



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY248359

DfES Number: 533280

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/10/2004
Inspector Name Amanda Jane Tyson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Montessori Children's House
Setting Address 34 Robin Hood Lane
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 2RG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The partnership of The Montessori Children's House

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Montessori Children's House
Address 34 Robin Hood Lane
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 2RG

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 Montessori Children's House opened in January 2003.

The nursery operates from a church community hall with access to toilets, with nappy changing facilities and a kitchen. There is disabled access into the hall via a ramp and chair lift and a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. It is situated in a central area of Sutton and serves the local community.

There are currently twenty one children on roll. The nursery are in receipt of funding for eight 3 year olds and three 4 year olds. The nursery welcome children with special educational needs and many of the children are bi-lingual. Children attend for either the morning or afternoon session, or both sessions bringing a packed lunch.

The nursery opens five days a week during term-time from 09:00 to 16:00.

Three full-time staff who have early years and Montessori teaching qualifications work with the children. The main focus is a Montessori curriculum, which is underpinned with the foundation stage curriculum. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Montessori Children's House provides high quality nursery education, whereby children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas.

The quality of teaching is very good. The specific Montessori teaching methods used by the experienced staff team particularly support and encourage high levels of confidence, self esteem and independence. Equipped with these skills, the children explore and experiment learning with enthusiasm and motivation. They are becoming confident mathematicians, articulate communicators and are developing good pre-reading and writing skills. The use of natural and real resources enhances their practical life skills and staff encourage the children to take self help responsibility and to make informed decisions. Staff know the children well, have high expectations and exploit opportunities to adapt and extend activities to ensure they are sufficiently challenged. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is well monitored, documented and used to plan next steps to help them progress further. The tranquil atmosphere and calm and consistent approach used by staff encourages co-operation and concentration. The staff clearly enjoy their work and the children exude happiness.

The effective and highly supportive leadership, with good training opportunities ensures a consistent, experienced and highly motivated staff team, who work well together. The setting are committed to further improvement, which is demonstrated by the systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision and acting on advice.

The settings approach to working in partnership with parents is inspirational. Parents are sound in their knowledge and understanding of the Montessori teaching methods, the foundation stage curriculum and of their children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are pro-active in their contribution towards children's learning and nursery activities.

What is being done well?

- The innovative and effective organisation of resources and routines, such as hand washing after creative activities and the changing of outdoor to indoor shoes on arrival, enables children to achieve high levels of personal independence. They choose their own play resources, set them up and clear away afterwards.
- Children's assessment records are of a high standard. Their progress towards the early learning goals is well monitored and documented. Staff effectively use this knowledge to plan, extend and adapt learning and play opportunities to ensure children are consistently and effectively challenged.

- The calm, tranquil and stimulating environment, consistent methods for encouraging politeness and consideration of others ensures children are happy, play very well together and have high levels of self esteem.
- Curriculum plans are enriched with the use of natural resources for children to experiment and explore, spontaneity and inclusion of cultural awareness. Innovative ideas inspire children to experiment with different writing methods and high quality resources and skilled intervention from staff help children to use their developing mathematical skills to solve practical problems.
- High levels of written and verbal communication keep parents fully informed of their child's progress. The book review scheme, whereby children take a book home each week and parents record children's interest and participation in the story which is then shared at nursery encourages parental contribution and enables consistent and effective home support. In addition, parents are fully involved in the strive for further improvement.
- The supportive and effective leadership ensures a reliable, consistent and experienced staff team. Opportunities for personal development, through training and individual support keeps staff motivated and enthused.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to explore different joining, assembling and connecting techniques.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children choose their own activities, set them up and clear away afterwards and their confidence and skill in managing practical life tasks is inspirational. Children are exceptionally polite, play co-operatively together, enjoy hearing about each others experiences and are developing a very balanced understanding of peoples differences. Children are highly motivated and interested in learning, new challenges excite them and they explore and investigate with enthusiasm.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use articulate language to express themselves and they confidently initiate conversations. Children experiment with different writing resources, i.e. candles and quills. They write well formed letters and use their written work as props for role play. Children link letters to sounds and older and more able children are beginning to work out simple words. Children look at books independently, enjoy the animated story telling by staff and contribute enthusiastically to book reviews.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count out correct numbers of objects and match to numerals, recognise increasing and decreasing quantities and become excited when staff set fun challenges, such as racing to complete tasks against a sand timer. Children use number, shape and size language in context and use resources well to grade, sequence and build balanced models. Children routinely use a wide variety of equipment to transfer water and they are developing a sound understanding of weight, volume and capacity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore the contents of objects from different countries with interest and they confidently share their own community, cultural and religious experiences, both past and present. Children use natural resources in pretend play, are learning to identify leaves, grow their own seeds in the garden and find out about living things. They build detailed models, but resources to encourage joining and connecting skills are limited. Children regularly visit the library and use the computers.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children step skilfully over tree stumps, climb with confidence and experiment with different methods to come down the slide. They participate in fun throwing and catching activities with staff and squeal with delight when they accidentally discover the effects on the body after spinning around. Children's well developed small motor skills are enhanced by the use of practical life resources, such as tweezers to transfer small objects and hammers and nails in woodwork.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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The use of natural resources encourages the children to touch, feel and smell, they delight in their "sticky fingers" when baking and use leaves, pebbles, fir cones, shells and conkers etc to imitate role play and to design and create models/ pictures. Children sing with gusto, march and play instruments in time to music and they act out real experiences without the need for resources. Children know how to make colours change by mixing paint and use different techniques to create patterns.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following;
- providing more opportunities for children to experiment with different joining and assembling skills when building and constructing, especially with regards to older and more able children.

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.