



Cherubs Montessori Day Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289709
Inspection date	31 January 2006
Inspector	Stephanie Graves
Setting Address	5 Castle View Road, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3PP
Telephone number	01634 716282
E-mail	info@cherubs.net
Registered person	Cherubs Montessori Day Nurseries Ltd
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?

Cherubs Montessori Day Nursery Ltd opened in 2004 as a limited company. The group operates from seven rooms in a detached building. It is situated in Strood, in the city of Rochester, Kent. A maximum of 74 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07.00 to 19.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 93 children aged from 3 months to under 5 years on roll. Of

these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 staff. Of these, 15 staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are four staff working towards higher qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are provided with a good range of experiences, which help to promote their knowledge and understanding of good health issues. For example, they are encouraged to be independent with routine self help skills, including toilet visits, hand washing and cleaning their teeth. Effective procedures help to prevent cross infection. This includes the use of antibacterial spray to wipe surfaces, disposable gloves and aprons during nappy changes and ensuring flannels are washed after every use. Children benefit from procedures which ensure they are taken care of if they have an accident or become ill. For instance, accidents are well recorded and children do not attend if they have an infectious illness.

Children are learning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. Drinks are readily available and many children help themselves. They are encouraged to make healthy choices regarding the food they eat. Menus are varied, appetising and nutritious. Children enjoy their favourite meals, including roast chicken or quorn and fresh vegetables. They choose from a wide variety of fruit throughout the day and even the very young children respond eagerly when tasting fruit. For example, pineapple and mango. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's individual dietary needs are met.

Children's physical development and sense of well being are promoted well. The younger children benefit from a 'soft shapes room' which allows them to move around, climb and explore their surroundings in safety. They sleep in a cosy, comfortable environment with gentle background music and sounds. Older children learn the importance of physical activity through the nursery education curriculum. They have regular opportunities to experience fine manipulative experiences as well as vigorous outdoor play. They are beginning to understand the effect physical exercise has on their bodies and they know when they need to rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure environment. There is plenty of space for them to move around and play freely within safe boundaries. Toys and equipment are checked regularly to ensure they are safe and appropriate for all ages and stages of child development. Security systems help to identify visitors at the entrance to the

building. Ongoing risk assessments ensure potential hazards are identified and reduced, including the movement of children between floors. Very young children are well supported by staff who allow them to move around independently, but supervise closely to reduce the risk of accidents. Older children learn how to help keep themselves safe through meaningful routines, activities and good staff explanations. For example, they learn to move up and down stairs safely and in single file to avoid accidents.

Children are well cared for because effective procedures promote their welfare and safety at all times. These include an emergency evacuation procedure, which is regularly practised with the children and child protection procedures, which demonstrate an understanding of current requirements.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are comfortable and settled at the nursery. They demonstrate high levels of well being and involvement. This is because they are provided with effective support and a wide range of stimulating toys, resources and free play experiences.

Babies enjoy the benefits of frequent cuddles and close contact with their carers. They have secure relationships with staff who know them well and spend much of their time playing and talking with them. The setting has implemented the Birth to three matters framework. Staff have a good knowledge of the developmental needs of young children and chart their progress well. They provide a range of freely accessible toys, resources and experiences. For example, babies use their senses to explore stimulating interactive toys with interest and concentration. In addition, children between the ages of 1 and 2 delight in joining in with action songs, such as 'wind the bobbin up'. Investigation through resources including paint, glue, malleable materials and role play equipment, helps younger children to represent their experiences and ideas, and make connections as they play. Children between 2 and 3 years of age enjoy cutting and sticking activities and manipulating play dough using a range of tools. They co-operate during role play, for example using toy mobile phones to tell one another 'it's tidy up time'. There is an emphasis on outdoor learning for all children. They happily wear warm outdoor clothing as they involve themselves in a wide range of activities, including playing with ride on toys and large apparatus.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making consistent progress towards the stepping stones and early learning goals. Their learning and achievements are good in relation to their starting points and capabilities. This is because the majority of staff working with them have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. In addition, effective methods of observation and assessment chart children's progress through to when they leave the setting. Planning is well documented and displayed for parents. Children are provided with activities and experiences, which build on what they already know and can do. The next steps in children's learning are promoted well but are not used to inform future planning.

Regular evaluations by staff help to ensure they are able to monitor the effectiveness of the activities and experiences provided.

