

Willow Park Montessori Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	509616
Inspection date	10 December 2007
Inspector	Debra Davey
Setting Address	19 Glenlyon Road, Eltham, London, SE9 1AL
Telephone number	0208 850 8753
E-mail	
Registered person	Willow Park Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Willow Park Montessori Day Nursery is a privately owned and managed nursery. It opened in 1992 and operates from a large private house. It is situated on a residential street in Eltham in the London borough of Greenwich. A maximum of 28 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 48 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The nursery follows the Montessori methods of teaching and dance lessons are offered. The nursery does not provide places for funded three and four year old children. The nursery provides support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs four full time and two part time members of staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery is clean and well maintained, and clear routines for nappy changing and toileting ensure that children are protected from cross infection. For example, staff wear gloves when changing nappies and children learn to wash their hands when using the bathroom and before cooking activities. Children are encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch and they take pride in having their own individual soap bags for their toiletries. In this way children are learning to attend to their own personal care to help them stay healthy.

Children develop an understanding of healthy foods through useful topics such as growing and handling fruit, making displays of allotment vegetables and making home made pizza. They learn about different flavours such as sweet and sour when squeezing their own lemons for juice making and tasting Christmas pudding. Children enjoy fresh fruit snacks where they sit together and drinks are served. There is a menu of planned meals for children which includes foods from different cultures. Children enjoy the main meals but there are high levels of fat and sugar in desserts which does not protect children's long term health.

Children are helped to understand that exercise is beneficial to them through a good range of physical play opportunities, for example, regular walks to the park, dance classes and daily access to the nursery garden. This helps children to develop confidence and enjoy moving with control, using their bodies in various ways by moving to music or meeting the challenge of an obstacle course. They are protected in the event of an accident because most staff have up-to-date training in first aid procedures and accidents are clearly recorded. Children benefit from good arrangements to care for them should they become ill in the setting and a clear exclusion policy to prevent the spread of infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Since the last inspection, aspects of the physical environment of the nursery have been improved, for example, children benefit from a bright and welcoming new bathroom and the youngest children are cared for close to the toilet facilities to ensure that their care needs are met well. There is a new music room upstairs where children enjoy the freedom of large physical play indoors through music and movement. Children enjoy the newly landscaped nursery garden as they are able to use their wheeled toys, and play with bats and balls in a spacious area. Whilst the effective use of risk assessments for indoors ensures that children are kept safe; the system for risk assessment in the new nursery garden has not yet been sufficiently developed to protect children. As a result, the decking area of the garden is hazardous because there is no physical barrier to protect children from falling off the front edge, particularly when using wheeled toys. The decking is slippery for children because it is not kept frost free in cold weather. Whilst staff are careful to ensure that they supervise children, this compromises safety.

Children use an extensive range of toys and equipment that are of good quality and kept safe through a checking system. They are further protected because staff teach them how to use the equipment with care to prevent accidents, for example, when handling and pouring beads using small objects, children understand that the beads must not be put in their mouths. Children enjoy free access to suitable tools such as a pencil sharpener, scissors and lemon graters, which

they use in a safe and appropriate manner. Children are protected on outings because there is a clear outings policy in place which staff use to identify and minimise risks.

Children are protected from harm and abuse because staff have received recent and appropriate training in safeguarding children issues, which they have used well to update their policies and procedures. The clear policy statement for safeguarding issues is prominently displayed in the hallway and shared with parents on admission. This ensures that all adults have a good understanding of how to protect children and recognise this as their first priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Every effort has been made by staff to ensure that the nursery is warm and welcoming to children, for example, bright posters and displays of interest to children and their parents are prominently displayed in the porch and hallway. Children are warmly greeted and welcomed by staff as they arrive, encouraged to hang up their own coat and change shoes in preparation for breakfast or pre-school activities.

