



# Archangels Montessori Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137221
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 May 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Denys Rasmussen / Elizabeth Anne Coffey
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<b>Registered person</b>	Vera Elizabeth Jarrett
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Archangels, Montessori Day Nursery opened in 1997. The nursery is privately owned. It operates from a detached house situated in a residential road in Penge. The nursery has the use of two playrooms, a kitchen, office and toilets on the ground floor. On the first floor are three additional playrooms, toilets and a kitchen. There is a secure garden for outdoor play. The nursery serves the local community.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 26 children at any one time. Currently there are 19 children from one year to under five years on roll. This includes nine children funded for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group opens each week day for 50 weeks a year. Opening times are 08:00 until 18:00. The group also offers morning or afternoon sessions.

There are seven full and part-time staff working with the children. There are five staff with an early years qualification and one staff member in a training programme. The group incorporates Montessori methods of teaching.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

There are satisfactory procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, most staff wear disposable gloves and aprons during nappy changes, use fresh water each time a baby's face is washed and ensure the no-shoe policy in the baby room is adhered to. However, this is compromised as the procedures do not always reflect consistent practice. Staff ensure that accidents and medication details are appropriately recorded to safeguard children's welfare.

Children are provided with drinks routinely and older children can access water as they want it. Children benefit from a range of nutritious meals that are freshly cooked on the premises. Special dietary requirements are complied with which helps ensure children remain healthy.

Pre-school children are involved in physical activity on a daily basis. They visit the garden where they are encouraged to run around and enjoy the fresh air. They use wheeled toys with skill, throw, kick and catch balls. They scream with delight when enjoying games, such as the parachute game. This helps them gain control of their bodies and promotes their physical development. The very young children do not have as many opportunities to enjoy going outdoors. Which means they have too few opportunities to play in the fresh air.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are appropriately maintained and made welcoming to children and parents through colourful displays and information boards. Children use a range of safe resources, which are easily accessible to them through low-level storage systems.

Suitable risk assessment systems help to identify hazards and promote children's safety. For example, there is a safety procedure followed when children access the concrete steps. Satisfactory safety measures have been taken to prevent the risk of accidental injury, such as sockets being covered and stair gates put in place. Fire

prevention is satisfactory and fire drills help children become familiar with the procedures so they learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. However, they are not practised regularly enough as new staff had not as yet taken part in a fire drill.

The manager/provider has attended recent training in child protection and demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of child protection procedures. There are satisfactory procedures to follow if a referral is necessary.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are content and settled in the nursery. They have opportunities to share stories and sing songs which helps develop early language and communication skills. Staff generally interact in a gentle and supportive manner and have good relationships with the children. Although staff have had training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework they are still unsure of how to put this in practice and how this ties in with their planning. This means, some of the planned activities are inappropriate for children under three. However, the children under two have ample space to move freely and safely and were seen to laugh and smile as they danced to music. Children under two benefit from familiar routines as staff follow the child's home routine. For example, when they sleep and eat. Children under two are happy and noticeably well settled, they play well with each other and are happy to go to staff for support and cuddles.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Plans follow a theme and incorporate areas of learning linked in with Montessori play. However, some activities are not planned as well as others. For example, sand, water and role play are not planned, which means they are repetitive and it is unclear what the learning outcomes are. Staff are unclear as to the focus of these activities which means learning opportunities are missed. Children's progress is tracked under the Montessori framework and includes tasks that need to be practised. Although the tracker tick list is linked to the areas of learning, it does not fully cover all areas of the foundation stage. A foundation stage early years record of achievement is beginning to be used. However, children's next steps for learning are not recorded so it is unclear how they plan to move children on. Nevertheless staff know the children well and work with them on an individual basis.

Children play well together and are enthusiastic during free play and adult guided activities. Children's independence is encouraged. For example, low shelves house Montessori equipment which children access for themselves, the art area gives children independent access to art and craft materials and self help skills are practised. Children put their work in their drawer and are very capable of tidying away activities. Children are well behaved and polite because of staff's positive example and realistic expectations. They enjoy story times, however, the grouping of the children is sometimes inappropriate for the level of the activity. For example, when all the children are sitting at the lunch tables for story time before lunch. The older

children become distracted by bored younger children and cannot fully participate. Children have opportunities to learn about letter formation and are encouraged to mark their work. However, writing is not used for a variety of purposes, for example, in the role play area. Children are helped to understand themselves and the wider world by topic work such as 'transport' and 'spring'. Children learn about living things when they plant and care for seeds and bulbs. This is reinforced when they use their produce, for example, lettuce in nursery sandwiches. Positive imagery around the nursery helps children to understand a variety of cultures and traditions which encourages them to have a positive attitude towards each other. Children are taught to do everyday tasks through practical activities. For example, undoing and doing up shoe buckles and learning to lay a table. However, some every-day routines are not exploited to use these skills, such as laying the table at meal times.

