

# Fledglings Montesorri Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 137297  
**Inspection date** 02 April 2008  
**Inspector** Silvia Richardson

**Setting Address** The Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 1HN  
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**Registered person** Brigid Mahony  
**Type of inspection** Integrated  
**Type of care** 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 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?

Fledglings Montessori Pre-school was registered in 1991. It operates from the Friends Meeting House, located in the centre of Bromley. The group have use of the main hall, a side room, premises facilities and an outside play space. Fledglings is registered to provide care for 32 children aged from two years to under five years. There are currently 41 children on roll, of whom 30 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 12:00. The pre-school accepts children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are five staff working directly with the children, including a qualified early years teacher, two qualified Montessori teachers, a trainee NVQ level 2 and a trainee Montessori teacher. The staff team provide a curriculum based on the Montessori Method and the Early Years curriculum. Staff have access to training courses and support services run by Bromley Early Years.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Well kept premises and hygienically clean toilet and wash facilities, are promoting children's welfare in the setting. Children's independence in the bathroom is supported well, through the use of step stools, so that children can reach the wash hand basins. Children understand the importance of hand washing and are able to say that soap helps to remove germs. Children are developing good personal hygiene habits, because they are routinely encouraged to wash their hands at the end of the play session, before having snacks and after using the toilet. Good hygiene practices are helping to protect children from cross infection, such as thorough cleaning of tables and provision of a clean table cloth, as part of the arrangements for drinks and snacks. Appropriate records are kept, supporting children's health and welfare, such as accident and medication records.

Adults are aware of children presenting with food allergies and have verbal agreements with parents, regarding provision of suitable snacks and drinks. Parents provide drinking water for children in a named bottle or beaker and this is placed in a designated position, where children know where to find it and help themselves at any time during the course of the session. Children are well hydrated, because they are also offered a choice of water or milk during snack time. Children are offered fresh or dried fruit and biscuits as snacks, in agreement with parents. However, the provision is not affording children choices from a range of healthy options and there are missed opportunities during the snack time, for children to talk and learn about foods which are good for them and those which are less beneficial to their health.

Children have good opportunities to acquire a broad range of physical skills, through well planned outside activities. Children are learning to balance and move around in variety of ways, such as hopping, skipping and jumping through hoops and peddling tricycles. They are developing hand and eye coordination through ball games and use a range of tools, such as spades and brushes. Adults create an interesting and stimulating outdoor play and learning environment, helping children to enjoy fresh air and exercise. However, children's learning about how their bodies work and their understanding of nutrition and physical activity are limited. This is because adults are not initiating discussion, for example about food energy and muscle strength, during the time children are actually engaged in physical activity, to help children make the connections and promote their understanding of being healthy.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and move around the setting confidently, because adults create a safe and secure environment. Outer doors are secure, ensuring no unauthorised access. Inner doors are fitted with bolts or hooks, denying children unsupervised access to other rooms and areas. Children are learning to become aware of their surroundings and encouraged to pick up and put toys away after use, avoiding tripping hazards. Children are directed in how to safely and appropriately use a range of Montessori equipment, promoting their confidence and independent learning. Adults provide clear safety rules and boundaries for children, so that they understand how to keep themselves and others safe. Children learn to sit safely on the floor, such as crossing their legs, avoiding tripping and folding their arms, to avoid a hand being trodden on. Visual information is available to children, reinforcing messages about staying safe.

Children are offered a wide range of interesting resources for role play and for exploration and discovery. Children enjoy 'acting out' fixing and mending electrical items with screw drivers, such as plugs, CD players and telephones. The activity is well supervised, so that children learn how to use tools safely. However, children's play and learning in this area, is not reinforced by discussion of safety issues and the hazards of 'playing' with electrical and electronic equipment in their home and other settings, significantly compromising their capacity to stay safe. Children know what to do and how to stay safe, should emergency evacuation of the premises be necessary, because they routinely practise fire drills. Written information for adults about fire procedures is displayed and fire exits are clearly marked and unobstructed, aiding swift and safe evacuation.

Children are kept safe and protected should safeguarding concerns arise, because adults have a good understanding of child protection issues. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, including direct supervision of any non vetted helpers. Adults check the identity of visitors and keep written records of those on the premises, helping children to stay safe. Adults make appropriate use of risk assessment, especially in the outside play area, reducing risks and minimising hazards, so that children play safely and securely. Risk assessment is also appropriately applied for taking children on outings, such as to the park, so that they cross roads safely and are closely supervised, keeping them safe from harm.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the setting, because adults create a warm and nurturing environment. Children enjoy familiar and consistent routines, helping them to feel secure in their learning. Children confidently move around the setting, making choices from the range of activities on offer, because adults present these in interesting ways. Adults clearly explain the activity choices available to children, motivating their enthusiasm to try new things. Children play very well together in small groups, because there are sufficient resources for satisfying group play experiences and plenty of space to spread out. Children actively take part in whole group activities, enjoying a real sense of belonging, because these sessions are skilfully lead and managed. A good range and balance of activities are provided, both inside and outside, so that children are always purposefully and constructively occupied. Children are developing confidence and independence, because adults consistently encourage children to try and do things for themselves, such as putting on aprons for messy activities, coats for outside play and helping themselves to their drinks. Activities are well organised, so that the developmental needs of younger and older children are appropriately met, such as small group story sessions.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Adults have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning, so that children take part in a wide variety of activities across all six areas of learning. The environment, both inside and outside, is very well planned, so that children become confident and independent learners. Activities reflect the community children come from and the wider world, so that children relate well to the teaching and learning opportunities. Children are focused and concentrate well, because adults are skilled at gaining and holding children's attention. Children are friendly, sociable and chatty, because adults provide good role models for standards of behaviour. Adults are calm, warm and reassuring in their approaches to children, so that children enjoy positive learning experiences and feel good about themselves and their

achievements. Children are making good progress, because adults assess well children's starting points and set appropriate targets, together with clear strategies for skill acquisition. Good use is made of observation, helping to plan effectively for children's next steps in their learning.