Children benefit from practical activities which are planned to promote their independence and help them learn. Children are grouped in classrooms according to their age and ability. There is a clear daily routine which includes time for group discussions, and individual and small group activities using Montessori equipment. This works well for older children who move around the classrooms confidently as they self select and use the equipment with increasing skill and dexterity. They show a very good level of co-operation with their friends as they choose to work together and alone. Staff record their achievements with complex tasks relating to shape, colour and pencil control. In this way, they get to know children well and identify helpful learning intentions as part of their preparation for school. Adult led circle times provide opportunities for children to talk about their experiences outside the nursery, for example, a family trip to a new local swimming pool. Such discussions are extended through staff's skilled use of questioning and the use of a good range of books and photographs as a basis for discussion.

Children benefit from a good range of regular outings with staff, for example, a trip to the local nature reserve. In this way children learn about the environment where they live and the wider world. Staff review child progress through written records based on observations of children both when they start at nursery and ongoing. However, observations, especially those for younger children attending, are not linked to their all round development. As a result, it is difficult for staff to plan activities that are age specific and foster important skills such as communication between two year olds. However, regular less structured activities are provided to ensure that children are able to explore their imagination and creativity through dance and singing as well as some role play opportunities, for example, rehearsals for the Christmas play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are helped to consider and value diversity through useful discussions about the wider world, visits to the local community and are able to learn about the needs of their friends through discussions around cultural and religious differences. For example, children enjoy shared experiences of festivals such as St Patrick's day, Diwali and Christmas. Many resources in the nursery are used to support this aim such as books, photographs, globes and maps but

there are few opportunities for domestic role play that reflects diversity. Children enjoy activities that help them to develop an interest in the world in which they live, for example, a project about Africa to help them look at plants, animals and people from other countries. Children also learn about the needs of others through outings to the local general practitioner surgery and special needs shop as part of a project about the Health service. Children attending who may be identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported because the nursery has a specially trained worker to ensure that their needs are met through communication with parents and professional agencies. Staff also ensure that behaviour issues are well monitored and that strategies such as extra attention for children are used to support a positive outcome. Behaviour generally in the nursery is good as children show concern and courtesy for one another in response to the good example set by staff. The nursery works well with parents through a system of clear information, regular reviews in the form of parent evenings and daily feedback. As a result, staff get to know families well, partnerships with parents are strong and parents express positive views about the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are protected because there is a sound recruitment process to ensure that staff undergo background checks and are suitably qualified. In service training for the staff team ensures that they are updated in their skills. Recently, staff have trained as a team in safeguarding children issues as well as Birth to three matters, although this framework is yet to be implemented to support the specific needs of younger children attending. There are a range of policies and procedures in place which contribute to the satisfactory organisation of the setting but the system for risk assessment has not been fully effective for the garden which comprises child safety. All other records such as accident and medications records are used well and shared with parents appropriately.

The daily routine is sufficiently detailed to allow children opportunities for indoor and outdoor play as well as regular meals, snacks and rest times. However, there are less secure systems in place to ensure that children are able to form secure attachments to key staff members. For example, changeover periods can become a little disorganised and younger children are not always well supported at these times.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to improved organisation of the nursery for the benefit of the children attending and this is fully supported by parents. For example, there has been a recent consultation with parents regarding the organisation of the setting. This, combined with the planned implementation of an effective framework such as Birth to three matters means that the staff team are taking positive steps to build on their strengths and develop evaluative practice.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in 2004, an action was agreed with the provider to ensure that there are procedures for lost or uncollected children. It was also recommended that a checking procedure was put into place for new staff. It was recommended that a review took place of the Health and Safety policy in relation to fire safety, including the sleep room location and stair wells. There was a recommendation made regarding good hygiene relating to nursery pets and also kitchen utensils.

Since the last inspections improvements have been made regarding the action and recommendations set; the action set at the last inspection has now been addressed and procedures are clearly displayed in the hallway and the policy handbook. The recommendations have all been addressed and a full fire assessment has taken place including a visit from the fire safety officer and a new evacuation procedure implemented. Hygiene procedures are sound as the kitchen is clean and well presented, and has under gone a satisfactory inspection from the environmental health officer.

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

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.

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 that the planned menu for children promotes healthy eating.
- conduct a thorough risk assessment of decking area and take steps to minimise risks.
- ensure that planning reflects the needs of children under three.
- ensure that children are well supported when moving between areas during the course of the day.

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