



Chapel Grange Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 305009 |
| Inspection date | 12 March 2006 |
| Inspector | Janice Shaw |
| Setting Address | Chapelstead, Dean Row Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 2BU |
| Telephone number | 01625 532083 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Chapel Grange Montessori Nursery 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?

Chapel Grange Montessori Nursery was registered in 1996. It operates from a former chapel, which has been converted to accommodate the facility. It is situated in a semi-rural area approximately three miles from the centre of Wilmslow, Cheshire. The nursery is run according to the Montessori Philosophy.

The nursery is open from 08:00 until 18:00 and is split into morning and afternoon sessions. Children may attend from 3 sessions per week up to full time. There are

currently 56 children on roll, 32 of whom receive nursery funding. The setting caters for children who have special needs and for whom English is an additional language.

There are seven staff employed in the nursery; all have NNEB or national childcare qualifications, as well as the Montessori Diploma. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children gain an effective understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. They show a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, as they spend time washing their hands after using the toilet or before lunch and are captivated whilst exploring the properties of the water and soap. Staff are available to help the younger children gain practical skills, such as turning off the taps without wasting the water and putting on their own coats. Children's health is exceptionally well protected because all staff are well informed about their medical conditions and robust emergency procedures are in place.

Children help themselves to easily accessible, enjoyable and healthy snacks at a time suitable to them, ensuring children's concentration and learning are not disturbed. They independently pour their drinks and take turns to serve the lunch. In depth conversations encourage children to understand the benefits of healthy eating. Meticulous arrangements are in place to cater effectively for children who have special dietary requirements.

Children make excellent progress in their physical development; they develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they move with control and coordination. They enjoy running, climbing and shooting balls outside, and they are beginning to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when active. Indoors, they use a range of equipment and practical life exercises to develop competent small motor control. Children pour small quantities of water accurately, clear up any spills and use appropriate tools with clay and on the woodwork bench. They are able to rest according to their needs after lunch within the comfortable book area or sleep on a mat in the small room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained, welcoming and child friendly environment. The premises are kept secure and most safety precautions are in place. It is organised efficiently, with children moving around confidently within the building. The kitchen door is consistently propped open and this compromises children's safety. Children benefit from the meaningful organisation of equipment, linked to the Montessori teaching method. They play with resources that are safe, well made and

of good quality, many in natural materials. There are useful artefacts and real objects, allowing children to explore the world around them. Children have the full use of the equipment stored on the shelves around the room, which is appropriate for their stage of development and attractively arranged at children's height.

Risk assessments are regularly carried out and a sound reporting system for defects to the premises is in place. Daily safety checks take place informally and fire drills are regularly held, however, children and staff details are not included in the register and are not available for an emergency evacuation. Children demonstrate their understanding of how to keep safe when the alarm sounds in the nursery and everybody is evacuated speedily and efficiently. One child said 'when the alarm goes off it would not be safe to stay inside the nursery', to which staff agreed. Children are well protected, as the nursery has a secure understanding about its role and responsibility with regards to child protection issues. All relevant information and contact details to safeguard the welfare of children are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled, eager to attend and relish their time in the nursery. Children learn through hands on experiences, investigation and questioning and are encouraged to be actively involved in their learning. Children show high levels of independence, curiosity and concentration, and use all their senses to actively explore a stimulating range of developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor experiences. Children enjoy exploring different materials, such as clay, paint and pulses, and they use a wide range of appropriately sized tools.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, resulting in children who make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff develop children's language very effectively by maintaining a dialogue with them and using skilful questioning techniques to promote and extend their thinking. They plan a range of worthwhile activities linked to the six areas of learning. Assessment is thorough and the information gained used effectively to guide planning, enabling children's learning to be maximised. Staff skilfully observe children's efforts and respond appropriately to them, for example, they sit with children on a one-to-one basis ensuring they can complete the chosen tasks satisfactorily. Staff have high expectations, explain clearly and encourage children to think. They have a very clear understanding of how children learn and of the next possible steps in their development. Their knowledge of the Montessori Philosophy and the links with the Foundation Stage is secure.

