

Right Start Montessori Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160120
Inspection date	14 February 2008
Inspector	Naomi Brown

Setting Address	East Lodge Lane, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 8AS
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Telephone number	07762 560739
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E-mail

Registered person	Angela Palmer
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Right Start Montessori Pre-School opened in 2000 and operates from two single storey self-contained buildings in the grounds of Botany Bay Cricket Club. It is situated in the London borough of Enfield. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00 to 15.00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor area and the cricket field.

There are currently 41 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions, and come from local and wider catchment areas.

The pre-school employs five staff who work directly with the children and an administrator. Of these four including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The Montessori method of teaching features in the curriculum. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted as they are offered a suitable range of food and drinks throughout the day. Children are offered fruit and plain biscuits at snack time and they have access to water regularly to ensure that their nutritional needs are met. Staff remind children to wipe their noses with a tissue and to put their hands over their mouths when they cough. This helps children to learn to take positive steps to minimise cross infection. Staff clean areas sufficiently so that children are protected from germs. Suitable routines ensure that children always wash their hands before snack and after toileting and messy play. This, and appropriate policies and procedures, helps to promote their continuing wellbeing.

Children have opportunities for physical exercise including an outdoor play area, dancing and yoga. Children enjoy physical play and this supports their large muscle development and helps to underpin their physical health. Dough cutters, pencils and painting equipment provide opportunities for children to develop their small muscle skills. This ensures that children's physical development needs are adequately met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe while in the setting as there is an appropriate range of safety equipment in place including smoke alarms and fire doors. Staff take time to teach children about fire safety, singing a 'fire safety' song at circle time. Areas used by children are risk assessed and staff check equipment regularly to ensure it is continuously safe for children to use. Doors to the setting are manned by staff to ensure that all visitors to the setting can be vetted. This helps to protect children who attend. The visitors book and clear registers also promote the safety of those in the building, although the register does not always show children's actual times of arrival and departure. This compromises children safety in the case of an emergency evacuation. Fire drills are practiced by the staff and children which helps to improve the speed at which children can be evacuated with benefit to their safety.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have an appropriate understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. The setting has a suitable policy and procedure in place to ensure that all staff, parents and carers are clear about the steps that would be taken to protect children if there were concerns about their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Younger children have plenty of opportunities to extend themselves as they have access to a wide range of good quality resources. Resources are labelled and organised so that children can access some freely. Children are supported and extended by staff who use gentle questioning and prompts to encourage children to experience a range of activities that help them to develop and learn. Children enjoy their time in the setting and show interest in the resources that are available to them. This helps them to develop their concentration skills as they are sufficiently interested to sit at individual tasks for considerable periods of time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making progress as they are cared for by staff who have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Resources fully cover the six areas of learning and are laid out enticingly to encourage children to try a number of different activities in every learning session.

Children's mathematical development is increasing as they are offered lots of opportunities to make simple calculations in everyday activities. They play with a range of puzzles and staff support them to develop mathematical concepts. Craft activities are used well to expand children's concept of a range of colours and shapes. Children are competent and interested learners who are stimulated by the firm range of activities that are offered to them. Children are able to represent a number of feelings, emotions and concepts in the creative play. For example, children can draw a range of faces, happy and sad, to represent how members of their family are feeling. Children are developing a good sense of time as they are able to describe events that happened to them several days ago and pinpoint when these happened, for example 'I had my hair cut on Sunday.' Tidy up time is an enjoyable affair as the children tidy while they dance to music. A yoga session encourages children to move all parts of their body. Children are clearly familiar with the routine and join in with enthusiasm. However, opportunities for large scale outdoor play are somewhat limited and this impacts on the setting's ability to fully challenge older children physically.

Plans are well written and fully cover the six areas of learning. However, it is not consistently clear how activities are adapted for individual children and this impacts on the setting's ability to encourage maximum progress for every child. However, assessment records are detailed and offer a good snapshot of children's development. Observations clearly inform these assessments and staff clearly know the children that they care for. This has a positive impact on the extent to which children develop towards the Early Learning Goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about the diversity of our wider world as they have access to positive images of different cultures, races and religions. However, images of individuals with differing abilities are limited and this impacts on children's understanding of disability. Staff in the setting are positive role models to children and promote an inclusive attitude in those that they care for. This encourages children to develop effective relationships with staff and each other. Children show adequate levels of self control and are able to successfully resolve any minor disputes without staff intervention. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The setting has a sensitive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff have experience of identifying potential concerns and managing individual educational plans for children with particular needs. The manager has a mature attitude towards communicating any concerns to parents and carers and is open about working with outside agencies to best meet the needs of the child. This benefits all children in the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents and carers are welcomed into the setting and have opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Parents have access to educational plans and can attend a twice yearly parents evening. Newsletters to parents request their feedback but the manager is exploring new ways of getting parents' and carer's input to increase the number of responses. This information helps the manager and her team to provide improving continuity of care for the children who attend the setting. Policies and procedures

are clearly written and shared with parents. However, some policies do not consistently reflect the current contact details of Ofsted. This affects parents and carers' ability to contact the regulator in the case of a serious complaint and could impact on children's continuing safety in the setting. Parents are satisfied with the care that their children receive and feel that they can approach staff at the setting when necessary.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit as they are cared for by a manager who has established a qualified and organised team. The manager has attended lots of training to improve her practice and consistently monitors her personal progress as well as that of her team. The setting has recently cared for children outside of their registered numbers for a short period of time. Subsequently the conditions of their registration were breached. This was an unintentional oversight and the setting has since requested a variation to their registered numbers. Children are consistently cared for by sufficient qualified staff and the setting has a number of emergency cover staff who can attend at short notice. This ensures that ratios are met at all times and protects children who attend.

The quality of the leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager of the setting has appointed qualified and suitable staff who have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum to ensure that it is delivered consistently to all children. The manager and her team have sourced a good range of equipment to cover the six areas of learning, ensuring that children have plenty of experiences and activities to promote their good progress. Long, medium and short term plans are well thought out to cover the curriculum well. They are varied to ensure that children remain interested in the education that they receive. This has a positive impact on their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection several recommendations were raised that concerned risk assessments, improving food hygiene, improving fire drill records and increasing the range of toys that reflect positive images of gender and disability. The setting now carries out daily risk assessments for all areas used by children. Three staff members have undertaken food hygiene training. Fire drill records have been improved to accurately reflect a continuing improvement in the time it takes to evacuate the building. The setting has improved resources that reflect positive images of gender but still has some improvements to make regarding positive images of disability. These improvements have a positive affect on the continuing safety and enjoyment 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

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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):

- provide a suitable range of toys that reflect positive images of gender and disability
- ensure that policies consistently reflect the contact details of the regulator
- ensure that registers reflect children's actual times of arrival and departure.

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):

- consider developing plans to reflect planning for individual children.
- increase opportunities for large scale physical play to develop children's large motor development.

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