

# Wise Owl Montessori Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116731
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Mary Deadman
<b>Setting Address</b>	United Reformed Church, Cores End Road, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire, SL8 5HZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01628 525210 and 523724
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Wise Owl Montessori Ltd.
<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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Wise Owl Montessori Nursery School opened in 1994. It operates from two halls in the United Reformed Church on the outskirts of Bourne End, Buckinghamshire. The setting has access to an enclosed secure garden area.

There are currently 27 children on roll. This includes 13 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 12.00.

Four staff work with the children. Over half the staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and follows the Montessori method of teaching.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from generally effective hygiene routines. They gain an understanding of hygiene procedures and wash their hands prior to snack. Staff commend them for placing their hands in front of their mouths when they cough. They reaffirm the reason for this, which supports children's understanding of good practise. Although staff wash the tables prior to children sitting down for snack time, they do not provide plates and children place their food down on the table in-between bites.

Children benefit from a healthy diet, which promotes their individual requirements and provides them with an understanding of healthy eating. They enjoy snacks of apple and banana. Children have a drink with their snack however, there is no easy access to fresh drinking water throughout the session. This relies on children asking for a drink if they need one. Staff adhere to children's individual dietary requirements and suitable procedures are in place to support children who have allergies.

Staff hold an appropriate first aid qualification and have easy access to basic first aid items. Staff record accidents and share the information with parents. This supports children's welfare after minor accidents.

Children enjoy a suitable range of physical activities that contribute towards a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy playing football and use the climbing frame and slide with confidence. They understand the effect exercise has on their bodies as they acknowledge that their heart beats faster after activity.

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

The provision is inadequate.

The premises are attractively decorated with children's artwork. Children have a good amount of clear play space. They have use of two main play areas, with the upstairs room used for large physical play. Suitable toys and equipment are available to support children's development. Staff teach children safety rules, for example, how to hold scissors without hurting themselves.

There are no daily risk assessments completed and as a result, children are at some risk of injury. For example, the finger guards are not always in place on the toilet doors, which results in children catching their fingers in the door.

Although there is a fire evacuation procedure it is not clearly displayed. Staff state that children take part in fire drills but there is no record of these. This does not allow them to monitor the effectiveness of the evacuation procedure which compromises children's safety.

Staff do not promote children's welfare as they do not always follow effective child protection procedures. This practice does not meet the overarching requirements of National Standard 13, child protection.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and fully participate in a range of activities. Areas are organised well to encourage children's participation and children arrive eager to join in. For example, children enjoy playing in the home corner. They cook dinner, complete the ironing and still find time to take the baby for a walk.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children make sound progress. Staff monitor children's development and evaluate the general outcome of the activity. Although staff have a good understanding of children's stage of development and general aims for their learning, there are no stringent procedures in place to plan for the next area of development for each child. On occasions, there is no clear identification of which staff member will introduce and implement an activity to the children, which restricts children's learning potential during that specific activity. There are basic procedures in place to monitor and evaluate staff's strengths and identify future training requirements.

Children have reasonable access to the written word and understand that print carries meaning. They have a clear understanding of linking sounds to letters. Staff extend children's learning in this area of development as they use games to support children's development. Children independently write their name and spell out each letter. Some children are able to read simple words.

Children gain an understanding of mathematical concepts. They have some access to activities which support their understanding of sequencing and concepts such as more and less than. Children have a secure understanding of shape. They recognise a variety of shapes and make good attempts to draw these.

Children have weekly use of the computer. They manage developmentally appropriate tasks. For example, they wash their hands independently after craft activities and self select resources. Children are resourceful and staff promote and extend their creativity and imagination. For example, when children find a toy fire extinguisher, staff encourage them to dress in the fire fighter's costume and participate in role play.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children enjoy the company of their friends and adults. They generally play cooperatively together as they participate in organised activities. Staff manage minor disputes in a sensitive way, which supports children's understanding of right and wrong. Staff immediately note any behaviour issues and promptly devise activities to support children's understanding of how to share, take turns and be kind to each other. Staff generally work in partnership with parents to improve children's social skills and behaviour. They work with outside agencies to support children's general development. Staff work with parents and speech therapists to support children who require additional help with their language development.

Children learn about the world around them through a variety of planned topics. During the acknowledgement of Chinese New Year, children learn about Chinese writing methods. Craft

activities relate to various topics. For example, children make mother's day cards from pressed flowers they collect on walks.

Staff have an insufficient knowledge and understanding of the complaints procedure. There is a written procedure which contains minimal information. However, this is not in easy access to parents and does not provide them with clear information to support them should they have any concerns. This is a breach of regulations.

With the exception of the complaints procedure, partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents receive a good amount of information within the prospectus at the commencement of their child's placement. This includes information relating to the early learning goals and the Montessori method of teaching. Parents receive formal reports relating to children's development. They have confidence in the setting and are very happy with the care their child receives. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children enter confidently into the setting, which has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. There is a high staff to child ratio, which enables staff to support children's confidence and develop new skills. Staff give children much time and attention. Children benefit from the care of a staff team who are suitably qualified, experienced and committed to good childcare practice.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is satisfactory. Generally effective organisation, ensures that children benefit from the planning of purposeful activities and adherence of record keeping requirements. There are suitable systems in place to ensure that staff undertake the required reference checks on new staff, which promotes children's welfare.

There are a reasonable range of policies and procedures in place to support children's welfare. However, some of these do not fully comply with current legislation and guidance. There are basic systems in place to monitor and evaluate the nursery education and staff performance, which ensures that children make progress.

The provider does not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the regulations associated with the registration of sessional care. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection the setting were asked to consider how to provide children with more opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills. The staff provide a variety of opportunities, for example, children write letters and address envelopes. The staff collate children's writing and send examples of this home to parents. They provide parents with an explanation of the stage of their child's development in relation to their writing skills. Children are competent at forming and recognising various letters.

The pre-school were also asked to provide daily opportunities for physical play, to make the pond safe, gain permission for emergency medical treatment, to update policies and procedures and ensure records are retained on the premises.

Children regularly use the large upstairs hall. They enjoy running around, play football and use hoops and balance beams. Children benefit from regular exercise.

The manager states that all policies and procedures have been updated and are regularly reviewed. The evidence supports that this is an ongoing issue and some procedures need further clarification. Staff maintain the required records and permission forms, which are signed by parents. The required information is kept on site with further records being available on request.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the previous 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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- make available to parents, a written statement that provides details of procedures to be followed if they have a complaint and devise systems to enable a summary of any complaint to be shared with other parents on request
- ensure there are effective child protection procedures in place, which comply with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### **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 to review the planning of activities and the evaluation of children's learning
- review the system for staff appraisals to ensure the discussions and outcomes are recorded.

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)