

Frogmore Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117114
Inspection date	25 March 2008
Inspector	Heather Morgan
Setting Address	Frogmore House, Frogmore Avenue, Egguckland, PL6 5XH
Telephone number	01752 769704
E-mail	
Registered person	Partnership of Lawrence & Maureen Taylor
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

Frogmore Montessori Nursery School opened in 1991. It operates from a large detached house in a residential area of Plymouth. There is a large secluded garden and outdoor play area at the rear of the property. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 50 children on roll aged from under one year to under eight years. This includes 26 children receiving funded nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Core hours are from 08:00 until 17:45, with additional care offered between 07:30 until 08:00 and from 17:45 until 18:15. Holiday and out of school care is offered to children who have attended the nursery and siblings up to the age of eight years.

The nursery is privately owned and is one of three operated by the proprietors. One of the proprietors manages the nursery and is supported by 10 members of staff. The manager and nine members of staff hold relevant qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local

Authority. It follows Montessori teaching methods and is a member of the Montessori Education Forum.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing good healthy lifestyles. They regularly run around and play outdoors in the fresh air, where they access a wide range of resources and equipment that support their physical development. Babies and young children who are developing their mobility are able to use push-along toys and begin climbing up and sliding down low level play equipment. Older children are able to manoeuvre wheeled toys, balance along wooden stepping stones and control their large muscle movements as they work together to manipulate a large parachute.

Children have regular meals and snacks throughout the day, that maintain their energy and hydration levels. Younger children are offered regular drinks, whilst older children can help themselves to drinks of water whenever they are thirsty. Part way through each morning or afternoon session, children enjoy a healthy, nutritious snack of fruit or vegetables, with a drink of milk or water. Children enjoy a cooked lunch in the middle of the day, or eat nutritious packed lunches provided by their parents. Good attention is paid to meeting the needs of children with special dietary requirements.

Children are protected from the risk of infection through the implementation of a range of policies and procedures. For example, staff regularly undertake cleaning throughout the nursery and use colour coded cloths for different tasks. Bathroom areas are kept clean, but most of the toilets do not have seats fitted and there are no partitions to provide privacy. Children learn the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet, or before eating. They wash carefully using liquid soap to limit the risk of cross infection. Sometimes staff provide them with baskets of disposable paper towels to dry their hands and at other times they are familiar with the routine of returning to their play area where the paper towels are stored.

The emotional well-being of the youngest children, particularly the babies, is supported very well. They are cared for by a consistent team of staff with whom they develop close, affectionate relationships. Effective settling procedures are agreed with parents to reflect the individual needs of the children. They are also supported well as they make transitions through the nursery into different groups that cater for their changing needs as they grow and develop.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure environment. Access to the building is carefully monitored and doors kept locked to ensure that the premises cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons and that children cannot leave the building unsupervised.

Children's play areas are carefully checked at the start of each session and monitored throughout the day. Comprehensive risk assessments of the play environment identify any potential hazards and controls are in place to minimise risks to children. For example, the door on the first floor landing is secured when children are playing upstairs, cleaning fluids are stored out of the reach of children and electric sockets are covered when not in use. Children develop a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe as they follow clear procedures to walk up and down stairs

holding the banister and they discuss the importance of handling equipment such as scissors and pencil sharpeners carefully so that they do not hurt themselves or others. They also practise their fire drill regularly to ensure that they can evacuate the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.

Children use a range of resources that are maintained in good condition. They are stored at a low level so that children can safely access them independently. Children are very familiar with the routine of tidying away one piece of equipment before they select another, which ensures that the play environment is not cluttered and the risk of tripping accidents is minimised. Children are carefully supervised as they learn to use new pieces of equipment.

Children's welfare is given high priority as all members of staff have a secure understanding of child protection issues, and the nursery's policies and procedures for responding to concerns. They are supported in their recording and referral responsibilities by a range of reference materials and by a designated child protection officer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages enjoy their time at the nursery. They are cared for in small groups, with children of similar ages and stages of development. Babies enjoy a wide range of sensory and exploratory play experiences which help them make sense of the world around them. They explore natural and man made materials, begin to develop their skills as communicators as they interact with their familiar adult carers, and enjoy using small world and role play equipment as they develop their imagination and make connections between their play and real life experiences.

