



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402203

DfES Number: 512203

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 12/03/2004  
Inspector Name Amanda Jane Gray

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Full Day Care  
Setting Name Harlequin Montessori Nursery  
Setting Address School Road  
Billericay  
Essex  
CM12 9LH

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Ann Margaret Arber

## 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

Harlequin Montessori Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from three classrooms in a self contained unit, in the grounds of a local secondary school. The nursery serves the local and surrounding area.

There are currently 54 children from 2 years to 5 years on roll. This includes 26 funded three year olds and 6 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08:30 until 16:15hrs.

Eight members of staff work with the children. Over half the staff have Early Years qualifications to NVQ level 3. There are 2 members of staff working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The nursery uses Montessori teaching methods.

### How good is the Day Care?

Harlequin Montessori Nursery provides good care for children.

The Manager and staff are committed to extending their knowledge through on-going training. There is a comprehensive operational plan in place, which works well in practice. Staff are well deployed within the setting and good use is made of space and resources. Children are given adequate support and care. Staff have induction training when they commence employment, which is a formal process and includes ongoing appraisals. The premises are warm and welcoming for children and parents. Space is well organised and meets the children's needs well. There is a wide range of suitable toys and play materials which provide children with sufficient challenge. Records are well maintained, accessible and stored securely.

There is an effective system for managing access to the premises and security is maintained at a high standard. Staff have a good awareness of health and safety, and promote the good health of the children and taking positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. Children have access healthy and nutritious meals and snacks .Staff have a clear knowledge of child protection issues and are supported by detailed written procedures.

Children are involved in a broad range of activities which support their language, imagination and creativity. Children are valued, respected and listened to by staff, who ensure that individual needs are met. Staff value good behaviour and use lots of praise and encouragement with the children. Strategies for dealing with behaviour are appropriate to children's ages and stages of development.

The setting is successfully working in partnership with parents. The Harlequin Parent Partnership (HPP) have regular meetings to organise social events and raise funds for the nursery.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection it was requested that the deputy demonstrate how she would meet a level 3 qualification. This has been addressed. The deputy has attended an APEL course and has written documentation to confirm that her qualification meets the necessary requirements.

It was requested that hazards in the secret garden be removed, this referred to stinging nettles. This has been addressed and the nettles have been removed.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Children are involved in a broad range of activities which support their language, imagination and creativity. Staff interact well with children and encourage their participation. Staff listen to children and value what they say, which enhances children's self esteem. Staff respond to children in a respectful manner, as a result children are confident and happy to explore and try new experiences.
- There is a strong emphasis on equal opportunities throughout the nursery. All children are included in the activities. Differences are acknowledged and valued by staff. Good support is given to children who have Special needs or English as an additional language. There is a comprehensive policy and procedure available. Staff are provided with a training pack to ensure that they have a clear understanding of equal opportunities. There is a good selection of resources and materials which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- The nursery works well in partnership with parents. There are many opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress and be involved within their learning. Parents have access to good quality information about the setting and are kept up to date with nursery news and activities.

**What needs to be improved?**

- development of staff training, to further improve the already good care and educational practices at the nursery.

**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
1	Continue to review staff training and their professional development to further improve the already good care and educational practices at the nursery.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Harlequin Montessori Nursery is generally good. It enables children to make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy, and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff seize opportunities to expand children's development in all six areas of learning and are highly aware of their individual stages. The staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is good. However, planning and assessment procedures are not sufficiently evaluated against the stepping stones or early learning goals. As a result they do not provide a secure basis on which to plan the next steps in children's learning. Children's work is valued and used to good effect on displays. A variety of teaching situations are used including whole group, small group and one to one teaching, giving children many opportunities to interact and enhance their learning experiences. Staff teamwork is excellent and ensures sessions are well paced, keeping children engaged and interested.

Leadership and management is very good. The manager is able to delegate responsibilities to the staff and is confident in their abilities. Monitoring and appraisal systems, including regular staff meetings, ensure that quality is maintained and consistent. Ongoing training is available which staff are encouraged to attend, ensuring that the setting keeps up with trends and developments. The group has a proactive and outward looking approach and welcomes new ideas. The manager and staff are committed to the improvement of care and education.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents have a good quality prospectus and regular newsletters keep them informed of developments, special events and activities. Parents are encouraged to become involved in children's learning. The nursery has an open door policy enabling parents to discuss their children at any time.

### What is being done well?

- Children are confident and curious. They communicate well with staff and each other, often initiating conversation, especially at circle time. They are motivated to explore the range of resources and activities provided.
- Children's natural curiosity is fostered by the nursery's Montessori approach. e.g. 'Where freedom is allowed for children to investigate the world they become active learners'.
- Children are keen to communicate with staff and peers. They interact and talk well, listening and responding with enjoyment to stories, joining in appropriately. Children are extending their vocabulary and explore the

meaning of sounds and words well. Children have formed good relationships with adults and peers and are sensitive to others. Staff encourage children to work as part of a group, take turns and share fairly, which they do well.

**What needs to be improved?**

- opportunities for children to further develop their designing and making skills
- curriculum planning and the use of children's developmental assessments

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn, eager to try new activities and confident to ask for help and support. They are settled and show a sense of belonging, seeking reassurance from staff and sometimes each other. Children follow instructions and are polite and can share well. They show interest particularly when looking at new things at show and tell time. Children take pride in their achievements and have good self esteem.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children use language confidently for a range of purposes. They talk alongside each other in play, initiate conversations and take part in larger group discussions. Children are developing good writing skills, encouraged by frequent opportunities for purposeful writing. Children are linking sounds and letters and enjoy listening to stories and looking at books themselves.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show a lively interest in numbers both through planned activities and spontaneously through free play. They use mathematical language and most children can count to ten and in some cases beyond. There are regular activities to encourage an understanding of simple calculation and children enjoy practical activities to explore shape, space and measure. The sensorial area supports children's development of symmetry and exploration of shapes, weight and capacity are explored regularly.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show curiosity and interest in their environment both inside and outdoors. It is rich in resources to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, opportunities for them to design and construct their own models are limited, eg.using re-cycled materials. There are activities to help develop children's interest in ICT and frequent opportunities for children to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Regular opportunities are planned to help children develop their physical skills through activities both inside and out. Children are adept at running, jumping and climbing. They are developing their balancing skills. Children have good hand and eye co-ordination which is practised through using tools and manipulating small objects. They have opportunities through music and dance to manage their bodies to create a range of movements.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are able to express their own ideas through paint, collage and construction, and their work is displayed well. Children have lively imaginations and create imaginary games with each other, using props around them. Children explore colour and texture well, both in free and guided activities. Older children respond to comments and questions, often entering into a dialogue about what they are doing.

**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 opportunities for children to design and make their own creations, and to develop and construct with purpose in mind, such as modelling with re-cycled materials
- develop the system for observing, assessing and planning for children with regard to the stepping stones and early learning goals, so that their next steps can be effectively identified. Use assessment records to inform curriculum planning to meet children's individual developmental needs.

*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.*