



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 140435

DfES Number: 585083

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	18/07/2003
Inspector Name	Kay Williams

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Little Tree Montessori Nursery
Setting Address	143 Ferme Park Road HORNSEY LONDON N8 9SG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Catherine Theresa Maria Twomey-Brenner
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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

The Little Tree Montessori Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from four playrooms in a house that is attached to a church/community centre. The group have access to a kitchen, toilets and an enclosed outdoor area. The setting is located in Crouch End, London. The local area is predominantly residential with a range of amenities close by. The nursery serves the local community, with a small number of children attending from neighbouring boroughs.

The nursery is registered to provide 29 places for children aged between two and five years. There are currently 57 children on roll. This includes 15 funded three-year-olds and 17 funded four-year-olds. The children attend a variety of sessions each week. This includes both part time and full time places.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and four children are currently learning English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days per week, during term times. Morning sessions are from 9:00am to 12:00, afternoon sessions are from 12:30 to 3:30pm and full day care is between the hours of 9:00am to 3:30pm.

Four full time and three part time staff work with the children. Six staff hold Montessori teaching qualifications, one member is currently working towards NVQ level two. The setting receives support from a teacher and a special educational needs mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The nursery follows a Montessori curriculum which reflects the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

How good is the Day Care?

The setting provides good quality day care for children.

The nursery is well managed and the motivated staff team provide a warm and

welcoming environment for the children. The premise is set out with children in mind and the range of equipment offered is both interesting and age appropriate. However there are security issues within the building and some flood damage which needs repairing. Documents and record keeping is of good quality overall, although the children's attendance records lack sufficient detail and the complaints procedure does not reflect the role of OFSTED.

Areas for promoting children's health are good, they enjoy a balanced healthy mid morning snack and their personal health needs are appropriately met. Children are positively recognised as individuals and cultural diversity is valued, children with Special Educational Needs are well supported.

Children are very well behaved. Staff provide positive role models and the well written behaviour management policy is consistently implemented by all adults. Relationships between the staff and children are a strong feature of the setting and as a result the children are confident learners. Children are grouped effectively, spending time in small and large groups as well as individually. Adults plan a wide range of activities which are stimulating, interesting and promotes children's learning very well.

Parents express high level of satisfaction with the standard of care and education offered at the nursery. Written reports and verbal feedback keeps them up to date with their children's progress and they are actively encouraged to help out in the group whenever they can.

What has improved since the last inspection?

All actions made at the last inspection have been appropriately addressed, staff files are now up to date, a visitors record book is now in operation and the fence and the ground floor windows have been made safe.

What is being done well?

- The staff team work well together, they are committed, enthusiastic and clearly enjoy their role. They have good links with the local authority Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership and regularly attend meetings and training sessions. Nearly all staff hold early years qualifications and they all demonstrated a good understanding of the needs of young children. (Standard 2)
- The wide range of well planned activities positively promote children's independence. They are confident learners who clearly enjoy their time at the nursery, engaging in a stimulating range of worthwhile activities. They are developing well in all areas of the curriculum. (Standard 3)
- Children's good health is effectively promoted through the food that they eat and the domestic arrangements for hand washing and caring for the nursery pets. (Standard 7 and 8)
- Children's individual needs are especially well met. The visual environment, equipment and curriculum positively values diversity. Children with Special

Educational Needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported (Standard 9 and 10)

- The behaviour management policy is well written and consistently implemented by all staff. As a result children are very well behaved. (Standard 11)
- Partnerships with parent's is a particular strength. Parent's express high levels of satisfaction regarding the service they receive. (Standard 12)

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The setting provides an excellent selection of resources made from natural materials and plans a vast range of experimental opportunities for the children to extend their scientific learning, such as building a working volcano.

What needs to be improved?

