



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY152665

DfES Number: 550460

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	03/03/2005
Inspector Name	Kay Williams

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Four Seasons Montessori
Setting Address	Mill Hill Park Pavilion London NW7

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Four Seasons Montessori
------	-----------------------------

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	The Four Seasons Montessori
Address	Mill Hill Park Pavilion London NW7

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

The Four Seasons Montessori opened in 2002 and is one of two nurseries owned by the proprietor. It operates from two play areas of a shared use premises located in a centre situated in the grounds of a public park in Mill Hill. A maximum of 16 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:15 until 12:00 and until 15:15 on Tuesdays. Sessions run during term time only. The children have supervised access to an enclosed outdoor public play area.

There are currently 10 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 4 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The children come from the local and wider catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs, and those learning English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 3 staff. Two of the staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member is working towards a qualification. The setting follows the Montessori method of teaching.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The Four Seasons Montessori Nursery provides generally good quality nursery education where children are make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in most areas of the curriculum, especially mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. However, the programme for creative development has some weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is very good. A significant strength in the teaching is that the staff know the children very well. They achieve this by maintaining detailed assessments of the children and use this information to plan a curriculum which effectively supports progression onto the next stage of their learning. They spend significant amounts of time working with the children individually, completing structured activities which focus on specific learning areas. During group activities staff skilfully develop children's language by engaging in meaningful dialogue and asking them questions to promote their thinking.

Leadership and management are very good. The recent change in manager has been positively embraced by the staff team who work well together. They share a sound understanding of foundation stage curriculum and link this closely to the Montessori method of education. They have identified the weaknesses within the planning for creative development for themselves and plan to address this. They know how to successfully create a rich learning environment for all children. This is especially evident in their effective use of the local environment to promote children's physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Partnerships with parents are very good. Parent's are offered good information regarding the curriculum, including detail on what the children are learning. They are kept informed of their children's progress, through daily verbal feedback, and termly meetings.

What is being done well?

- Planned weekly music sessions effectively foster children's interest and experience of live music, group singing and movement to music.
- Staff are calm and gently spoken with the children. As a result children are well behaved.
- Mathematics is effectively taught and more able children are confident at adding and subtract and recording the answers.
- Children demonstrate high levels of independence. They are able to select their own resources and activities and take responsibility for putting them away once they have finished.

What needs to be improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities for children to create more of their own individual art work and to engage in meaningful role play.

What has improved since the last inspection?
not applicable

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and independent. They are very well behaved. Relationships are good. Children are able to take turns and share fairly, waiting appropriately for their turn to suggest a song for the music teacher to play. Children part happily from their parent's and settle quickly into the familiar routine of the nursery. They spend their time meaningfully and are motivated, enthusiastic learners.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident communicators. Staff value their ideas and children are used to speaking in small groups. They appreciate other languages and sing songs in French and Chinese. They listen attentively at story time and make good use of books independently. Staff effectively teach children the sounds that letters make and children write for a variety of purposes. Older children are able to write recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children benefit from good individual support which teaches them to count, read and write numbers with increasing understanding. Children use numbers with confidence and older children can write recognisable numbers and can problem solve complex addition. They are able to sequence effectively and know how to use mathematical language to describe shape, size, measurement and quantity. Children can compare with skill, describing the difference between a hexagon and an octagon.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children learn about their own culture and those of others. They learn to care for living things as they tend and water the indoor plants. Staff make good use of the settings park location and take the children on regular nature walks so they may observe change and difference, especially seasonal and environmental change. They use cassette recorders and telephone in support of their developing ICT skills. Photographs encourage children to recall past events.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Fine motor skills are developing well. Children use dough, scissors, tweezers and threading beads with increasing control. Staff make good use of the outdoor play area to ensure that children have regular opportunities to learn to run, jump and climb. Good resources support children's development of skills such as throwing, catching and balancing. Children demonstrate a good sense of space, carefully negotiating the position of their chair when creating a semi circle for the music session.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Music is a strong feature of the curriculum, children delight in weekly sessions. They are provided with opportunity to make their own music too. They engage in a varied range of art activities in 2 and 3 dimension. However, these are over adult directed and do no lend themselves sufficiently to the development of children's individual creativity. Some free art work is offered at the easel. Children use there imagination during movement to music, but opportunities for role play are weak.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- provide more opportunities for children to create their own independent art work and to engage in a variety of meaningful role play situations.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.