



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402938

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 25/11/2004
Inspector Name Marnie Downes

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Merry Gold AMI Montessori
Setting Address Murray Park Hall
 Kneller Road
 Twickenham
 Middlesex
 TW2 7DX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Malsri Amarasuriya

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

Merry Gold Montessori is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 1990 and operates from Murray Park Hall which is situated within Murray Park in Whitton. A maximum of 28 children attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays each week from 09:00 to 12:00 during term time and opens on Mondays and Thursdays from 13:00 to 16:00 during the spring and summer terms. All children share access to a small outdoor play area.

There are currently 31 children aged from two and a half to five years on roll. Of these 13 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area and attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff. Three of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate Early Years qualifications. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised Early Years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. They following the Foundation Stages of Learning.

How good is the Day Care?

Merry Gold AMI Montessori provides unsatisfactory quality care for children overall.

The first day of this inspection only one out of the four staff working with the children had CRB disclosures, the three without had unsupervised access to the children at times during the session. Children's attendance is partly recorded by the group, however parents are responsible for recording their hours of attendance and this does not meet regulations. The premises are clean and sufficiently maintained. Space is adequate for the children and equipment is well laid out. Policies and procedures are in place, although some are not specific to the way the group operates. There is no procedure to follow if a parent fails to collect a child.

The premises are safe and staff have some awareness of potential hazards,

however on both days of inspection children gained unsupervised access to the kitchen. Risk assessments are limited and children are taken on outings but no operational procedures are in place. Health and hygiene procedures are in place, but accident records are not signed by parents and some important emergency information is missing for some children. Children are not provided with a healthy or balanced snack, on both days they were given a dry cracker. Staff lack knowledge of child protection and procedures to follow.

Children are offered both Montessori and traditional resources. Structured activities are offered throughout the session and children can also make independent choices of what to play with. There is no written daily plan and the manager plans and implements most group activities. There is a good selection of equipment and activities available to the children including a wide range of activities that develop their understanding of equality. There is an inconsistency in the way the staff team manage children's behaviour.

Parents receive written information on the nursery and when asked said they were happy with the service provided.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Thirteen actions were raised at the last inspection, some of which are still outstanding. Group sizes do not exceed 26 as low level shelving and tables separate the hall into smaller areas. An appropriately stocked first aid kit is now held. Policies and procedures have been implemented in relation to caring for sick children and parental consent is obtained prior to administering medication. Electrical appliances including the cooker do not pose a hazard to children.

A policy has been drawn up on unvetted persons not being alone with children, however staff still do not have CRB disclosures. The registration system does record times of arrival and departure for staff and children, although recording children's hours of attendance should not be the responsibility of their parents. Public areas are checked prior to being used, however this is not included on risk assessments. Children still have unsupervised access to the kitchen area. Conditions of registration are not being complied with as persons unvetted are still left alone with children. The child protection procedure does not include procedures to follow if allegations were made against a staff member and the group still do not have a procedure to follow if a parent failed to collect a child.

What is being done well?

- The room and space is well organised and laid out into different areas of learning.
- Resources are made fully accessible to the children. Children are provided with a good range of activities that promote their understanding of equal opportunities.

What needs to be improved?

- staff vetting procedures and unvetted persons not being left alone with children
- policies and procedures in relation to uncollected children, recording children's attendance, recording accidents, risk assessments, outings, children with special needs and child protection
- requesting parental consent and emergency contact details
- the inaccessibility of the kitchen
- snacks provided for the children
- staff understanding of working with children who have special needs, managing children's behaviour effectively and child protection.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since 1 April 2004 Ofsted have not received any complaints about this provider.

Outcome of the inspection

Unsatisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown**

Std	Action	Date
1	ensure that staff who are not yet in receipt of a clear CRB check do not have unsupervised access to children	23/12/2004
2	ensure that staff are responsible for the children's registration system showing the hours of their attendance	29/11/2004
2	ensure there is a procedure in place to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child	23/12/2004

7	ensure that accidents records are signed by parents	29/11/2004
13	increase staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection; ensure that the written policy refers to ACPC guidelines and includes procedures to follow if an allegation was made against a staff member	23/12/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
6	ensure that the kitchen is made inaccessible to children or that they only have supervised access
6	ensure that risk assessments identify hazards both indoors and outside including equipment, materials and procedures
6	devise an operational procedure for the safe conduct of any outings provided
7	request parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment for all children and ensure that all children have emergency contact details recorded
8	ensure that children are provided with snacks that are healthy and nutritious
10	develop staff's knowledge and understanding of caring for children who have special needs
11	ensure that all staff demonstrate consistent management of children's behaviour
14	ensure that policies and procedures promote the efficient and safe management of the provision and are specific to the setting

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Merry Gold AMI Montessori provides acceptable nursery education, but has some significant areas for improvement. The children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by significant weaknesses in two out of the six areas of learning, although there are some good aspects.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff do not have a sound knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning, and do not sufficiently understand how to extend children's learning and provide opportunities to effectively challenge them. They do not conduct regular observations on children, and are not involved with the planning of activities. Children's personal social and emotional development is promoted by staff's kind and caring approach, and most children are well behaved. Resources are very good, but staff do not always know how to use them to best effect. Staff have not embraced training opportunities that would help them develop their understanding of the foundation stage of learning.

