rooms, providing space for children to play, eat, sleep and have their care needs met. Children are very independent in the setting. They use child-size furniture. The open shelving allows children to self-select their resources enabling them to make their own choices and decisions. Step-ups to sinks and toilets promote their independence in personal hygiene. Some areas of the setting feel cold and there is no thermometer in place to ensure the temperature is adequate. The nursery has a wide selection of Montessori resources. Overall these are maintained in a safe, good condition for children to use through regular cleaning routines.

Some staff have a suitable understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children in their care and are able to manage any concerns about children appropriately. Newer staff have a basic understanding of how they safeguard children in their care and lack knowledge of the nursery policy and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled at the nursery. The older children know the routines of the nursery well. Children in the nursery enjoy the company of adults and the other children. The babies enjoy cuddles and individual time and attention from staff. Children are taught using Montessori methods and resources in all areas of the nursery. Children benefit from being able to select these resources and initiate their own activities, providing independence and choice. The out of school club have a good range of planned and self-chosen activities. This means they are able to make their own choices and use their ideas and interests. Children learn French as they are read books, are spoken to and sing songs together through-out the day. This encourages children to understand and learn a new language.

Staff in the baby unit have undertaken the Birth to three training. However, this is not actively used to promote outcomes for under three's in the nursery. Children lack regular times to use their creativity and imagination. No clear records are kept of the children's development in the baby unit. This means that when children move up into the next room no records are available to the staff to ensure they have a good understanding of the children's stage of development. Through-out the nursery children's access to books are limited and these are mainly kept out of reach of the children. This does not promote children's independent interest in books.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff working with the funded children lack a working knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They provide a Montessori curriculum for the children, of which they have a sound understanding of its purpose and intentions for the children's learning. Records are kept of the children's progress against the Montessori curriculum. No clear links are made within the development records of how children progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. This results in staff not being fully informed

of how children are progressing or how to plan for their next steps in learning towards the early learning goals.

Children make good progress in some areas of learning, such as Personal and Social and Mathematical development. Children use good manners and are able to negotiate with each other purposefully when needed with little or no adult intervention. The older and more able children organise their own games together with other children, for example, ball games in the garden. The Montessori resources enable children to learn mathematical skills through their practical use, such as problem solving, number sequencing and recognition and one to one correspondence.

A sense of belonging is achieved through children's participation in preparing snacks and meals. Children use sharp knives deftly. They carefully cut up fruit and vegetables, showing excellent small physical skills and very good concentration. Knowledge is gained about modern technology as they programme the microwave, steamer and bread maker. In addition to cutting with knives, children also adeptly use scissors to cut and use needles and thread with sewing cards. This promotes their small physical skills well. Children have access to a painting easel to use their creativity and imagination and sometime clay is used to create three dimensional models.

However, children do not partake in regular and varied creative and imaginative activities.

Montessori resources are used to develop children's understanding of letters, such as sandpaper letter tiles to trace over. Children write their own names on their work and the more able and older children copy writing clearly, correctly forming letters and words. Children listen well to stories being read to them. Staff use good techniques to ensure children stay involved and interested in the story, however, they do not check the children's comprehension of it afterwards. A weekly outing to the library is undertaken. This supports their interest in books and also contributes to their understanding of the local community as they walk there and back. In the room children lack access to a good range of books. This does not promote their enjoyment of them.

Children use the nursery woods where they practise some of their physical skills, such as balancing and climbing. They also learn about nature from observing plants, such as mushrooms first hand. The garden is used daily and children benefit from the large space in which to run freely around. They benefit from gardening activities, feeding the wild birds and caring for the nursery rabbits. This develops their understanding and knowledge of living things. The garden equipment lacks challenge for this age-range as it is mostly aimed at the younger the children. Staff do not actively promote children's large physical skills in the garden as overall they do not involve themselves in this type of play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The nursery reflects the wide diversity of staff and children through celebrating a range of different festival and religious dates. This values the different cultural and religious backgrounds of the families. Many of the staff and children speak in their home language which supports those who are learning English as an additional language and widens children's understanding of languages different to their own. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are treated and valued as individuals by staff, for example, staff working in the baby unit recognise and respond to the children's individual needs. The nursery is able to manage concerns about children's development appropriately. Suitable procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Children's behaviour is good. Staff provide good role models to the children as they are calm and polite. Good manners are encouraged, such as 'please' and 'thank you'. The older children are developing skills to negotiate with each other without staff support, for example, children ask politely and calmly for space to sit down during circle time. Children develop responsibility as they help tidy up and care for the nursery pets. Children's self-esteem and confidence is built through praise and encouragement from staff.

