

Daisy Chain Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 122645
Inspection date 17/10/2010
Inspector Chris Mackinnon

Setting address St Lukes Hall, New North Road, South Park, Reigate,
Surrey, RH2 8LZ

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The nursery first opened in 1999 and is located in a church hall in the South Park area of Reigate, Surrey. Children use a large hall as the main play area, with access to a paved outdoor play area and garden learning area. The setting is open from 8.00am to 4.00pm for five days a week, all year round.

The setting is registered on the early years register and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the childcare register. Children aged between 2 and 8 years may attend, with no more than 24 in the early years age group. The setting currently has 58 children on roll, and all are in early years age group. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is also in receipt of funding for nursery education. There is a staff team of seven, and most have early years qualifications with one staff member currently completing the foundation degree. The setting also has qualified Early Years Professional Status staff member.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery is a well organised day care setting, with a well qualified staff team committed to promoting children's welfare and development. Children have access to a highly stimulating play environment, that includes many opportunities for child led play and outdoor activities. A highly organised and well planned programme of activities and learning themes is provided, and children make excellent progress with their learning. Staff are highly organised in their use of observation and assessment, and the promotion of individual children's achievement is consistently maintained. The setting works closely with parents and carers to ensure children thrive and engage, and staff are confident in their organisation of self-evaluation, and the promotion of continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- review risk assessments and ensure outdoor garden play area is included 17/12/2010

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- revise records of attendance to be kept more clearly and not used to record other information

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is a Montessori based pre-school setting, and provides day care throughout the year. The staff are effectively led and managed, and have a high level of early years training, with many staff level three qualified. The manager is currently completing the early years foundation degree qualification, and the setting also has the benefit of an early years professional status practitioner. An effective and well managed key person system has been established, which is highly effective in maintaining individual children's learning progress. Staff are also well supported by their seniors in making effective partnerships with parents and carers. Safeguarding is soundly organised within the nursery, and children's safety and security is consistently managed. Staff are knowledgeable practitioners and have a consistent awareness of children protection procedures. A well written range of policy guidance is also in place to ensure children's security and welfare are maintained. The setting's organisation of record keeping has all required elements in place, but the record of attendance is also used to record other information, which dilutes its clarity as a required document. A range of appropriate written risk assessments have been undertaken for the setting, but these were found to be not fully complete and accessible within the setting's documentation.

Children make good use of an exciting and well presented play environment that contains an excellent range of play materials. Two particularly strong elements within the setting are the displays and learning materials provided to promote language and literacy, and children's awareness of numbers. Children are consistently encouraged to explore the play environment, and have many opportunities to adapt and combine play materials. Children's responses to the planned environment are excellent, and staff are skilled in their promotion of child initiated activities. For example, an activity where children roll wooden cylinders down a ramp, becomes a chalk marking exercise, to measure how far they would go. Children have access to well stocked 'interest tables' where they can explore and compare a wide range of objects linked to the current learning themes. There are also many visual elements and art works displayed, and good use is made of photos in the learning areas to stimulate children's interests. The nursery makes good use of its outdoor play garden, when weather permits and children are able to have a wide range of learning experiences. For example, children have adventure play climbing on a set of low trees, which are also used for child led role play. The outdoor play area also provides many opportunities for learning about growing and nature. The setting provides an excellent mix of Montessori and mainstream play resources and it is this high level of accessibility to challenging play items; and the attention given to promoting visual learning, that contributes to setting's play environment being judged as outstanding.

The setting successfully promotes inclusion and staff work closely with individual children. Key persons take care to ensure the children they support are able to develop and make good progress across their learning gaps. The setting also provides close and continual assessment of children's development, and frequent

one-to-one guidance from staff, promotes important learning areas such as speech and language and children's integration into the group. Staff effectively ensure children gain a consistent understanding of equality and diversity. A range of learning activities are provided to support the children's understanding of peoples differences, such as looking at books and hearing stories from around the world. A range of other culture festivals are planned and included throughout the year, and children have daily access to a good range of diversity based play and learning resources.

The nursery has established good links with other care settings, and with local schools that children transit to when older. The quality of these links is exemplified by the recent revision of the setting's learning journeys, to allow clearer information for teachers receiving the nursery's intake. Close consideration is also played to other providers and care settings, to help maintain individual children's welfare and continued learning. Staff key persons are an important point of contact with parents, and set times are arranged, when parents can meet with key persons to assess their children's development. Parents are also kept well informed, with daily information and updates through the setting's well organised parent's display area. Parents are also effectively included and encouraged to take part in the play programme. For example, parents were able to join in recently with several 'pirate' themed activities, by providing dressing up clothes, and items to support the play project.

