



Caterpillar Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118151
Inspection date	29 November 2005
Inspector	Hilary Turner
Setting Address	St Albans Church Hall, South Parade, Acton Green, W4 1JU
Telephone number	020 8747 8531
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Registered person	The Caterpillar Montessori Nursery School Limited
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 satisfactory. 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?

Caterpillar Montessori Nursery School operates within 2 adjacent buildings, it is situated in Chiswick in the London Borough of Ealing and serves the local and wider community. The premises are adequately maintained and located close to two tube stations and served by several bus routes. Each building has separate kitchen, toilet and washing facilities.

The school is adjacent to a park and the children use the enclosed children's

playground for outdoor play.

There are 49 children on roll aged from 2 years to under 5 years. This includes 24 funded children. The nursery supports children who have English as an additional language. There are no children attending who have been identified with special educational needs.

The school opens 5 days a week term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 to 16:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions with morning and afternoons sessions available.

There are 6 staff who work with the children. The school follows the Montessori teaching methods and all of the staff hold the Montessori Diploma. The setting employs outside teachers for extra curriculum activities.

The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's well being is protected and supported by the clear and comprehensive written policies and procedures which are in place and carried out thoroughly by staff. Children are learning good hygiene procedures as staff maintain good levels of hygiene throughout the nursery. Children know why they must wash their hands and lovely photographs of children in the bathroom washing and drying their hands reinforces this. Good procedures are in place for the recording of accidents and administering medication. However entries in the accident book are not consistently signed by parents.

Children enjoy well balanced, nutritious snacks, and those who bring a packed lunch enjoy lots of fresh, healthy foods, such as, raw carrot, cucumber, fruits, and organic drinks. Which they eat enthusiastically whilst chatting happily to one another about their likes and dislikes.

All children enjoy fresh air and exercise every day. They make good progress as they run, balance and climb. Fine motor skills are developing in the 3 and 4-year-old as they use a wide range of good quality Montessori equipment and malleable materials with increasing confidence. One child confidently uses scissors to cut out the shape of his hands. Children move confidently and show awareness of space as they carry chairs carefully to the table. They are able to climb, balance, crawl and slide with increasing confidence. Children enjoy regular yoga sessions which helps them to understand how their bodies work.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, welcoming and secure environment. Most of the required policies and procedures are in place to ensure they are kept safe. Furniture and equipment used by children is clean, safe and checked regularly. There is a wide range of suitable resources and equipment, which is interesting and stimulating, much of which is based on the Montessori method of teaching.

Children are very confident in using the resources as they independently self-select resources from low-level shelves, returning the equipment when they have finished playing with it.

Children are learning to be aware of their own safety; for example, as staff encourage them to carry chairs correctly and remind them not to run indoors, explaining the reasons for this. Sound security arrangements are in place to ensure children are cared for in a very secure environment. Staff monitor the entrance at the beginning and end of each session. Overall the staff are very well deployed which means children receive high levels of supervision and support.

Children are appropriately protected by staff as they have good knowledge of potential signs and symptoms of abuse; however, some staff are less secure in the reporting procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and eager to participate. Those who are new to the nursery are helped to settle by staff who are sensitive towards their individual needs. Close, caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and develop a strong sense of self. Communication skills are well supported through good quality adult- child interactions. A rich stimulating environment with a varied range of activities and good quality Montessori equipment promote children's interest and overall learning.

Children are enthused by the activities provided and they are highly motivated to explore and learn. Staff have the knowledge and understanding to plan effectively for all children. They keep a record of the children's progress to identify the next steps for their individual learning. Children are helped to make sense of what they see, hear, smell and touch. For example, as they paint, squeeze dough and explore sand and water.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children are highly involved in well planned and exciting activities. The staff closely observe children's involvement in the activities. As a result, this helps them to plan the next steps in their individual learning while providing suitable challenges. Staff are very enthusiastic and motivated and they use effective Montessori teaching methods to help children make progress. For example, by providing good quality Montessori equipment and the use of open ended questioning to encourage children's thinking and vocabulary.

Staff make good use of the space and resources as they give children sufficient time to acquire new skills, by allowing them the time to revisit a particular task until they have achieved it. Children are having lots of fun while they are learning.

Staff have a strong commitment to improving the quality of provision for nursery education.

