



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 138248

DfES Number: 533002

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	15/10/2003
Inspector Name	Elaine Douglas

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	The Maria Montessori Children's House
Setting Address	122-124 Kingston Road Wimbledon London SW19 1LY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Maria Montessori Children's House 03793748
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	The Maria Montessori Children's House
Address	175-177 Temple Avenue London EC4Y 0DB

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 Maria Montessori Children's house was registered in 1999.

It operates from St John's ambulance hall in South Wimbledon. The group have sole use of the premises during the day, which consists of a main hall, kitchen, a storage room and two bathrooms. The Children's house serves the local area.

There are currently 42 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 10 funded three-year-olds and four funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Two children have special needs and the group supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.30 until 12.30 and from 13:30 until 15:30 on Monday and Wednesday; from 9.30 until 14:30 on Tuesday and Thursday; and from 9.30 to 12.30 on Friday.

Two part time and three full time staff work with the children. Three have early years qualifications. Two staff are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The group are members of the Pre - school Learning Alliance, and follow the Montessori principles of teaching.

How good is the Day Care?

Maria Montessori Children's House provides good quality care for children. The group are providing a warm, welcoming environment in which children can develop independence. They are supported by caring, knowledgeable staff, who build good relationships with them, and work well as a team. Well written, extensive policies and procedures underpin the effective running of this provision.

Most health and safety routines are effective, and understood by staff and children alike. Good nutritional snacks are part of the daily routine to develop children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff are knowledgeable of children's

individual needs, and ensure they have the relevant information to care for children with special needs.

The group provide a wide range of stimulating activities to promote all six areas of development while adhering to the Maria Montessori principles. Children are able to select from resources for themselves and are encouraged to be independent. Staff support children in their learning through observation and appropriate questioning.

Parents are welcomed into the provision to exchange information on a daily basis, and receive written documentation to keep them informed of their child's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the provider agreed to record the exact hours that children attend the group; different attendance registers are kept for morning and afternoon attendance and staff record any changes to a child's normal attendance, such as arriving late. A separate record was required to be kept of the fire drills; the group now have a fire drill book in which they record the details of all fire drills, these are carried out for an entire week each term to ensure all children are present during a drill. All electric sockets now have safety covers, as agreed. The group were required to obtain play materials which reflect positive images of culture and disability, they have done this by purchasing small world people with disabilities, and cultural play people, they have developed the use of their continent pack which depicts people from other cultures across the continents, they are many pictures displayed around the nursery which also provide positive images. The provider also agreed to record significant incidents of behaviour, they now have a system in place to do this.

What is being done well?

- the managers commitment to ongoing training, setting high standards and keeping up to date with regulations.
- the well organised use of available space, and deployment of staff to ensure children are safe and well cared for.
- The stimulating, interesting range of activities which promote all areas of development.
- the range of good quality resources which promote learning in all areas.
- the fire procedures, which are practised regularly, and the staffs knowledge of their roles and responsibilities during fire evacuation practises.
- the nutritional snack available throughout the sessions, and the availability of milk or water which children are able to help themselves to.
- the methods staff use to deal with children's behaviour sensitively and appropriately. Staff see situations arising and skilfully distract children to avoid inappropriate behaviour.
- the exchange of information with parents both written and verbal, parents are welcomed into the group and freely approach staff who value their knowledge

of their own children.

- the extensive policies which provide clear procedures for both staff and parents, as to how the group operates.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

The partnership with other agencies to ensure routines, resources, and the environment are suitable for children with special needs. Staff are knowledgeable of children's individual needs and ensure they are meeting them at all times.

What needs to be improved?

- The hygiene routines at snack time, and with all hand washing, to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- The documentation to ensure the lost child policy, and the procedures for if an allegation is made against a member of staff, to ensure they are clear and relevant to the group; and the risk assessment to ensure actions are recorded.

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
7	Raise children's awareness of good hygiene routines with regard to hand washing prior to eating. Provide sufficient hand washing equipment to prevent cross contamination.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education is acceptable and of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Key strengths in all areas are due to excellent interaction from staff and their ability to extend children's learning through questioning and conversation. Staff are receptive and responsive to the children, and use appropriate opportunities to join in their play. Personal social and emotional development is supported by the excellent relationships staff have with children, however children are not always given clear explanations relating to behaviour.

