



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 129010

DfES Number: 518866

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 05/11/2003
Inspector Name Liz Margaret Caluori

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Blackheath Montessori Centre
Setting Address Independents Road
Blackheath
London
SE3 9LF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Blackheath Montessori Centre Limited 01622834 285105

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Blackheath Montessori Centre Limited
Address Blackheath Montessori Centre
Independents Road
London
SE3 9LF

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

Blackheath Montessori Day Nursery became registered under the Children Act in 1992 but has been in existence for many years. It has sole use of a large church hall in Blackheath Village. The premises consist of four class rooms, three of which are used as group rooms and the other for additional lessons. There is a large communal indoor play area, storage facilities and office, toilet and kitchen facilities. There is also a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery currently has 22 funded three year olds and 11 funded four year olds. Children may attend a variety of sessions although most have full time places. The nursery is currently providing care for a number of children with special needs and others who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens from Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 08:00 - 18:00.

In addition to the manager, six full time staff work with the children. All staff working with children are qualified Montessori teachers. The nursery also employs an administrator, a cook and a maintenance worker. The setting follows Montessori teaching whilst also following the National Curriculum Foundation Stage. The nursery offers swimming lessons and has weekly visits from a French teacher, a music teacher and a dance teacher.

How good is the Day Care?

The nursery provides good quality care for children with an element of outstanding practice.

Children are provided with a good range of play materials. The environment is stimulating and space is imaginatively used, both inside and out. Staffing levels are high and there is a clear commitment to training. Documentation is well ordered and appropriately stored.

There are well thought out precautions in place to minimise risks to children, both in the nursery and on outings. Children are supported in developing good personal hygiene practices. Practices regarding administering medicines and treating accidents are entirely appropriate, as are child protection procedures.

Effective systems are in place to ensure that each child's individual needs are identified. This forms the basis of the planning for each room and a varied range of activities are provided to offer an appropriate level of challenge to each child. The positive relationships between staff and children create a warm, comfortable environment for children to experiment and explore.

There is a clear equal opportunities policy, which is consistently applied. A range of resources and activities are provided aimed at promoting positive images of different cultures and disabilities. One staff member is responsible for co-ordinating the care of children with special needs. Staff have experience of working with other professionals, such as speech therapists.

Behaviour management within the nursery is consistent and focuses on positive re-enforcement. Children develop confidence and an understanding of right and wrong as a result of the praise and support provided by the staff.

Staff offer a warm welcome to parents and carers and take time to exchange information. A good range of written information is provided, including all policies and procedures, termly newsletters and frequently updated notice boards.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has successfully completed all actions agreed at the previous inspection. Additional policies have been devised to comply with the national standards and child protection procedures have been obtained.

What is being done well?

- Effective procedures are in place to identify children's individual needs and a good range of activities are skilfully planned to provide appropriate challenge for each child.
- The imaginative use of space and the attractive displays of children's work contribute to the stimulating and welcoming child-centred environment.
- Children are provided with a large and varied range of toys and play material, including those aimed at promoting positive images of people of different religions, cultures, genders, social backgrounds and disabilities.
- Staff consistently manage children's behaviour in a positive manner, using praise to re-enforce good behaviour.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The staff have worked hard to create an exciting, child-centred environment both inside and out. They skilfully display children's work and make very good use of the architectural features of the building, for example supporting columns in the

classrooms are used to represent trees. The environment is warm and welcoming and furniture and resources are set out in a way which encourages children to make full use of all activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures for recording daily attendance to include the time of arrival and departure of each child

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
14	Revise daily registration system to include time of arrival and departure.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Blackheath Montessori Nursery offers very good quality nursery education.

Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning, through a wide range of activities. Staff make skilful use of the Montessori teaching methods and a create positive learning environment for children.

The curriculum is well planned and the staff have regard to the stepping stones when assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals. A broad-based curriculum is offered that includes a very good range of challenging and interesting practical activities and experiences. Staff utilise planned circle time activities to help children extend their vocabulary.

Staff spend quality class contact time with the children to enable them to extend their learning and understanding. Children enjoy a varied balance of free play and structured learning experiences. Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately, by ensuring they are always focused and activities are skilfully monitored and rotated. As a result children are in the main, highly motivated and well behaved. The assessment of children's learning is very good and staff observations are used to inform planning. Children who speak English as an additional language benefit from support through the many resources for inclusion.

Staff have high expectations of behaviour and are positive and consistent in the management of children's behaviour. A variety of strategies are used to encourage good behaviour including plenty of praise, encouragement and acting as good role models. Children are well cared for in a safe and highly stimulating environment.

Leadership and management is good, there is a clearly defined leadership and management system, with a strong commitment to ongoing staff development and improving the nursery education.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. There is a good range of information about the nursery and the activities provided for children.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. They are confident, independent, are interested to learn and demonstrate good self care skills.
- Children form good relationships with staff and their peers and they speak and listen, confidently both informally and in groups.
- Children are provided with very good opportunities to develop their creative

abilities, through music, drama, dance, art, design, stories and songs.

- The leadership and management is effective in supporting the staff team and has a commitment to constant development of the quality of service.

What needs to be improved?

- Noting the comment from a new parent that said she did not feel very well informed, a point for consideration for the management would be to develop a means of auditing parents comments and suggestions on a more frequent basis so that they may obtain parents opinions more readily.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no key issues from the last inspection. However, staff continue to provide planned programmes of activities of long, medium and short term nature.

Staff continue to observe, record and link to planning of children's individual needs and continue to contribute to assessment and provide opportunities of parents to comment on their children's progress.

Staff also continue to access training through the Early Years Childcare partnership.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in the area of Personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children demonstrate high levels of independence and are confident talkers. Children co operate in group activities, take turns and share tasks with successful outcomes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in the area of communication, language and literacy. Children can write recognisable letters and are becoming aware of punctuation and sentence construction. Children speak and listen confidently in groups and express real and imagined experiences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in the area of mathematical development. Children count reliably and recognise numbers to 10 and are using mathematical ideas to solve mathematical problems as they relate to everyday examples. Children use mathematical language concepts to compare size and age, they add and take away using familiar examples such as days of the week and months of the year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are developing a very good sense of time and place as they are regularly investigating materials in the natural things around them. Children use technology to support their learning and are familiar with practices associated with other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in the area of physical development. Children use a range of large and small apparatus and are offered the opportunity to take part in swimming lessons and group activities for music and movement on a regular basis.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's development in creativity is very good. Children explore colour and texture in a variety of forms making full use of all their senses and imagination. Staff encourage children to developing confidence with music and rhythm and dance.

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:

- A point for consideration, is to ensure that an audit of parents opinions are obtained on a more frequent basis.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.