Children learn to count through everyday routine, and are offered practical activities to recognise shape, pattern and to sequence. They learn about size and measure by plotting their height and feeling the weight of objects. They are learning about basic addition and subtraction when they sing number songs, such as 'five currant buns' and when they play with Montessori number rods. Children use their imagination well during role play despite the limited resources. However, role play is not sufficiently planned which means it is repetitive and learning opportunities are not fully exploited. Children respond eagerly to experiences with music and movement. They access art and craft materials independently and design things. Children learn about colour when they mix paint at the art easel and they play imaginatively in the sand and water. Children are encouraged to enjoy the fresh air in the garden and run around freely. They play adult guided games to help them gain control of their bodies. Outdoor activity promotes physical skills such as using wheeled toys, manoeuvring through equipment and practising ball skills. Children are encouraged to balance on the circle line and are skilled at using small tools such as glue sticks, scissors and pencils.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children show a sense of belonging when they share their experiences about their family and friends and follow nursery routine. They are introduced to a variety of cultural traditions. Resources positively represent the children attending as well as individuals from the wider community. This all helps children to develop a positive attitude and respect for each other. There is a satisfactory system in place to promote the welfare and development of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Children's self-esteem is fostered when staff praise them and recognise their achievements, such as when they tidy up or complete a task. Children are well behaved and polite. They work harmoniously with each other in response to the realistic boundaries and expectations of staff. Warm relationships are fostered and the children are happy and secure. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents of children receiving nursery education is satisfactory. The regular sharing of children's progress enables parents to have clear guidance on

how their child is developing. The provider/manager provides opportunities for parents to learn about the Foundation Stage at parents evenings and how to develop this at home. This helps promote children's development. Children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. This ensures children settle well and their individual needs are met. They experience consistent care due to effective communication systems between parents and staff, such as daily written information in the contact books, regular written reports and daily verbal feedback.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Documentation is unorganised, which means the provider cannot easily locate the required records. Most records are maintained to a satisfactory standard. The exception to this is the documentation relating to complaints, which is a breach of regulation, and staff attendance.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The provider has ensured staff working with the pre-school children are supported by the Local Education Authority. This helps bring their practice up-to-date. They are given information about how the Montessori practice links in with the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and how to apply this in practice to support children's development. However, weaknesses in teaching and learning have not been identified.

Staff vetting and recruitment procedures are ineffective and poorly organised as the provider has failed to address changes in regulations. The organisation of the deployment of staff is inadequate. This means children are not always protected because un-vetted staff are sometimes left in sole charge of children. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last care inspection the nursery have made some improvements. They were asked to make some safety improvements, improve some records and ensure all staff actively manage children's behaviour in accordance with the groups policy and procedures. They have made safety improvements in the garden which is now secure. Substances transferred into another container are now clearly labelled and all accidents are well recorded. Documentation showing staff qualifications are available at the setting. The staff were observed to manage children's behaviour in a positive and gentle manner and in accordance with the nursery policy.

Since the last education inspection the nursery have made some improvements. They were asked to increase staff's understanding of the foundation stage and learning objectives, to review the planning system and to implement a system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. Staff are being supported by the LEA to bring their practice up-to-date. However, staff still lack confidence in planning and are unclear about learning outcomes for some activities. Improved assessment records are being maintained. However, children's assessments are not used to

inform the planning as next steps for learning are not recorded. The provider/manager has put systems in place to evaluate staff's performance. This is used in appraisals and to identify any training needs. All these improvements contribute to satisfactory outcomes on children's learning.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, in relation to staff vetting and qualifications and National Standard 11: Behaviour, in relation to how staff manage children's behaviour. A letter was sent to the provider on 26/05/2005 detailing the concerns. Ofsted inspectors then visited the nursery on 13/07/2005. National Standards 2 and 11 had been breached. The provider agreed to actions relating to both National Standards. A further visit by Ofsted inspectors found that the actions had been addressed. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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**

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff and any persons over the age of 16 working or living on the premises are suitable to do so.
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a complaints procedure that includes keeping a log of complaints.
- ensure the staff register is up-to-date and clearly identifies the names of all adults.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

### **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):

- improve the planning to include the role play and other daily activities and be clear about the learning outcomes.
- improve the assessment system by recording children's next steps of learning and using them to inform the planning.
- ensure the grouping of children is appropriate for the activity provided.

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