



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 250087

DfES Number: 511732

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 25/06/2003
Inspector Name Karen Cooper

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Little Learners Montessori School
Setting Address St Helens Church
St Helens Road
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 2DA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Pratibha Surelia

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

Little Learners Montessori School has been established since 1995. It is privately run and is situated in the centre of Solihull. The setting subscribes to the Montessori approach and is located within St Helen's church. Facilities include a large hall, toilets, kitchen and storage facilities. There is no outdoor play facility however, regular opportunities are provided to explore the local environment.

The group serves the local community and surrounding areas. There are currently 31 children on roll, which includes 20 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with Special Needs and children who use English as an additional language.

Opening times are Monday to Friday during school term time only. Sessions are from 09.15 until 12.15 and 12.30 until 15.00hrs.

Four members of staff work with the children, two are trained Montessori teachers and one is working towards a Montessori teaching qualification.

The group receives support from a SENCO from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Little Learners Montessori School provides good quality care for the children. Staff are well qualified and experienced in childcare. Relationships between staff and the children are good and children are content and settled. Space is well organised to meet the needs of children effectively. There is a well-devised operational plan that is shared with parents although the recording of incidents needs to be reviewed and the documentation for outings. The group have use of a large hall and the effective deployment of staff ensures that correct ratio's and good supervision is maintained at all times.

Staff have a good awareness of children's safety and regular checks are carried out

on the premises, toys and equipment. Effective health and hygiene procedures ensure that staff raise children's awareness by teaching them the importance of hand washing and using the toilet correctly. Staff make it their priority to gain a secure knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of every child. Children are valued and their individuality respected and staff work in partnership with parents and other organisations ensuring that children's individual needs are being met. They are calm, caring and relaxed in their management of the children whilst offering frequent praise and encouragement to succeed. They work well as a team, treat children with respect and set high expectations. All children are encouraged to take part in the full range of activities and good support is offered to children who use English as an additional language.

There is a good range of toys and equipment allowing for both physical play and relaxation. Opportunities are provided for children to use technology to support their play and learning. Daily routines are consistent which help children to feel secure.

Partnership with parents is very positive. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's learning and are kept well informed of their progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the manager agreed to devise a system to record incidents, ensure safe storage of medication, fit secondary safety devices to internal doors and negotiate use of adjoining toilet facilities in order to meet the correct ratio to children. Incidents are now recorded in an appropriate manner. A safety lock on the fridge now ensures children do not have access to medication. All internal doors have been fitted with high locking mechanisms to ensure sole occupancy during group sessions. Agreements have been made with the church to allow use of the adjoining toilet facilities.

What is being done well?

- There is good range of toys and resources, which enable the children to develop in all areas of learning. Activities are worthwhile, stimulating, well organised and are provided in a structured environment.
- There are good procedures in place to observe and record children progress enabling staff to plan the next stage of progression for the child.
- Space is used effectively to meet the needs of the children. The hall is subdivided allowing space for physical play and relaxation.
- Staff have a good awareness of children's safety. Good procedures are in place to carry out risk assessments and minimise hazards.
- Staff promote good hygiene practices and act in the best interest of the children in the event of sickness. Good procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection.
- There are many opportunities for children to learn about themselves and other cultures.

- Staff work hard to help children with special needs participate in all activities. Children are valued and their individuality respected and staff work in partnership with parents and other organisations ensuring that children's individual needs are being met.
- Staff have a consistent and positive attitude to the management of children's behaviour. High expectations are set and children's behaviour is good. Staff act as good role models.
- Partnership with parents is open and friendly. Information is shared daily and parent's wishes are respected.
- Policies and procedures are well documented and good systems are in place for reviewing and updating.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures for taking children on outings;
- the procedures for completing the incident book regarding existing injuries.

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
6	request written permission from parents for outings;
11	ensure incident records are maintained and shared with parents.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Little Learners Montessori School provides an environment where the children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of the educational programme. Behaviour and relationships in the group are very good. Younger children are well settled into the daily routine and are happy and eager to learn. The older children are confident, independent and self-reliant as they choose activities and develop concentration, early reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematical skills through suitable activities.

The teaching is very good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Staff skills and knowledge are updated through relevant training courses. Learning is promoted through a planned programme of activities and use of effective teaching methods.

Leadership and management is very good. Strong leadership is promoted within the group and the staff work well together giving each other a high level of support. All staff are positively encouraged and supported to undertake further training.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's learning and are kept well informed of their progress. Staff work hard to maintain good relationships with parents, they are provided with information about the group and have access to information regarding activities.

What is being done well?

- Opportunities within the planning for children to compare size, recreate simple patterns, match, sort, sequence and use mathematical language.
- Support for children with Special Educational Needs and who speak English as an additional language.
- Staff have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals which results in a positive effect on children's achievements.
- The variety of suitable activities available in a well-organised, structured environment.
- Observations and recording of children's progress.
- The development of children's communication language and literacy skills.

What needs to be improved?

- Point for consideration.

- further develop opportunities for children to freely choose activities to extend their creative development.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made very good progress since the last inspection. An extended range of resources are provided for the children to participate and develop in imaginative play. Sessions now include time for children to engage in role play.

More opportunities are provided for mark making and to practise writing. Children are provided with writing books to copy, write and illustrate their own stories in.

Meetings with parents, written information and daily opportunities are provided for parents to discuss their child's progress and on going assessment.

More opportunities to share and provide parents with information regarding the educational programme.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Children are interested in the activities, eager to learn and willing to attempt new challenges. They are confident, sociable and have caring relationships with each other and staff. Staff have developed the children's self esteem by giving regular praise and encouragement. There are many opportunities for children to understand differences and other cultures.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's learning in this area is very good. Children are confident and fluent speakers and engage easily in conversation with each other and adults. Children are developing an understanding that print and pictures carry meaning and is read from left to right. They show an interest in books, listen well and respond to stories, taking an active part. Children make marks and practise writing for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in mathematical development is very good. Children use numbers as part of their everyday routine and can recognise numerals and count up to 10 and beyond. Children record numbers and solve problems through practical activities, such as subtraction and addition which is supported by appropriate apparatus to underpin their experiences. Children compare size, match, sort, sequence and use mathematical language.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Children frequently talk about their past and present events in their lives and learn about the lives of others. Good use of the local environment enables children to explore the natural world and learn about the place they live. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of the sense of time and past and present events.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in physical development. Children are developing bodily control, co-ordination and an awareness of space through a range of planned activities, physical play, music and movement. They move confidently and imaginatively around the room when using equipment. Children are becoming aware of their own bodies and of the importance of good hygiene and keeping healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's progress in creative development is very good. Children learn to express themselves through music and movement, singing and role play. They explore colour, texture, form and space in two and three dimensions. Many activities provided enable children to respond to what they see, hear, smell touch and feel.

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:

- children explore colour, shape and texture however, such experiences could be extended to further enhance their creative learning and development.

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.