



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN EY267314**

**DfES Number: 270004**

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

Inspection Date 26/04/2004

Inspector Name Jan Leo

### **SETTING DETAILS**

Day Care Type Full Day Care

Setting Name The Children's House

Setting Address The Pavillion, Park Hill Recreation Ground  
Benmead Road  
Kidlington  
Oxfordshire  
OX5 2DA

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

Name Mrs Henrietta Portia Ussher

## 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 Children's House Nursery first became registered in September 1997 and moved to its current location in September 2003. It is a Montessori nursery and operates from a pavilion on a public recreation ground, within walking distance from the centre of Kidlington. A large room is available for the majority of activities with a small side room, kitchen, office and toilet area off to one side. The small room and kitchen are used for specific small group activities. A public activity area is used for outdoor play. This is located at the rear of the building and has a fence and gate to aid security.

There are currently 32 children aged between two and five years on the register, of whom 19 are funded three year olds and five are funded four year olds. There are currently no children with special educational needs but two have English as an additional language.

The group is open five days a week, during school term time, between the hours of 08:30 and 15:30.

There are two full time and two part time members of staff working with the children. Three are Montessori trained, and the fourth has other relevant childcare qualifications.

### How good is the Day Care?

The Children's House is a Montessori nursery which provides good quality care for children. It is staffed by a well qualified team who have worked together for a number of years, and they continue to update their knowledge by attending relevant training. Staff work with the children to provide a wide range of stimulating activities at an appropriate level, and children enjoy their play. The children are becoming very independent and take part in maintaining a tidy environment. They are sociable and confident, and their behaviour is good.

Most aspects of health and safety are well met and some formal policies and

practices have been implemented in order to maintain children's well being. Deployment of staff in the outdoor play area however needs to be reviewed as a precautionary measure. Children are provided with well balanced refreshments which they are able to access freely and staff are aware of children's changing home circumstances to ensure they remain settled and participate fully.

Staff build good relationships with parents and carers to ensure they are kept fully informed about all aspects of the provision and feel welcome at the nursery. Annual questionnaires are given out to allow parents and carers to comment on the provision and a large percentage, of those returned, consider the nursery to have a calm atmosphere.

Most of the required documentation is in place but some is not kept quite in accordance with regulatory requirements.

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

Not applicable. This is the first inspection since becoming registered in this building.

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

- Staff build very good relationships with parents and carers in order to remain alert as to children's changing home circumstances and tailor the day to meet individual needs.
- Staff are committed to ongoing personal development and attend relevant training to update their knowledge and skills. They work well together as a team.
- The environment and resources are organised to develop children's independence, and allow adequate space for a variety of planned and freely chosen activities to operate alongside each other.
- Excellent security systems are in place to monitor access to the building and keep children safe on outings.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- record keeping, to ensure that the daily register of attendance accurately records children's hours of attendance, and Ofsted agrees a location for records to be stored off site
- deployment of staff when the climbing frame is in use, to ensure staff are close enough to help if a child gets into difficulties

#### **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	conduct a risk assessment on all areas and equipment used by the children, identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks
14	ensure that documentation is kept in line with regulatory requirements to accurately show the hours of children's attendance, and agree a location with Ofsted when documentation is not kept on site

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The Children's House, Kidlington is a Montessori nursery provision where children are making generally good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff interact very well with the children to ensure they are settled and their individual needs and feelings are catered for, but at times the level of adult support fails to promote thinking and reasoning, and hampers individual creativity. Staff capture children's interest by imaginative use of resources and linking learning to things that interest the children, but access to some resources and equipment is limited which restricts children's knowledge and development and safety matters are not always pointed out to the children. A formal behaviour policy is in place and put into practice to promote good behaviour. The children behave very well.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents and carers are supplied with clear information about the setting, and are advised on how they can contribute to their children's learning. They are kept well informed of children's progress through both formal and informal reporting procedures, and parents and carers are made to feel welcome.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. Staff and management are qualified and experienced in Montessori teaching, and work well together as a team. Ongoing personal training and development is encouraged in order to increase skills and staff support each other well. All staff are involved in planning and have a thorough understanding of the systems in place and the aims of the group. Staff do however, rely heavily on memory and experience to reduce formal planning and related paperwork, which limits the ability to monitor coverage of the curriculum and operational procedures.

### What is being done well?

- Children are sociable, confident, independent, and interested in learning.
- Staff work well together as a team to provide a calm, stable environment where children feel secure.
- Staff support children on a one to one basis to ensure their individual needs are met, and they can progress at their own pace.
- Staff build strong relationships with parents and keep them well up to date with children's progress.
- A wide range of natural resources are provided and used imaginatively to give children a broad range of experiences.

**What needs to be improved?**

- the level of staff intervention, to ensure that thinking and reasoning are fully promoted, individual creativity is allowed to flourish, and children develop an awareness of potential hazards
- the opportunity for children to experience and use modern technology on a regular basis
- planning and relevant paperwork, to ensure that coverage of all areas of the curriculum can be easily tracked

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

At the last inspection the group was required to plan physical play activities carefully to ensure all children could benefit from using 'all available resources in a wide curriculum'.

The staff have now introduced a chart to monitor children's participation and activities are organised to appeal to all children.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are independent, interested in their surroundings and confidently show off their skills. They are friendly, sociable and frequently move from one friendship group to another throughout play, and they build close relationships with the staff. Effective procedures are in place to manage behaviour and children are co-operative and behave very well.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Excellent interaction is used to develop children's communication skills and they share thoughts and ideas freely. The children have a thorough understanding of the link between sounds and letters and have fun exploring sounds. They have regular opportunities to practise early reading and writing skills for a variety of purposes, but staff do not consistently promote children's thinking and reasoning.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are given numerous opportunities to explore shape and space using a variety of media, and they are beginning to develop their problem solving skills through practical activities. Resources are used imaginatively to develop number recognition on a one to one basis, but few opportunities are provided for children to practise counting and early addition and subtraction within the daily routine.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are provided with a variety of opportunities, experiences and natural resources to learn about the natural world, local community and the wider world through practical activities. Their changing circumstances at home are considered in the planning to provide relevant activities and reinforce understanding. Little technological equipment is available to reflect modern life and resources are not readily available to enable children to develop different construction techniques.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move extremely confidently and have opportunities to challenge their physical ability in outdoor play. They have regular access to the outdoor area for a range of activities, and children move well. Children are given a wide selection of resources to help develop and practise manipulation skills and they have well developed spatial awareness.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are given a varied range of textures and media to experience and explore, and natural resources are used to reinforce learning and add meaning. Children share their own ideas to create imaginary play using appropriate resources to extend themes, but their individual creativity is sometimes hampered by too much adult direction in practical tasks. Some children have few opportunities to participate in movement and music activities on a regular basis.

**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**

- review the level of staff intervention, to ensure that thinking and reasoning are fully promoted, individual creativity is allowed to flourish, and children develop an awareness of potential hazards
- expand the opportunities for children to experience and use modern technology on a regular basis
- improve planning and relevant paperwork, to ensure that coverage of all areas of the curriculum can be easily tracked

*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.*