As children develop they are offered more play experiences and their development is supported through carefully planned activities. For example, they enjoy listening to stories, creating two and three-dimensional art work using many different materials, developing an awareness of number and enhancing their hand-eye co-ordination as they become increasingly skilled at using Montessori practical life resources. Carefully planned routines ensure that all children have opportunities to access the different play environments within the nursery, although sometimes the two-year-old children are grouped all together for activities and have limited opportunities to make their own individual choices within each play area.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff team work together well to offer children a range of experiences that support their progress and development. Consequently, children make good progress along the stepping stones in each of the six learning areas. Staff plan a range of activities and are clear about the learning objectives of each one. This enables them to support children's learning and assess their development. Clear records of children's progress along the stepping stones are kept and staff ensure that children are able to repeat activities as often as necessary when learning new skills. Children's play experiences are regularly evaluated and information used to plan future activities. This process is effective in supporting children's progress, although does not identify how individual children's next steps for learning build on what they already know and can do.

Children develop good independence and are very skilled at selecting and using the available resources. They sometimes work co-operatively, for example when constructing a large train

track and are also able to persevere with tasks to complete them on their own. They are developing very good speaking and listening skills as they learn to differentiate sounds, notice rhymes and enjoy singing. They use language well to describe what they are doing and to engage their friends and adults in conversation. They use numbers confidently to count different objects and are developing a good awareness of a range of mathematical concepts. For example, they can sort and match using a range of criteria and can recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes. They use appropriate language to make comparisons of size, for example when comparing shorter and longer rods. Children have a keen interest in their environment and some of its features. They like to explore different materials to find out which ones are magnetic, they learn how to care for plants and animals, and enjoy handling different materials such as sand, water and dough. Children have many opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination. They are able to skilfully manipulate very small pieces of equipment such as beads and use tools such as tweezers to carefully transfer resources from one container to another. They access a wide variety of paint, collage and recyclable materials which they use in different ways to create artwork that represents their thoughts and ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well by the staff team who liaise closely with parents to provide consistent care. Effective verbal and written communication supports staff in meeting children's needs and access to the group's policies and procedures ensures children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. Children are supported well in settling in to the nursery community and accessing the wide range of play experiences available. Good support is provided for children with specific needs as staff closely observe them and identify where additional support is required to enable children to achieve appropriate targets.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is very good because they respond well to the calm and consistent support of the staff, who implement the nursery's policy of positive reinforcement very effectively. Children are supported in learning the necessary skills to promote harmonious play such as the importance of sharing and taking turns. Their good behaviour is rewarded by regular praise and encouragement. Staff are good role models, consequently, the children develop good manners and speak respectfully to others. Children learning English as an additional language are supported well in developing their communication skills. Their self-esteem and sense of belonging is also supported as they are encouraged to celebrate their traditional festivals and events within the nursery, developing everyone's awareness of diversity.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They are well informed about the curriculum their children are following and how the range of activities support their children's progress and development. Regular information about the nursery's themes and the activities their children enjoy enables them to develop conversations at home that have a positive impact on children's learning. Parents are knowledgeable about, and pleased with the progress their children are making. They have opportunities to discuss their children's achievements, although evidence of learning at home is not included in children's assessment records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are cared for by a team of staff who are well qualified and experienced. Secure recruitment procedures are in place, supported by a robust induction programme to ensure that staff caring for children are appropriately vetted and their working practices evaluated. Staff have access to a range of training opportunities to support their ongoing professional development and some are working towards higher qualifications.

Daily routines are well organised to ensure that children have opportunities to access the different play environments within the nursery, and to ensure that they are able to rest and enjoy quiet times as well as engaging in exercise outdoors. Carefully planned staff rotas are used effectively to ensure that appropriate adult ratios are maintained throughout the day.

All regulatory documentation is in place and made readily available to staff and parents. Policies are reviewed regularly and parents given an opportunity to comment on them, influencing their development. The range of policies and procedures in place are implemented effectively to promote positive outcomes for children.

Leadership and management of the nursery education curriculum are good. The proprietor works closely with her team of staff to oversee the planning of activities, ensuring that children access a balanced curriculum. Regular discussions between staff and evaluations of the children's learning enable the team to adapt the activities offered to support children's progress. Staff appraisal is used effectively to encourage all members of the team to reflect on their practice and identify areas for improvement. Staff are enthusiastic about attending training and implementing new ideas which have a positive impact on children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the nursery has improved the support offered to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as they have reviewed and updated their policies to reflect current legislation. They have also improved procedures for ensuring children's health and safety by regularly checking that the contents of first aid boxes are kept up-to-date and keeping clear records of children's attendance times.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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 the bathroom facilities to provide children with fully equipped toilets and easily accessible resources for drying their hands; consider how to support children's privacy when using the bathroom areas
- review daily routines to provide children, particularly those aged two years, with more opportunities to choose freely from a wide range of play experiences each day

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):

- further develop the planning and assessment cycle to ensure that when planning children's next steps for learning they build on what individual children know and can do; include information from parents in assessments of children's progress

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