



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 144049

DfES Number: 581997

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 19/03/2004
Inspector Name Valerie E Davis

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Clapham Montessori
Setting Address St Pauls Community Hall
 St Pauls Church, Rectory Grove
 London
 SW4 0DX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Rosalind Bowles

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

Clapham Montessori operates on the first floor of St Paul's Community Hall, in the London Borough of Lambeth. A large hall on the ground floor is used for physical and musical activities. The kitchen, dining area and children's toilets are also situated on the ground floor. The children have access to an adjacent garden area. The group operates from 09.15 to 15.45, Monday to Friday, term time only. Both part time and full time places are offered.

The nursery is registered to care for 20 children. There are currently on roll six funded 3-year-olds and five funded 4-year-olds. Some of these children speak English as an additional language. There are currently no funded children with identified special educational needs.

Four staff work with the children. They adhere to Montessori teaching principals. They hold Montessori teaching qualifications or are currently training to obtain appropriate early years qualifications.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Clapham Montessori Nursery offers high quality provision for nursery education, which helps children make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are well qualified and use the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and the Montessori programme to plan and deliver a rich and varied programme. They use detailed observations and assessments of children's progress to plan well for individuals and groups. The programme is flexible and is changed to take advantage of the many exciting teaching and learning opportunities that arise daily.

The nursery is very well resourced in most areas of learning, although less so for aspects of physical development. Staff have excellent relationships with children and challenge them with appropriate praise and support. The nursery has a calm atmosphere and this promotes purposeful learning. Behaviour is very good.

The leadership and management of the nursery is very good. The manager is very experienced in the field of Montessori and early years education. She encourages reflective practice and is a positive role model to children and to staff. The manager monitors planning and the quality of teaching on a regular basis. She organises effective staff training. As the Special Educational Needs Coordinator, she encourages positive and sensitive strategies to meet children's individual needs.

The partnership with parents is very good and this contributes to a positive learning environment. Parents are familiar with the assessment process and express great satisfaction with the programme and the positive impact it has on their children.

What is being done well?

- Behaviour is very good and children are encouraged to be kind to each other.
- Children are confident and thoughtful learners.
- Staff and children interact well with each other and this promotes a calm and purposeful environment.
- Staff model good speaking skills at all times; they articulate vowel sounds, and the beginning, middle and end of words very well.
- Children are eager to read and write and they enjoy recording their ideas and keeping samples of their work.
- The setting benefits from manager's clear and professional leadership, and her promotion of very good early years practice.

What needs to be improved?

- provision of a greater variety of resources for physical development, to ensure children have more opportunities to select their own activities during active play.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made very good progress since the last inspection, at which two key issues were raised. The first key issue was to develop consistent strategies to modify challenging behaviour. Very good progress has been made and behaviour is managed well. Staff encourage children to be sensitive to each other and to understand the consequence of their actions.

The second key issue was to improve the organisation of teaching and indoor accommodation and to plan staff deployment and groupings of children more effectively. Very good progress has been made. Staff are deployed well and share responsibility for structured presentations, that are a feature of Montessori education, to individuals and to groups. Although resources are set out in advance, children are also encouraged to select activities from the low shelves, and in doing so begin to structure their own learning. The organisation of teaching activities and the effective use of the indoor space, including the hall downstairs, enables children to participate well in the activities.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident in their play, highly motivated to learn and behave very well. They select resources, handle equipment well and show respect for each other and the environment. Children concentrate and follow through an activity for long periods of time as they become engrossed in their play. They work independently and in groups, for example, they build complex structures together and read to each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are willing to talk about their lives, share ideas and listen to each other. Several of the older children are very confident readers and writers, using their skills in phonics to read books and to write stories, poems and lists. They are articulate, express themselves well and enjoy developing their vocabulary. Children make good use of the multi-sensory resources to develop their language and literacy.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

All of the children can count to twenty and beyond and many use the Montessori equipment to explore larger numbers and units of ten up to hundreds, thousands and sometimes up to a million. They understand simple number operations and many children willingly move on to more complex mathematics. They enjoy using the extensive variety of geometric resources and explore patterns in nature and through art.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore the local environment, make displays and label their work. They talk about the weather and the changing seasons. Children use maps, land and water moulds, globes and pictures to learn about land forms and continents. They plant bulbs and seeds and learn about the life cycle of frogs and other animals. Children learn about their own and other cultures and beliefs. They use construction activities, bolts, screws and tape recorders to explore technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident moving around the nursery. They use a variety of Montessori equipment, graded by size and texture to develop their co-ordination, manipulative, sensory and tactile skills. Children enjoy using the lower hall and garden area to run, jump, skip and hop. However, the resources for boisterous indoor and outdoor play are limited, which impacts on children's ability to independently select their own activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's creativity is fostered through the use of extensive art materials, music and dance activities. They learn how to use powder paint and thick brushes and use water colours to produce finer paintings. Children enjoy using collage, clay and dough to make models. They make flower arrangements for the nurse's room and their art work is displayed well. A specialist teacher provides additional experiences for music 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:

- consider reviewing the provision and organisation of resources for some aspects of physical development, in order to provide further opportunities for children to independently select their own activities during boisterous indoor and outdoor play.

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.