Children are very happy, confident and highly motivated to learn. They are developing their independence skills and self-care skills; for example, as they put their coats on and do their shoes up with little support from an adult. Children feel very proud of themselves and glow with delight when they have accomplished this skill. They confidently share out snacks and pour drinks independently. Children are able to work as part of a group, take turns and share and they are expressing their own thoughts and feelings during discussion times. Children are well behaved and they display a high level of involvement in all activities.

Children are learning to count confidently and reliably, and they recognise several written numerals. They are learning about shape and space as they fit puzzles together and use equipment in the water and sand. They use mathematical language during their play. For example, to describe size and position. Children are solving mathematical problems as they build and construct, weigh, and use various objects to add and subtract. They are beginning to predict and calculate through activities and every day routines. Staff successfully extend their learning; for example, as a child shares out fruit the member of staff asks the child how many pieces of fruit he has, how many children are there and will there be enough. The child counts both the children and fruit and replies "we've got exactly the right amount"

Children are confident speakers and engage in conversations with each other and adults. They enjoy looking at books independently, in groups, and they listen attentively at story time. Children are developing very good pencil control and there are good opportunities for children to be spontaneous in their writing. For example, a group of children enjoy playing in the Doctor's surgery they use a pencil and notepad to arrange the appointment times. Most children are able to write correctly formed letters and many confidently write their own name.

Children are developing a good understanding of the world in which they live because the setting has a very good selection of resources to support their learning. They have great fun as they explore, and respond to all their senses through various projects, topic work and equipment. They have lovely opportunities to develop their imagination through role-play, as staff frequently change the role-play area to include a garden centre, restaurant and travel agents. Children explore fast and slow, names of instruments, listen to various types of music, and move imaginatively to songs and music. Children listen to and respond enthusiastically to different types of music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing lots of confidence and self-esteem as they have time to explore independently in this safe environment. They are given good support in

learning to manage their own behaviour through the Montessori methods of teaching and the positive role-models of adults. As a result behaviour is good. Children are kind and considerate towards each other. All children are treated with equal concern and their individual needs are met very effectively by the staff.

Children enjoy finding out about different cultures and beliefs as they celebrate festivals, such as, Diwali and Hanukkah and Chinese New Year. They have access to a range of good quality toys, resources and artefacts which promote equal opportunities. For example, books, dressing up clothes, puzzles and different types of music. Children who have special needs are welcomed into the setting. Equipment and resources would be appropriately adapted to ensure all children are fully involved, integrated and well cared for at this setting. There is a special educational needs co-ordinator who has attended relevant training which ensures children are well supported. Staff have the knowledge and skills to identify children's developmental concerns and they liaise effectively with parents and other professionals.

Children's social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the sound relationships between parents and staff as information is shared to meet their needs effectively within the setting. Parents receive good information about their child's progress, however they are less well informed about how their children learn in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents' comments were extremely positive, they are very happy with the care and education their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The Leadership and Management is good. The manager has taken positive steps to develop leadership and management within the nursery, which has enhanced the care and learning for children. There are sound systems in place to monitor, assess and evaluate the quality of the nursery education. However, the manager is aware that further development is needed, to ensure that all the required policies and procedures are in place and hold the appropriate detail. Including the procedures to follow in the event of a child becoming lost, or not being collected. The overall operational plan requires further development to ensure all required information is available to parents on how the provision promotes children's welfare, safety and learning effectively.

The manager provides a very good role-model to staff and all staff work well together as a team. Consequently this is reflected in the very good practice throughout the setting which results in children being very happy, secure and content in their surroundings. Children benefit from the combined knowledge in the staff team, who have a sound understanding of delivering an effective and interesting foundation stage curriculum based on Montessori methods of teaching. They are encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge by attending various courses.

The premises are well organised and indoor space is arranged to maximise play opportunities for children. Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection a number of recommendations were raised they were to, develop staff's understanding of the new child protection procedures book 'What to do if you suspect a child is being abused'; ensure the written complaints procedure includes the address and telephone number of the regulator and provide more planned opportunities for role play scenarios to enhance children's imaginative skills.

The regulators contact details have been included in the written complaints procedure, some staff have increased their understanding of the child protection procedures; and through very good development of the role play area, children have many good opportunities to enhance their imaginative skills through lovely different role play scenarios. Overall this has enhanced children's care and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which can be seen on request. The complaint 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):

- develop the child protection policy to include the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer; ensure all staff are familiar with the reporting procedures for child protection

- develop the operational plan to ensure it holds all the required detail, including the names of staff with designated responsibilities
- implement a clearly defined procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost or not collected.

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):

- increase the information available to parents on how children learn in relation to the foundation stage curriculum

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