Staff make good use of a range of methods to effectively assess the quality of the activities, and use of learning resources. For example, frequent changes and adaptations are made to the play environment, to facilitate the continuous free flow of child led activities. The weekly play and activity plans are also subject to change and revision, as the staff respond to the children's interests and play ideas. The setting has fully met all the recommendations made at the previous inspection, and staff have produced and submitted a detailed and thorough self-evaluation document. This successfully outlines the setting's planning and teaching practice, and clearly identifies areas for improvement. Frequent staff meetings are also held to discuss development, and the manager, owner and early years professional play a strong role in ensuring the setting maintains continuous improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The setting's organisation of learning development is highly effective, and is of an outstanding quality. Staff provide an excellent range of play themes and topics, which successfully support children to enjoy and achieve. A well established and multi-level planning system is used to ensure children have a full range of play and learning experiences. Over the year, children have a series of featured learning topics, that are either seasonal or event driven. Other culture festivals are also planned and well included in the year plan, such as Divali. The staff develop and present a range of planned weekly activities, which explore the learning themes and provide opportunities for more focussed planning, and support for individual

children's development. Staff also demonstrate a highly flexible approach to the presentation of day to day activities, which allows for a considerable amount of child centred input in the organisation of activities. For example, children's interest in pirates and dinosaurs prompts many activities, and children's favourite story books are also used to develop play ideas.

The staff show good skill and expertise in their teaching and learning interactions with children. They make good use of questions to challenge children's thinking, and staff also show a strong awareness of the need to foster and encourage children's own play and creative thinking. For example, a chalk marking activity in the art craft area, develops into a chalk pathway round part of the hall, for children to follow. Staff also show a consistently effective understanding of the six learning areas, and how they can be applied. Many activities are successfully extended to include counting, colours, shapes and letter sounds. Staff gain consistent support from the setting's early years professional, who undertakes continual coaching of staff. Staff also have their own areas of expertise which are well demonstrated. For example, one staff member was able to sign a story book for a group of children, successfully helping them to use many of the signs for colours and animals.

The setting's organisation of observation and assessment is excellent, and recent revisions to make the system more effective and accessible, are noted as an outstanding example of consistent reflective practice, and commitment to improvement. The new documents being used provide more scope for tracking children and enhance staff's ability to identify and plan ways forward and the next steps in children's learning. The setting's key persons are also instrumental in the effective observation of children, and make regular narrative reports and updates in their children's learning journey records. Staff also make excellent use of photos, in their assessments, and these are consistently matched to the children's learning stages, which parents can easily see.

Children are helped to feel safe within the nursery, and key person staff take care to ensure individual children feel welcome and able to settle within the provision. Staff follow clear procedures to maintain safety and security, and daily checks are made on all play resources and equipment. Staff also successfully promote children's healthy development, and children have a 'rolling snack' so that snack time does not impede the free flow of the children's play activities. Children's healthy eating is consistently promoted, through the regular provision of fresh fruits, and children have planned food based learning projects. A wide range of games and physical activities, also helps to successfully promote children's healthy growth and development. For example, children greatly enjoy a wide range of active indoor games, that involve running and balance; with many physical activities also provided in the setting's outdoor play areas.

Support for children's personal and social learning, is well included in the planned curriculum. Staff show considerable skill and experience with guiding children's behaviour, and children are consistently encouraging to share and take turns. Children are also helped to join in with the group, and encouraged to contribute to the play sessions. As part of the Montessori system, children are given a number of practical tasks, which fosters their independence, and children are encouraged to be tidy and helpful to others. This was well demonstrated by the many good

examples of co-operative child led play observed, such as buying items in the green grocer's role play shop, and children recognising each other in photo displays.

Children's skills for future learning are consistently promoted. There is a strong emphasis on communication learning and use of language, within the setting, and staff show skills with signing and encouraging letter sounds. For example, mark making with chinks and painting and drawing activities, provide many opportunities to explore letter shapes and writing. The use of music and exploring sounds is well included in the play programme, and singing and saying rhymes are well used to promote rhythm and speech. Children have many activities that challenges and develops their awareness of numbers and counting. Many activities include recognising sizes and distances, like measuring how far things roll. Children are also consistently encouraged to engage in problem solving activities with an excellent range of assembly and building block resources, which they use to construct bridges and towers.

The nursery provides a wide range of play opportunities that strongly promotes children's creative development. Children make good use of the setting's well prepared art and craft area, and have fun with paints, mixing colours and exploring textures. Children greatly enjoy cutting and sticking activities and are able to combine media to make imaginative patterns and pictures. Children are effectively encouraged by staff to generate their own play ideas, and staff encourage children to explore and be inventive. For example children are guided to make a drawing of something they have seen, and then others are asked to guess what has been drawn. Children are also consistently encouraged to make up stories and have imaginary adventures, such as the recent pirate play project, that involved making a pirate den in the trees in outdoor learning area. Staff take care to include understanding about the world within the play programme. Children learn to use maps and puzzles based on the world's continents, and children learn about the countries where different animals live. Regular transport and travel themed activities are also featured, and staff make good use of the children's visits to places of interest, to support their wider learning.

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Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met