Leadership and management have some significant weaknesses. The proprietor/manager interacts well with the children and ensures sufficient resources are available. She has had the same planning in place for the last three years. This does not clearly indicate the learning intentions or evaluations of activities, and does not target the more able or less able children. Staff have not been encouraged to embrace training opportunities, and some of the key issues from the last inspection report have not been met.

The partnership with parents is generally good. The parents are provided with information about the early learning goals by way of a notice board in the foyer, but are not encouraged to become involved with their child's learning. They are invited to an annual open day where they can look at their children's work and discuss their progress. A final progress report is compiled for their child before they move onto school.

What is being done well?

- Staff encourage children to be independent by getting them to tidy away activities after they have finished with them, and by allowing them time to put on and take off their own outdoor clothing.
- Children learn about the ethnicity, views and beliefs of others by looking at a wide range of festivals celebrated by different cultures. Art work relating to these celebrations appears on the walls of the setting.
- Children's mathematical development is promoted effectively through a range of stimulating activities that encourages them to count and recognise numbers, learn about basic shapes and sequence articles into position and

size.

- Children are confident at naming colours and are able to recite a wide variety of simple songs from memory. They play musical instruments with enthusiasm, tapping out beats and recognising sound and sound patterns.
- Staff use effective strategies to promote good behaviour and consideration for others. Their calm and polite manner sets a good example to children.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge of the foundation stage of learning and the stepping stones that lead towards the early learning goals
- the planning of activities and the observation and assessment of children progress
- the attention given to increasing children's vocabulary and increasing their awareness of the different purposes of writing
- the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world relating to technology and information and communication technology, learning about people in the local community, identifying living things in the natural world and construction using a wide range of objects and techniques
- the planning of the physical development programme and the outside area to promote children's understanding of how to handle large equipment, extend their climbing and balancing skills and develop their awareness of the importance of staying healthy.
- the monitoring of the quality of teaching

What has improved since the last inspection?

There remains significant weaknesses in the progress made in tackling the issues identified by the previous inspection report. These required the setting to improve the partnership with parents by providing information about the early learning goals, and by showing parents how their children could be helped towards them. Information about the early learning goals is available to parents on a notice board in the foyer, but parents are still not encouraged by the proprietor/manager to become involved in their child's learning. The proprietor/manager was asked to strengthen the provision for physical development by ensuring children have opportunities to develop climbing skills on a regular basis. The setting has made no progress in this area and children do not get to climb or balance on a regular basis; this remains a key issue. The proprietor/manager was asked to make better use of technological equipment and give children more access to resources for construction. Children now have a range of programmable toys, but have no access to information and communication technology or to other forms of technology. Children do have a variety of construction materials to choose from, although they have limited opportunities to construct using recycled materials or to learn techniques of how to join materials together in a variety of ways.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have opportunities to show independence whilst putting on outdoor clothing and selecting resources for themselves. They develop good relationships with staff and their peers, and learn about the cultures and beliefs of others; they have covered festivals such as Eid, Diwali, Thanksgiving and the Notting Hill carnival. Children are not initially self motivated when entering the setting, instead they sit quietly in ones and two's making conversation and awaiting instruction.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children respond to songs with enthusiasm and are able to sing many songs from memory. They link sounds to letters and are beginning to write the sounds of spoken words. Children enjoy looking at books, and show an understanding that print carries meaning. Children's vocabulary is not always extended by staff to explore the meaning of words, or to help them express themselves. Opportunities to develop children's awareness of the different purposes of writing is limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children can reliably count, recognise and name numbers up to ten, and many can go beyond this up to 19. They use mathematical ideas to solve practical problems, such as fitting triangles into square boxes, and use mathematical language in relation to shapes. Children regularly sequence objects by their size and recreate simple patterns. There are few opportunities for children to explore volume and quantity through practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children enjoy investigating objects such as plastic minnie beasts and things that float and sink. They use programmable toys to support their learning, but do not use information and communication technology or everyday technology as part of their activities. Children have limited use of recycled materials and the techniques used to join materials together. They do not identify living things in the place where they live, or find out about people in their local community.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Poor

Children do movement and marching to music, showing awareness of space for themselves and others. They regularly use fine motor skills whilst playing with small world toys and threading beads onto laces. Children do not learn about healthy eating or how to recognise changes in their bodies when they are active. There are limited opportunities for them to climb, balance, ride bikes or to use large equipment. The outside area is not used to extend children's learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children know their colours and regularly explore two and three dimensions whilst doing art work or mathematical development. They are able to sing a wide range of simple songs from memory, and can match movement to music, recognising sound patterns and changes. Although children respond to some of their senses during activities, taste and smell are not explored regularly. Children have limited opportunities to use their imaginations to re-enact stories using role play materials.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- develop staff's knowledge of the stepping stones towards the expected early learning goals, and ensure a system of monitoring the teaching enables all staff to be confident in their ability to link knowledge to practice, to make full use of children's learning opportunities.
- review the curriculum planning system to ensure that the six areas of learning are clearly indicated with learning intentions and resources identified; ensure evaluations are conducted on focussed activities.
- involve all staff in the planning of activities, and ensure regard is given to the stepping stones leading to the early learning goals in each area
- improve the programmes for physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
- make sure meaningful observations and assessments are conducted on children which will inform progress records and show parents what their children have achieved in the six areas of learning. Include individual targets in the planning to help all children progress to the next stage of learning.

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.