Children have a very positive attitude, they are keen to learn and try new skills. They make very good progress towards the early learning goals. They are developing an extensive understanding of number, reading and writing through activities and equipment that are designed to build on what the children know and challenge them to explore further. Children have appropriate chances to reflect on others at play and staff support this learning in a positive manner. All children communicate effectively and are confident, articulate speakers. Many children are keen to contribute in circle

time. They understand that learning to listen is very important and try very hard to listen attentively to one another as the sharing stone is passed around. When holding the stone they express their thoughts, feelings and ideas very well. Children make good links between letters and sounds; when playing with the 'pink alphabet' children proudly announce the first letter of other children's names.

In mathematical activities children's progress is very good; they carefully estimate how many number cards there are and how much equipment they need to complete an exercise. Children can count independently and represent numbers using fingers, marks on paper and pictures. Children have many varied experiences that help them use and recognise numbers up to 17 and many more able children can do so well beyond. Children create mathematical designs when they repeat patterns using the Montessori equipment. Real objects are used to good effect in mathematics, with children using corks and tongs to count to 10.

Natural materials are available for use in many aspects of the nursery, which support children's sensory experiences; they use dried beans, rice and pasta in regular and interesting transference activities. When using large wooden bricks, children are keen to offer their own ideas and develop their curiosity and concentration as they build complex structures. Exploration and experimentation is fostered well when they use a variety of media, such as sand, water and clay. Children's understanding of the natural world is nurtured successfully when the nearby fields are used as a good source of learning. They enjoy the nature walks around them and know not to disturb the wild rabbit that spends quite a lot of time in the nursery garden and lives behind their play shed. They whisper to each other 'we must just watch, shush!' Children's imagination is nurtured well when they create interesting pieces of artwork. The detail in their paintings is very advanced for their age. They can save their clay models to dry and paint later if they wish and all the children's paintings and drawings are kept safely to take home. The lack of a designated role play area restricts children's opportunities to maximise the development of their imagination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Relationships are very effective at all levels. Children understand their own needs and begin to respect the needs of others as they help each other with their work and show sympathy to a child who hurt itself. Behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Children are confident, self-assured and can work and play well on their own or with others. They cooperate and take turns. Children recognise their names and display them on the chart to await their turn. They respect each other when working alone on their work trays. Children can freely discuss their emotions with an adult and each other. They draw happy faces and discuss smiles knowledgeably. Staff are accomplished and sensitive in their management of children and their behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents complete a developmental document, which is used as an induction for the children. They have relevant information about the setting and their child's education. The key worker scheme ensures parents have

a full discussion about their child's progress on a daily basis and during the twice yearly parents' evenings. This helps ensure children are settled and secure. Staff, parents and external agencies, where appropriate, work together to meet each child's requirements. There is a secure system to quickly identify children's needs and ensure they receive appropriate support strategies. Children develop a sense of belonging as the books and displays reflect the community from which they come. There are posters reflecting different cultures and some traditional festivals are acknowledged, including Chinese New Year, Easter and Divali.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the provision is good. The management team gives very good educational direction in all areas of the nursery's work. The nursery manager successfully monitors staff performance by working alongside them, as well as providing a very good role model for teaching and relationships with children. Regular staff meetings and good staff training effectively contribute towards the professional development of the staff. Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation throughout the setting. Staff are well deployed in the nursery, allowing children to receive appropriate adult attention. The satisfactory staffing levels ensure children build effective relationships and develop a positive approach to the learning experiences provided.

Knowledgeable staff understand and follow the setting's well written policies and procedures to promote children's well-being, supporting them to develop their potential. Children are well protected because of the secure recruitment procedure in place. They benefit from the positive and proactive approach of the nursery staff, who have a strong commitment to the setting and the Montessori Philosophy. Documentation is good with all records in place. The nursery works well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection there were four recommendations made. The nursery was required to maintain a complaints record; ensure that arrival and departures of children were accurately recorded; that staff details were available in an emergency and that parents were informed and requested to sign the accident records on the day of the accident. Parents now complete in and out sheets, which give a clear picture of all present. Staff details are not available in emergencies and are included as a recommendation following this inspection. A complaints record is in place and accident records are appropriately completed.

Following the previous nursery education inspection a point for consideration was to implement a consistent procedure for recording children's progress towards the early learning goals. This has been successfully addressed and secure systems are in place which accurately record all aspects of children's progress.

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.

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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):

- ensure that children and staff contact details are available during emergency evacuation procedures
- ensure that the fire doors in the kitchen are not propped open.

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 additional opportunities for children to develop their imagination through role play.

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