Staff are observant of the choices that children make, and use effective methods to record, evaluate, and monitor children's progress and development.

Children make very good progress in maths, due to good resources, and staff knowledge of how to support children with using the equipment to its full potential. There is limited use of everyday technology resources.

Secure knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage enables staff to plan and provide a wide range of interesting activities that are fully extended.

Leadership and management is very good. The manager and co-manager have a clear vision and are committed to continuous improvement. The staff work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The manager and co-manager have an excellent knowledge of children's individual needs, and have established effective links with outside agencies to support children with special needs.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are well informed about the group and are actively involved with their child's learning plan. They receive good information about the care, curriculum, and policies. Relationships between staff and parents are warm friendly and inclusive. There are effective formal and informal channels of communication to discuss children's progress and concerns.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. They are confident, interested, and are able to work independently using Montessori methods. Behaviour is very good.
- Staff's clear understanding of the early learning goals leads to well planned activities which engage and sustain children's interests and efforts.
- Staff work closely with children and are skilled at observing and using potential opportunities to extend children's learning. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of children's individual progress, and objectives for learning are

carefully recorded and monitored.

- Staff set challenges for children, including those with special needs, that increase their thinking and skills.
- An excellent range of resources and competent teaching ensure that children's progress in maths is outstanding.

What needs to be improved?

- the use of everyday technology to support children's learning.
- the explanations given to children to ensure they understand about the consequences of their behaviour.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Key issues from the last inspection have all been met.

The group has made very good progress since the last inspection. A variety of additional resources have been obtained and made accessible to support imaginative and role play. Staff respond to child initiated imaginative play by joining in and extending the play through positive interaction. There are planned projects and new resources that provide opportunities for children to extend their learning in relation to knowledge and understanding of the world. A world table, large floor puzzles of world, globes, reference books, outings into the local community, and continent folders with photographs of people, animals, and customs are easily accessible. A central interest table has a wide variety of resources including a hamster, fish, african snail, plants, and items related to the season. Staff have attended training on Special Educational Needs. They work closely with other agencies who visit the group on a regular basis. A new initiate has been established, to co-ordinate the objectives for learning identified by all agencies involved in working with a child, so there is one individual education plan. All staff have knowledge of the learning objectives for each child.

All records of children's progress are now dated.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in this area. Children show excellent independence in selecting and carrying out tasks using the Montessori equipment. They persist at activities and concentrate well. Staff consistently join children at activities and ask open ended questions to extend children's learning. Children's achievements and objectives for learning are carefully recorded and monitored. Children are not always given clear explanations about the consequences of their actions.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in this area. Staff develop an environment that gives children the opportunity to communicate their ideas. Interaction between staff and children is excellent. Children are very confident with linking sounds to letters of the alphabet, and make good use of reading and writing resources. Children are confident and enthusiastic writers. Staff make writing activities interesting and applicable to the planned learning objectives for each child.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in this area. There are excellent accessible resources available for mathematical development. Children have a very good understanding of size, shape, and recognition and concept of numbers. They are particularly confident with using Montessori methods to solve practical problems. Staff provide a wide variety of opportunities for children to develop confidence with counting and recognition of numerals. Children show interest in solving number problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in this area. There is a very good range of accessible resources related to the natural world. Children show interest and excitement when learning about the world in which they live. There are good opportunities for children to learn about their environment, through outings and planned activities. Children do not make regular use of the everyday technology resources.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children make very good progress in this area. Children show a good awareness of space, themselves and others, and negotiate space successfully when playing with large and small equipment. Children are confident with manipulating materials and objects and have very good hand and eye co-ordination. They handle tools, objects, construction, and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. Children move with control and co-ordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children make very good progress in this area. Staff recognise and praise children for their creative achievements. Children work creatively, and have regular opportunities to explore a wide range of media and materials. Planning of activities provide good opportunities for children use their imagination in art, design, music and movement. Children frequently enter into imaginative dialogue with their peers and staff.

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:

- PFC - Develop the use of everyday technology to support children's learning.
- PFC - Ensure children are given clear explanations about the consequences of their behaviour.

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.