

Inspirations Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY364535
Inspection date	27 June 2008
Inspector	Naomi Brown
Setting Address	Enfield Cricket Club, 9 Lincoln Road, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 2RY
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Registered person	The Partnership of Inspirations Montessori Nursery School
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?

The setting was registered in 2007. The nursery school operates from Enfield Cricket Club and is within reach of local amenities. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time. There are currently 18 children on roll between the ages of two and four, of whom 12 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. There are four full- and part-time members of staff, all of whom are qualified to a minimum of NVQ level 3. The setting follows the Montessori method of teaching.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well protected as they are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment. Children are able to take responsibility for their own health as they are able to wash their own hands without prompting in the well organised toileting areas. Staff support younger children in their hygiene routines, for example, pulling hand towels down from the

dispenser to their level. This ensures that all children in the setting are able to learn about steps they need to take to keep themselves healthy.

Children receive a good range of healthy snacks while in the setting. They have independent access to a wide range of fruit and select it themselves. They also take responsibility for clearing up after snack time as they adhere to a simple clearing routine that staff have designed for them. This ensures that children are learning about the importance of clearing surfaces used for food and they understand the importance of disposing of leftovers appropriately. Children are enthusiastic about their snacks and they eat happily as a group, supported well by staff who encourage them to discuss healthy eating. Children are confident to pour their own drinks and have regular access to drinks throughout the day to meet their hydration needs.

Children have good opportunities to develop their large and small muscle skills. For example, children take part in activities that help them to develop their pincer movements, threading beads and using tweezers to manoeuvre objects. Children ride bikes, move through tunnels and balance on the see-saw, supported and praised by staff in all their efforts. This develops their confidence to try new challenges and aids their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is upheld while they are in the setting. They play and learn in a well organised environment where equipment is stored safely and within children's easy reach. Staff check all equipment regularly to ensure its continuing suitability for children's use and use a system of well organised risk assessments to ensure that both indoor and outdoor areas are safe for children's play. Staff help children to keep themselves safe, gently encouraging them to put toys away to keep areas clear and thanking them for their help. Children are protected by good systems in place to secure their environment. For example, the staff do not admit visitors without an appointment and all visitors are recorded. Children are counted as they enter and leave the setting after outdoor play and doors to the setting are secured with high latches so that children cannot operate them independently. Children are able to manage their own safety in the large outdoor area as staff have implemented strong boundaries and rules for outdoor play. This ensures that children can play safely at all times. However, some large indoor play equipment, including a ball pit, is not well organised and as such poses a hazard to children moving around the setting.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded as all staff are fully aware of signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. The manager of the setting is confident to record and report concerns should they arise. Policies that relate to child protection are all well written and comprehensive and are shared with parents so that they are sure of the setting's responsibilities towards their children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and content throughout their time in the setting. They all take part in the good range of activities that are laid out on tables and the floor throughout the room. Children have access to a wide variety of puzzles that encourage them to recognise colours and shapes and to solve simple problems when fitting different pieces together. Children have lots of opportunities to make marks and to recognise letters as there are alphabet strips around the room and pencils and paper throughout the setting which they can use to practice letters and

marks. Staff in the setting have implemented a good range of themes that support children's development including weeks surrounding a particular country. Throughout 'India Week' children had henna tattoos, made Indian foods and created distinctive and imaginative artwork that represented different aspects of the culture. This is indicative of the level of detail and imagination that staff apply to children's activities to support their creative development.

Staff use a range of well thought out questions to encourage children's thought processes. For example, while two children make a race track for some cars a member of staff asks the children where the cars are going. The children then create a story that involves the cars going to the seaside and act this out. Children are confident to create a series of very imaginative games and play well together in groups and independently.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress within the Foundation Stage curriculum as they are taught by staff who have a secure understanding of the curriculum and how children learn and develop. Throughout the range of well thought out activities children show good levels of concentration and engagement with the resources that have been laid out for them. Staff are skilled at planning activities that cover the six areas of learning and use outside visitors to supplement the strong range of activities that they offer. A volunteer from the local library visits to read stories to the group, which she does with a range of puppets. Children are mesmerised by the actions of the puppets that are used to tell the story and they mimic the range of movements that they make. This activity encourages them to respond to stories and to recognise common features of texts as the volunteer discusses the beginning, middle and the end of the books. Children have plenty of opportunities to extend their mathematical skills as staff involve numbers throughout all activities, encouraging children to recognise numbers at snack time and to count different items throughout the day. Children are able to count up to ten with confidence and some are able to count to twenty without prompting. Colour, shape and number puzzles are used throughout the day to encourage children to problem solve and reason. Staff ask a series of pertinent open questions to children throughout the day to encourage them to extend their thinking, for example during a hand printing task children are asked to mix the colours that they will use, exploring the effects of mixing different paints. This is indicative of the level of care that staff take when planning activities, to ensure that large elements of each activity can be child-led.

Plans that relate to the Foundation Stage are well written and clearly cover the six areas of learning for a range of abilities. Staff take meaningful observations that demonstrate their individual knowledge of the children that they care for. However, observations and assessments are not consistently linked to the Foundation Stage and this affects how accurately one can identify children's progress within this framework. The setting also works within the Montessori method and plans clearly demonstrate how the Montessori method and the Foundation Stage curriculum are linked to provide a coherent and effective curriculum that meets the needs of all children in the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn from staff who use positive language with them at all times and readily discuss differences between cultures, religions and abilities in a respectful manner. Children are secure in the setting and have formed strong relationships with staff and each other. They are warmly comforted and this ensures that any children who are new to the setting can settle quickly.

Children embrace a good range of activities that increase their understanding of the wider world. For example, children have recently enjoyed 'India Week,' during which they made Indian food, took part in a henna tattoo activity and interpreted a range of Indian artwork in a craft session. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Strong boundaries and clear rules encourage children to manage their own behaviour. Children are cooperative with each other and respond quickly to directions given by staff. Children help to tidy up the setting and respond well to established routines.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive plenty of information regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum when their children enrol in the setting. They then have continuous access to information surrounding their children's achievements, activities and progress. The manager is planning a parent consultation evening shortly to discuss children's progress formally with parents as this is currently an informal arrangement between staff and parents. Regular newsletters and a thorough entry point questionnaire ensure that there is an effective two-way dialogue between staff and parents which underpins good continuity of care for all children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit as they are cared for by a well organised and responsible staff team who all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities towards the children in their care. Staff are all well qualified and experienced and this ensures that they can plan and implement a good range of activities to enable children to play and learn. Staff have access to a wide range of training that they undertake to develop their skills as practitioners. This helps them to maintain practice that reflects best practice guidelines to the benefit of all children. All documentation is effectively maintained to promote good outcomes for all children and shared with parents to ensure that they understand the provision that their children receive. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff and the manager meet regularly to combine their knowledge of individual children so that their specific needs can be planned for and this is reflected in planning documentation. Plans are regularly evaluated along with all activities in the setting and this helps to provide continuously improving educational provision for all children who attend. Staff are uniformly enthusiastic about the activities that they plan for children and this enthusiasm translates to the children so that they enjoy their educational development.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable: this is the first inspection since registration.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take 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):

- consider improving the organisation of large indoor play equipment to ensure that all areas are suitable for children's play

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):

- consider improving current observational records to demonstrate how they link to the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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