

Snowflakes Day Nursery and Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Julie Biddle
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Snowflakes Day Nursery and Montessori is one of two privately owned nurseries. It opened in 2002 and operates from one large playroom in a portacabin. It is situated in the London borough of Ealing.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children in the early years age group and there are currently 25 children on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs four members of staff and all of these hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery follows traditional and Montessori teaching methods.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff show a good knowledge of each child's individuality and interests and use this information to provide well for their individual needs. Children are involved in a good range of activities which are provided according to their interests and enhance their learning through play and conversation. Partnerships with parents and other professionals are strong. The management team and staff demonstrate a commitment for continuous improvement and are aware of their strengths and areas for further development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further develop the outdoor area for the benefit of all the children
- update the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risks for outings and trips.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safe and secure in the nursery as appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Staff are familiar with the safeguarding policy and are aware of the correct procedures to follow should there be any concerns. The children's safety is given high priority at all times, with risk assessments carried out on equipment and

the premises, both inside and outside. However, the risk assessments do not include outings.

Security is rigorous as staff check the identity of everyone arriving at the nursery. Children are further protected as staff and parents are reminded not to let any one shadow them into the setting. In addition, the nursery has in place a robust recruitment procedure that includes Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, references and a detailed induction period. Meaning that staff working with the children are suitable to do so.

The manager and provider have a clear commitment to the continuous improvement of the nursery. They and the staff group demonstrate a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement; they all, for example, would like to improve the outdoor area for the children. The views of parents are meaningfully sought through questionnaires; issues raised by parents are acted upon immediately thus benefiting all the children. The nursery is also receptive to support, guidance and feedback from the local authority.

Partnership with parents is good. They have good information about the setting and are kept up to date with current themes and activities through regular newsletters. In addition, a notice board in reception keeps parents informed of staff on site and a host of information related to children and activities in the area. Key workers are always available to discuss any issues with parents. Parents are invited to forums where they are able to meet local authority trainers and take part in informative sessions about children's play for example. Parents comment they are very happy with the nursery and the approachable staff.

The nursery is proactive in forming good links with other professional agencies to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive additional support to meet their needs effectively. The provider and manager are committed to ensuring the staff are suitably trained and can access training throughout the year, meaning staff are enthused in their work with the children. Regular staff meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to share good practice and evaluate activities.

Overall children benefit from a fully inclusive environment. The nursery actively promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring that all children and their families are valued and respected. Many of the staff speak community languages and so support both children and families with English as an additional language. Staff's planning for the individual child helps to narrow the achievement gap and support all children's progress. There is a range of toys and resources which help to promote children's understanding of diversity within our society, for example, posters of family and community groups. Furthermore, diversity is valued through recognising special events and festivals in children's lives, such as Christmas, Diwali and graduation to 'big' school.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are well settled and thoroughly enjoy their time at this stimulating and friendly nursery. The key worker system in place ensures that staff get to know the children well and are able to help them settle and develop their own interests. The setting is resourced with good quality equipment that is organised to support children's independent thinking and learning across all areas of the curriculum. Children make good progress in their learning and development as staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. Staff obtain information about children's starting points from parents initially and then make their own assessments from the observations undertaken throughout the sessions. The staff record individual progress records and learning journeys for each child, detailing observations of their achievements. The information gathered is used consistently to track and to plan for individual children's progress.

Children are developing an understanding of healthy lifestyles. They talk about healthy foods as they eat their meals. Menus are varied and include foods that meet children's individual dietary needs. Meal times are social; staff sit with the children as they enjoy their food. Children are delighted as they help themselves to salad and pizza. They talk about the food and where it comes from as they eat. Children keep themselves hydrated as they are able to independently access fresh drinking water throughout the day. Staff extend children's learning opportunities and physical development when they play outdoors. They ensure a good range of activities are readily available in this area. For example, children particularly enjoy using small sized gym equipment, such as a ski and running machine.

The children learn important lessons, such as being kind to each other and taking turns in their play. They are encouraged to behave appropriately in order to keep themselves and others safe, for example, how to use walking feet in the nursery and how to carry their chairs safely. Children feel safe as they form close relationships with staff and other children in the nursery. Children are particularly welcoming to new children as they settle, bringing toys for them to play with and giving lots of hugs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported by staff. The activities are adapted in order to enable them to take part and feel included.

Children enjoy circle time and have a super time as they talk about the theme of the week. They remember the noises animals make and that cows give us milk and sheep give us wool. Staff use props to encourage children to consider the texture of the wool. They ask the children thoughtful questions to encourage them to describe what they can feel. Children are developing their early writing skills; they have opportunities to write for different purposes and have access to a range of writing resources which they select independently. They enjoy different creative media, such as play dough and clay, and stretch their imaginations as they create models in the clay using their hands as tools. Children have great fun as they explore and feel shaving foam; they wave their hands in the air saying, 'We look like ghosts'.

Children receive lots of positive praise and encouragement from staff throughout the session, helping them to feel a valued member of the setting. Staff show great respect for the children; they speak to them with kindness and respect, thus encouraging their self-esteem and confidence.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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