



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 144720

DfES Number: 530082

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	03/03/2005
Inspector Name	Kay Rutter

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Toad Hall
Setting Address	37 St. Marys Gardens Kennington London SE11 4UF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Vivien Rees
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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

Toad Hall Montessori Nursery School opened in 1985.

It operates from a four-storey terraced house in Kennington. It is situated within walking distance of Lambeth North and Kennington stations, local bus routes, shops and parks.

There are currently 25 children aged between 2 and 5 years on roll, this includes 18 funded children. The session supports children with special needs and children speaking English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days per week, during term time. The nursery is open between 08:30 and 16:15. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

Three full time and one part time staff work with the children. The provider is on site each day. One member of staff has a relevant early years qualification, equivalent to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3. Two members of staff are working towards recognised early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from Surestart and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). Staff use Montessori and traditional methods of teaching to cover the foundation stage areas of learning.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Toad Hall Montessori Nursery provides good quality education, which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in the six learning areas. Children participate in a well planned programme of adult led activities at each session. They enjoy some free play after completing planned tasks but have little independent access to resources. Children build positive and respectful relationships with adults and peers.

The quality of teaching is good. Clear communication systems and established roles result in a motivated staff team that work well together. Adults are knowledgeable about the foundation stage and stepping stones. Good use is made of the indoor space to present a wide variety of activities, which is sufficiently broad to meet the needs of most children. Staff successfully use a wide range of direct teaching and questioning techniques to extend each child's thinking and learning, less time is spent learning or developing through practical exploration and investigation.

Leadership and management of the setting is effective. The provider is committed to providing good quality education for children, her aims are clearly understood by staff. The staff team are established, positive and enthusiastic; they work well together to ensure that children receive good quality care and education. Continuous improvements have been made to the setting, activity planning and assessments of children. Adults plan collaboratively and the manager ensures staff are well deployed to offer children ample attention. There are weaknesses in the overall organisation of the day resulting in periods where children wait, unoccupied whilst organisational tasks are completed.

Partnership with parents is good. A range of information is available about the setting, funding, the foundation stage curriculum, policies and procedures. Parents are warmly welcomed and ongoing communication with key workers keeps them informed of their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- The provider has a clear commitment to providing good quality education. This ethos is shared by all staff. Adults are well deployed and have clear roles and responsibilities, which ensures staff are able to be attentive to children and support them in their learning individually and in small groups.
- Staff are attentive to children and provide ample support. Adults are interested in what children do and say; this enables children to feel secure and confident, builds good relationships based on mutual respect and fosters the children's self esteem. Children interact confidently with others, they can conduct simple conversations and listen attentively when required.
- Adults provide a stimulating and attractive environment to welcome children

and parents. Good use is made of indoor space to offer a variety of planned activities. A consistent routine and daily opportunities to work in small group situations with direct teaching from adults enables children to make good, steady progress in all areas of the curriculum.

- Adults are clear about the scope of learning each planned activity offers. They introduce relevant vocabulary, ideas and ask questions to make children think. This challenges children effectively and enables them to progress at their own pace.
- Partnership with parents is good, parents are welcomed warmly and communication is friendly. A wide range of information about the setting and foundation stage curriculum is available in written format and on the nursery website.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning and organisation of the routine and large group teaching sessions; there are periods when children are waiting, patiently but unoccupied whilst organisational tasks are completed. This does not meet their educational needs
- the frequency of which the outdoor area is used to support all areas of learning, particularly to provide opportunities for vigorous physical play. The garden is not sufficiently used in the winter months.
- chances for children to operate independently and spontaneously; there are few opportunities for children to self select from a range of materials and equipment. This limits their chances to explore or investigate, use their imagination in role play, find out how things work and consolidate their learning through practical experiences.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting were required to take action to address two key weaknesses. An appropriate action plan was produced and the setting have made generally good progress in addressing the key issues, they are continuing to develop in these areas.

The setting have partially addressed one of the key issues. They have improved the programme for physical development and now provide children with daily planned activities to promote the development of their large motor skills. Many of these activities are adult initiated and take place indoors, which offers limited scope for children to experience vigorous physical play, initiate or explore their own ideas. The setting are required to continue to develop this area.

The setting have addressed the second key issue very effectively. Short term plans are now clearly linked to the six learning areas of the foundation stage. Planned activities have a clear focus and written plans identify how these relate to the stepping stones and early learning goals. Adults are very clear how activities can be differentiated for children who learn at different rates. This is very effective in

practice as adults consistently pitch dialogue and questions at an appropriate level for each child, which enables them to make steady progress.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident, they enjoy and persist at a range of planned activities. Opportunities for children to choose activities spontaneously, explore their own ideas, set their own challenges and operate independently are limited. Children are keen to participate in group discussions and listen attentively. Children are generally well behaved and are beginning to develop cooperative relationships with their peers, sharing and taking turns.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are articulate and speak confidently about their experiences. Structured activities are used to develop children's understanding of phonic sounds and teach accurate letter formation. Children confidently attempt to write their names and write well during adult led activities but have few other opportunities to explore writing for different purposes. Children enjoy adults reading impromptu stories to them, they can handle books competently and are aware of the directionality of print.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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There are many opportunities to explore mathematical concepts and vocabulary, building on children's knowledge of colour, size, shape and position. Counting accurately to beyond ten and recognising numerals are common place, although children have few opportunities to use mathematical skills to solve practical problems. Children sort, match and learn about pattern. They are beginning to explore calculation, addition and subtraction.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children learn in great detail about living and growing things, life cycles, the natural world and the environment through topic work and taught activities. Children enjoy experimenting with a small range of materials for sensory exploration. They have daily access to a computer but spend little time finding out how things work, or investigating everyday objects and technology. Children are developing design skills, they use construction materials and tools safely to create complex models.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Adults plan appropriate daily activities to promote spatial awareness, balance and enable children to develop good control and co-ordination. Children use the climbing frame on a regular basis. Most physical activities are held indoors, the outdoor environment is not maximised in the winter months, which limits opportunities for children to enjoy vigorous physical play or initiate their own ideas. They develop good dexterity and manipulative skills by using a range of tools and small equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore colour, texture and shape through adult led art activities. They have little independent access to materials to be spontaneously creative, but staff encourage children to follow their own ideas and plan regular sessions for children to create unique and original work. Children regularly listen to music, move creatively and play instruments. Children enjoy using the basic props provided for role-play and introduce imaginary play into many of their activities.

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

- Ensure that the organisation of the routine and large group teaching sessions meets the educational needs of the children and ensures that they are purposefully engaged at all times
- Use the outdoor environment more frequently to support all areas of learning, particularly to provide opportunities for vigorous physical play
- Provide more chances for children to operate independently and spontaneously, explore and investigate a wide range of materials and to consolidate their learning through practical experiences.

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.