- the accuracy and detail of information recorded regarding the children's attendance; (Standard 2)
- the decorative order of the children's toilet; (Standard 4)
- the security of the doors leading from the children's rooms into the church; (Standard 6)
- the accuracy of the information contained within the parents complaint procedure.
- (Standard 12)

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
2	ensure that records accurately record childrens attendance in appropriate detail, including hours of attendance, reasons for absence and late arrival

	or early departure.
4	make sure that the mould on the toilet walls is made safe for children.
6	make sure that premises are secure and that members of the public are unable to gain access without warning.
12	make parents aware of OFSTED's role within the nursery complaints procedure.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Little Tree Montessori Nursery provides very good quality nursery education and children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in all six of the learning areas with examples of outstanding practice noted within the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff encourage children's independence and good behaviour. Staff are calm, gently spoken and the children are happy and co operative. Staff knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum enables them to plan an interesting and appropriate range of activities, which extends children's learning very well.

Leadership and management are very good. Success of the setting is due to the well-structured management system and an effective staff team who work well together. Staff share a good understanding of early years practice and are committed to developing the quality of the provision through ongoing evaluation and training.

Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents are well informed of the curriculum and are kept up to date with their children's progress. They openly express satisfaction with the service they receive and many take advantage of the opportunity to help out in the setting.

What is being done well?

- Children speak clearly and fluently as a direct result of staff engaging in their play and conversations. There are excellent opportunities for children to develop writing skills. Children practice writing for a variety of purposes, including labelling their work. Older children can write their names and other familiar words; younger children are developing these skills with competence.
- Strong leadership nurtures a shared ethos of very good early years principles. Staff are enthusiastic about their work and endeavour to further their skills and knowledge through additional training and evaluation projects. Staff plan a wide range of activities coupled with good periods of uninterrupted free play which allows the children to engage in meaningful play and develop their learning fully.
- The assessment of children's progress is very effective. As a result, staff know the children well and are able to plan appropriate, stimulating challenges for all children, especially those with special educational needs.
- Personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children are confident, independent and interested in their work. Relationships are good and children care about their peers. Behaviour is excellent.

- Opportunities for children to develop large physical skills are very good. The setting places strong emphasis on this area of children's learning and uses the outdoor area extensively, recreating similar activities indoors if the weather does not permit outdoor play.
- Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents are offered good information about the setting's ethos. Parents are invited to attend informal monthly coffee mornings and more formal sessions to discuss their children's progress. They are welcome to spend time in the setting whenever they wish to.

What needs to be improved?

- the range of opportunities provided for the children to develop skills in information and communication technology.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the two key issues for action identified at the previous inspection. As a result significant improvements have been made to the planning of the education programme, which have had a beneficial effect on children's learning. Parents receive detailed information regarding their children's learning and this is continuing to be developed.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Behaviour is excellent. Children form good relationships with adults and their peers. They work well together, taking turns and sharing fairly. They are enthusiastic about their play and select their own materials with independence and responsibility, putting away their resources afterwards. They demonstrate high levels of self-confidence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak confidently and articulately, often recalling detailed information. They listen attentively to others. Structured writing activities result in children learning to write their names. Older children can write other familiar words too. Children use books appropriately and enjoy stories, often using reference books to extend their learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Structured activities teach children calculations, including adding and subtracting. Practical activities, such as counting children for the register are used to consolidate children's mathematical learning. Children can count reliably to ten, and often beyond. Older children can write numerals. They can identify a wide range of shapes, understand concepts of size and recreate simple patterns.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

The current theme - land, air and water - is successfully developing children's understanding and investigative skills of how things work, such as volcanoes erupting and ice melting. Children learn extensively about features of living things and observe growth regularly. Teaching children about their own culture and that of others is excellent. Opportunities for exploring information technology are somewhat limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

A wide range of equipment is used to develop skills such as throwing, climbing, balancing and catching. Children are confident movers and demonstrate good understanding of spatial awareness. They ride and manoeuvre bikes with ease, displaying competent levels of co-ordination. They are taught the importance of health and hygiene. Children use tools and malleable materials with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
<p>They express their ideas freely through a comprehensive range of well-planned activities, such as music, dance, singing and role play. Sensory learning opportunities are excellent. Activities designed to help children respond to what they see, smell, hear, taste and feel are interesting and varied. Children explore materials, especially colour, through a range of carefully planned activities in particular mixing food dye with water.</p>	

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:
- extend the opportunities for children to develop skills in information and communication technology.

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.