

Gina's Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135291
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Inspector	Julia Louise Crowley

Setting Address	140 Morley Hill, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 0BG
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Telephone number	020 8482 3881
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E-mail	
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Registered person	Gina Ferriter
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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 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?

Gina's Montessori Nursery is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 1987 and operates from the ground floor of a semi detached residential property. Children have access to a through lounge, conservatory and toilet. A maximum of 12 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday and sessions run from 8.30 to 10.45, 11.00 to 13.15 and 13.30 to 15.45, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 33 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and beyond. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs three staff. Two of the staff, including the manager holds appropriate early years qualifications.

The Nursery receives support from the Early Years Development Child Care Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean, safe and well organised environment. They stay healthy because the provider follows current and up to date environmental health and hygiene guidelines. For example, the setting is cleaned daily and maintained. In addition, a thorough risk assessment is completed and recorded.

The provider has all necessary policies and procedures in place. For example, medication and accident records and consent for emergency procedures. Effective health and hygiene procedures are in place; practitioners implement these well to minimise the risk of cross infection. Good daily routines help children understand the importance of personal hygiene. Children know they must wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating snacks to prevent the spread of germs. For example, children enthusiastically pass around the wipes before fruit time and know to place them in the bin and independently access liquid soap in the bathroom.

Children are successfully nourished as they enjoy healthy fruits during each session. Fresh water is accessible at all times and children help themselves.

Opportunities for children to be active, learn to control their bodies and develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors are effective. For example, children enjoy a broad range of opportunities to balance along beams, negotiate tunnels, play with beanbags and hoops, manoeuvre pedal bikes and explore and develop their imagination in the large sand pit and a water play table. Children competently use a wide range of small tools and equipment with increasing control.

Children inventively learn about healthy living. The practitioners are enthusiastic when offering information and inspire the children to eat and play healthily. For example, children carefully consider why they need toothpaste and what it does. Children happily chatter at circle time about older siblings with wobbly teeth and dentist trips. They eagerly play with the healthy foods flash cards and begin to select foods for an imaginary picnic on the carpet.

All practitioners hold first aid certificates and have a competent knowledge of what to do should an emergency take place. Consequently children are protected in the event of an accident or illness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and well maintained setting. They move around the nursery confidently and are aware of how to maintain a safe and calm environment. For example, children know where to find challenging and favourite toys and automatically tidy toys away after use to prevent any accident. They carefully place their chairs in a circle for fruit time and know to support the back in case it tips. Consequently children begin to consider safety and make their own independent decisions about how to keep themselves and others safe. Practitioners offer gently reminders for younger children and present as positive role models.

Children move confidently around the nursery. They explore and become engrossed in their chosen activity because each area is well resourced and accessible. Children freely use the creative area which has sufficient space for children to work. It has open shelving full of art

materials and equipment at children's level. However, the heating in the conservatory does not consistently provide a comfortable, warm environment for play and learning for children and practitioners.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to play outside in small groups where they are effectively supervised by a practitioner. Practitioners are skilled at allowing the children to take risks that build their confidence but does not compromise their safety. For example, children run through outdoor hoops, they negotiate as they hold it upright while moving their bodies through.

Children are safe and secure on the premises. Their safety is protected effectively by the comprehensive health and safety policy. This is implemented well and effectively monitored by the designated member of staff responsible for safety. Children are safeguarded from abuse or neglect by practitioner's good understanding and proactive approach to implementing their child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young children are greatly enthused by the activities provided. They enthusiastically explore and learn as they play. Children gluing different materials to create their own Easter nests are very focussed in their play. Practitioners are eager to support their understanding of the materials they are using by commenting on their texture and colour. In addition the children really enjoy the freedom they have to experiment with sand, water and paint.

Young children communicate confidently with the sensitive encouragement and good support of practitioners listening and contributing to stories. For example, children talk about one child's recent skiing trip. They discuss the weather and the height of the mountains imaginatively. Time is given to allow younger children to contribute at their own pace as older children are helped to wait and listen. At snack time, fruit is provided for children in bowls containing five pre-selected pieces and handed round by the children themselves. This practice has been developed in consultation with parents, and is intended to reinforce sharing and politeness as well as mathematical opportunities. Less positively, the pre-selection of the fruits limits younger children's opportunities to further their independence.