Children have consistent learning opportunities, for developing skills in maths, such as, at the beginning of each session, children count and calculate the number of children, girls and boys present in the group. They talk about 'more and less than', and look at numbers as figures, developing understanding of maths concepts. Children are especially enjoying learning through singing and rhymes. Adults support children's enjoyment through songs about numbers and days of the week. Children see words as carrying meaning and point to those representing days, seasons and weather, helping them to also learn about past, present and future. Children enjoy stories and looking at books, which are well presented, motivating their interest in language and literacy. They enjoy mark-making activities and use a variety of resources for writing for different purposes. Children have some excellent opportunities to use a wide range of resources for developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They enjoy gardening activities, information and communication technology and practical activities, for learning about different cultures and customs. Children are developing their imagination and creative skills through music, role play, painting and craft activities and are encouraged to use construction materials to build and make things of their own design.

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

The provision is good.

Children are made very welcome in the setting and adults create an inclusive environment, so that all children are able to make full use of the facilities and activities on offer. Group activities are particularly successful, enabling all children to participate and make a contribution, because they are skilfully lead and managed. Children enjoy taking an active part in story telling and take turns in counting the number of children present. Adults get to know the children well, through seeking and sharing information with parents and observing the children while they are playing, so that individual care and learning needs are effectively addressed. Adults have an appropriate awareness of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and work with outside agencies, such as speech and language therapist, facilitating children's development and progress. Books, pictures and photographs reflect diversity and disability, supporting children's learning and appreciation of differences. Parents are invited to contribute from their own experiences, so that children enjoy practical learning activities, regarding different cultures, customs and festivals.

Children are very well behaved in the setting and show a strong desire to cooperate and develop appropriate social skills, because adults provide good role models. Children share and take turns well, because adults support children effectively. Children have a good understanding of desirable behaviour, because adults are clear about expectations and positively encourage acceptable ways of behaving. Good use is made of resources, such as the 'good sitting cushion', helping children to listen and pay appropriate attention, for example, during whole group circle activities. Adults consistently praise children by saying, for example, 'good thinking', 'good listening' and 'good walking', reinforcing positively, desirable behaviour that promotes learning and social skills. Adults talk to children about being kind and remark on appropriate ways of talking to friends, such as not shouting and talking nicely. Adults show children the 'please remember book', which provides written and clear visual images and photographs, as reminders of desired behaviour in the group. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The quality of partnership with parents and carers is good.

Adults establish strong working relationships with parents and carers, so that they are able to contribute positively to children's learning in the group. Parents and carers are encouraged to participate, by sending in toys and items for the 'show and tell' session, supporting children's learning of letters and sounds. Some useful written and photographic information is available to parents and carers, so that they have a good knowledge and understanding of the purpose of the activities offered to children, especially with regards to the Early Years curriculum and the six areas of learning and the Montessori method of teaching and learning. Parents and carers have good opportunities to spend time in the setting, settling new children and contributing to activities, providing them with direct experience of the children's learning opportunities. Adults are available to parents and carers each session, to talk about children's progress and development. Formal meetings are also arranged and written reports provided, keeping parents and carers well informed. Children's observational and achievement records are available to parents and carers and there is a note on the parent/carers board, encouraging them to ask to see their children's records.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Adults are properly vetted ensuring they are suitable to look after children. A good ratio of qualified staff and assistants are employed, so that children receive good levels of support and supervision. Adults are well deployed in the setting, so that children are able to enjoy a wide range of different activities, in the main hall, the entrance lobby, side room and outside play area. Activities are very well arranged, so that children help themselves to easily accessible resources, making choices and decisions about what they want to do and with what and whom they wish to play. Good use is made of space, so that groups of children can play comfortably together. A lengthy free-play period, is enabling children to learn at their own pace. The schedule of activities is well balanced and includes indoor and outdoor play, rest and snack time, small and whole group activities, meeting children's care, learning and play needs throughout the session. Policies and procedures are in place, ensuring the safe and efficient management of the setting. Appropriate records are kept, including daily registers, accounting for the times children are in the care of the provider. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

The manager provides a 'hands-on' presence in the group and acts as a role-model for good practice, especially for trainees working in the setting. Guidance is clear, positive and helpful, so that staff understand the ethos of the group and work well as team. Teaching methods are consistent and strongly encourage children to think and do things for themselves, promoting confidence and independence. The manager draws on many years of experience, providing good quality play and learning experiences for children, and adapts well to curriculum changes. Planning is strong and ensures that activities are inclusive and address individual learning needs. The curriculum is monitored and evaluated, so that strengths and weaknesses are identified. Action plans are in place to bring about improvement, so that the setting continues to promote children's care, welfare and learning. Staff have further training opportunities, enhancing their practice in the setting. Leadership is effective, ensuring good communication and positive partnerships between staff and parents and carers.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last care inspection, the provider ensures staff are aware of up to date child protection procedures, enabling them to respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.

Since the last nursery education inspection, the provider ensures children receive support when using the computer, developing their abilities.

### **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**

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 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):

- create opportunities for children to develop their understanding of how to stay safe when handling tools and electronic equipment, with regards to the associated hazards and dangers of electricity

#### **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):

- provide healthy choices at snack times and create opportunities for children to learn about and make connections between healthy eating, exercise, physical activity and how their bodies work

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)