The partnership with parents is good. Staff and parents exchange information daily with each other as staff are available to speak to parents on arrival and collection times. In the baby unit 'two-way diaries' are used. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Good information is available to parents which includes leaflets about Montessori education and details of policies and procedures. Comprehensive information is gained from parents regarding children's needs and the parents wishes. This enables the nursery to meet these. Twice yearly meetings are held with parents to discuss the children's progress in more detail. Parents are able to have access to their children's Montessori development records on request and at the formal meetings.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The registered person works alongside staff with the children which enables her to observe their practice with the children. Staff focus on the needs of children overall and have a clear sense of purpose. Staff work well as a team and have good communication and regular meetings are held. The environment is set out well to develop children's independence. Some of the key issues and recommendations from the last inspection have not been fully addressed. This means that the nursery has not greatly increased and developed it's practice further.

Paperwork is satisfactory although some lacks the necessary detail. There is no written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for children. The records relating to children receiving nursery education funding lack detail of their progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Some staff lack knowledge of the settings policies and procedures, particularly the child protection policy and procedures. The staff to children ratio is not well maintained in the garden over the lunch time period.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was given two actions and three recommendations. These were in regard to documentation to keep a daily record of children's attendance, visitors and accidents, to improve hand washing resources for staff, increase flexibility to enable toddlers to have more choice regarding participating in structured activities and to ensure the staff ratio is maintained at all times and trainees under 17 years of age are not included in the ratio.

The nursery keeps an accurate record of the times children attend, records of visitors to the setting and accidents being recorded. This ensures records are maintained appropriately and

in line with regulation. A weekly check of the staff hand washing facilities are undertaken and recorded. This ensures a supply of paper towels and soap are always available and staff are able to maintain good hygiene routines. Circle time for the toddlers has been developed to offer variety and interest to the children. Staff support children by sitting with them and encouraging their participation. This enables children to gain from the experience. Staff ratios are overall maintained through most of the day although at times in the garden required ratios are not in place. The nursery is aware of not including trainees aged 17 years and under in the ratio's. This means that trainees have appropriate duties and responsibilities.

At the last nursery education inspection three key issues were made. These were to develop the curriculum to increase opportunities for children to learn about modern technology, develop their imagination and individuality through creativity, fully develop their physical skills and have free access to a wide selection of books. The nursery was asked to introduce better monitoring systems to evaluate practice and record children's progress and improve opportunities for parents/carers to learn about the curriculum and be involved in their children's learning.

The nursery has not addressed these fully. The children use modern technology when they help to prepare snacks and meals, such as a microwave, steamer and bread maker. This enables children to programme equipment and use it for a purpose raising their awareness of the use of modern technology. Although children have some access to activities to develop their imagination and individuality through creativity, such as painting at an easel and gluing activities, this area has not been developed further to provide more varied and frequent activities. Children's small physical skills are well developed through the variety of tasks they participate in. They have access to large physical activities, such as visiting the woods and playing in the garden. However, the garden equipment lacks challenge for the children and staff overall do not involve themselves in outdoor play. This does not fully promote children's large physical skills. Children still lack free access to books, which does not allow them choices or encourage their enjoyment of books. No formal records are in place regarding children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. No formal evaluations are kept to develop and improve practice. Records are kept of children's progress within the Montessori curriculum and parents have access to these. Staff and parents also regularly discuss children's progress and twice yearly formal meetings are held. This ensures parents are kept informed.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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):

- ensure consistent routines are in place for children's hand washing
- obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for children
- ensure children are supervised and ratio's are maintained at all times in the garden
- develop the curriculum to provide regular and varied activities to enable children to use and extend their imaginations and creativity
- ensure children have free access in all areas of the provision to a variety of books
- ensure all staff have a working knowledge of the policies and procedures, particularly safeguarding children.

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 challenging physical activities in the garden and develop the children's skills and confidence through further staff involvement
- ensure staff update their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how this links with the Montessori curriculum
- ensure records of children's progress clearly links to the early learning goals and stepping stones.

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