Practitioners follow children's interests and use spontaneous occurrences to extend children's learning and help them to make connections. For example, one child volunteers to tell the story at circle time. The child selects the book 'Do you like custard on your cornflakes?' and considers how best to hold the book so that everyone can see the page. The child allows the group to answer in turn and quickly settles into the role of presenting to the group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the practitioners competent knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones. They use the Foundation Stage guidance as a working document that they frequently refer to in order to develop and inform what they provide so children enjoy a well-balanced curriculum which captures their interest. Practitioners take children's individual interests into consideration when planning activities. They record observations on children and these are used to plan the next steps of each child's learning.

The manager is particularly skilled in wondering out loud and asking questions to extend children's thinking, during activities. For example, as the children consider the weather outside,

she asks what happens to the rain that falls on the ground. Children are focussed and spell bound and respond enthusiastically with their ideas. Practitioners repeat activities to consolidate learning and allow children to fully explore what is provided, for example, role play, construction sets and maths games are left out over the whole week. Every day familiar objects are utilised to create innovative games. For example, supermarket vouchers are collected and used as tokens to count and take away, offering children opportunities to calculate and use language for thinking.

Children are making progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They are interested, and motivated to learn and persist at chosen activities. They are developing self-confidence and self-esteem as they express their needs and views, for example, when discussing the foods that they like to eat and what makes the best picnic.

Children have close relationships with practitioners, they are able to work as part of a group, take turns and share. Children spontaneously hug the practitioners as they chatter and focus together on activities; they co-operate over sharing and request the timer so that everyone has a turn with the nursery toy cat. They come together at snack time and in the early morning circle time in a relaxed way and sing greeting songs to each other and practitioners.

Children's communication, language and literacy is well developed. They enjoy small group story times and circle times where they listen and discuss well. Children's literacy is encouraged very effectively. They know the names and sounds of many letters of the alphabet and are beginning to write. This is fostered by the well resourced writing area and the amount of text displayed around the room. Opportunities to write are available indoors and outside weather permitting

Children are very interested in numbers. Many children are confident in counting and recognising written numbers. They participate in the counting activities that are woven into each morning. They count how many children are present; they look at the date and clap that number of times to decide if it is a large number. They are learning simple addition and subtraction through acting out number songs and are beginning to measure. An example of this is children measuring their height and recording their findings on the wall chart.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are learning about the world they live in and the beliefs of other people. For example, children arrive at the nursery to see a yellow ribbon hanging on the door. This means that this week is French week. Children greet each other and practitioners with 'Bonjour'. They also enjoy hearing, acting and completing creative activities that tell the story of religious festivals, such as Diwali, Easter and Passover. Children look at books about other faiths' festivals, for example, Diwali and Christmas. In addition the displays on the walls provide positive images of different cultures, disability and gender roles.

Children are happy and are developing a positive self-image because of the excellent encouragement given to each child to be themselves and to develop at their own pace. Children feeling a little unsure about separating from their parents are given individual attention and are helped to get involved. Children who enjoy participating in group games do so with enthusiasm but those less keen are not put under pressure to join in or made to feel awkward because they choose not to.

Children's behaviour is good. Children are praised for being kind and helpful. Staff provide very good role models through the obviously sound relationships they have with each other. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered very well; the positive caring emphasis at the nursery and the nurturing relationships practitioners form with children supports this.

Younger children benefit from the good relationships and partnership between staff and parents. New parents are invited to visit the nursery and they are given thorough information about the nursery including policies and procedures and guidance on activities, illness and safety. Older children's parents are involved in their children's learning through the provision of good quality information, for example, on the early learning goals and in the children's home folders enabling them to effectively contribute. Parents receive reports about their children's progress and are invited to meet with the key workers to discuss the children's progress. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is outstanding.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and learning at the nursery. The overarching aim of the nursery is to provide children with a caring environment where they can enjoy a variety of experiences and form a secure and firm foundation for learning. Sound policies and procedures underpin the good practice of what is provided. Records are kept effective, accurate and up to date. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. The manager has a sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and supports the staff team well to implement these effectively within the setting. She is keen to encourage both staff and children to reach their full potential. This happens through staff meetings, one to one meetings and frequent informal conversations. However staff do not make effective use of training and guidance provided by the local authority. This limits their ability to share new skills and knowledge and implement what they learn to further benefit the children. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of what is provided. Self assessment forms are used each term and action plans are developed from these. Parents' views are regarded as very important and practitioners value their ideas and contributions. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure contingency arrangements for staff absences and emergencies. The provider has sufficient staff ratios and a resource of relief staff that she can use in emergency situations such as sickness. In addition she was asked to offer opportunities for children to develop skills in movement with control and co ordination. This has been achieved through a variety of outdoor and indoor play equipment consequently children's safety and physical development is maintained.

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):

- improve heating system in the conservatory to ensure a consistent temperature

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):

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