Children show a very strong sense of belonging as they play and learn together. They are well behaved, friendly and show care and concern for others. They are confident enough to approach staff to express their thoughts and feelings. For example, at lunchtime they explain 'the jelly isn't right'. Staff respond effectively and offer solutions. Children are becoming independent learners as they move around the room, choose their own activities and follow routines such helping to set the tables at meal times. They use a variety of tools to make marks and some are able to write their names using correctly formed letters. Children show an appreciation for attractively displayed books and happily mend any that are torn. They are developing a sense of time as they remember and talk about significant events, such as a child leaving the nursery soon and going to another school. They are gaining confidence with numbers and counting. They use simple addition and subtraction in every day routines. They also learn about shape and measure and use language such as 'big' 'lots' and 'heavy' to describe size, quantity and weight.

Children learn about themselves and the wider world through topics and small group discussions, including festivals such as Chinese New Year and talking about events in their own lives. They demonstrate a curiosity for living things and natural resources such as shells and pebbles. This is extended by staff who provide plastic bugs and magnifying glasses for them to explore further. They are fascinated during guessing games where they take turns to describe animals. For instance, 'It lives in the desert, walks on hot sand and is yellow goldeny'. Staff support the activity well by asking effective questions, including 'does it have a hump?' Children are developing good hand eye co-ordination. Some are very competent when pouring drinks. Others use scissors competently to cut a range of materials. Regular use of the outdoor area promotes children's developing physical skills. They can play with a range of resources such as ride on toys, as well as climbing and balancing on large apparatus. Children play creatively with others during role play, enjoy music and familiar songs, such as 'Jelly on the plate' and are able to explore sound through musical instruments.

Overall, the provision plans and provides a very good range of activities, experiences and play opportunities, to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery and are cared for according to their individual needs. They arrive confidently and settle well. This is because staff are fully attentive and enjoy being with them. Even new children are settled and comfortable as they are regularly acknowledged and affirmed. Children learn about the similarities and differences between themselves and others through toys, resources and well planned activities, which promote positive images of diversity. They understand the difference between right and wrong, as staff are good role

models and regularly praise their achievements and good behaviour. Children speaking English as an additional language are supported well and all children benefit from consistency of care. This is due to staff and parents working closely together to support their needs. The provider takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents of children receiving funding for nursery education feel they receive good quality information, for example through consultations and regularly sharing children's individual progress records. Curriculum plans are displayed with clear aims relating to the early learning goals. Parents are invited into the nursery to share their special skills and interests. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and settled within a very well organised environment. They feel secure and at ease with familiar staff and their surroundings and can access a wide range of play opportunities. Systems are in place to ensure the adults working with children are suitable to do so, although these have not been updated to current requirements. The provider ensures Ofsted are notified of any significant changes. The registration certificate is displayed and the necessary records are in place and shared with parents. These include effective daily attendance records which show clear arrival and departure times. Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted, due to the policies and procedures, which help to underpin the group's good practice. However, those relating to child protection, lost and uncollected children, special needs and complaints have not been updated to current requirements.

The leadership and management is good. Staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage is good and there are clear aims for the personal development and achievements of all children. These focus on staff providing well planned ideas, but children interpreting their play and learning in their own way. Staff are committed to the integration of care and nursery education, to promote successful outcomes in all areas of child development. Regular communication and monitoring of teaching and learning means the overall effectiveness of the curriculum is evaluated well. The provider is committed towards the continuing improvement of the provision. For example, the group have embarked upon the 'Kent Quality Kitemark' Endorsed Quality Assurance Scheme.

The nursery provides a professional service. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider received five recommendations: to ensure parents sign to acknowledge medicines given to children; to provide a procedure to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse against staff; to provide resources that reflect disabilities; to record checks made on sleeping babies and to seek advice on

the safe evacuation of babies.

All five recommendations have been addressed. Medication records are countersigned by parents and a procedure to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse against staff is in place. Toys and resources reflect positive images of diversity, the sleep routines of babies are recorded and shared with parents and a procedure is in place regarding the safe evacuation of babies.

The setting has taken steps towards improving the service provided and ensuring children are safe and well cared for at all times.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure adequate system's are in place to continue to check the suitability of staff working on the premises
- continue to review and update policies and procedures to current requirements, including complaints, special educational needs, child protection and lost and uncollected children and ensure all are readily available for inspection.

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):

- ensure the next steps in children's learning are used to inform future planning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk