



The Montessori House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY296776
Inspection date	10 January 2006
Inspector	Jennifer Liverpool
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Registered person	The Montessori House Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Montessori House School opened in 1984 with the Nursery section and Out of School provision opening in 2004. It operates from seven rooms within a three storey house and is situated in Muswell Hill in the London borough of Haringey. The nursery is registered with the Department of Education and Skills as an independent nursery school for children aged 3 years and over for the period of a school day, and registered with Ofsted for children aged under 3 years. A maximum of 70 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 08:30 to 16:30 for 35 to 36 weeks a year, the out of school operates on Thursdays from 15:00 to 17:00 term time, and each week day from 08:30 to 16:30 during school

holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 104 children on roll. The children's age range from 6 months to 7 years. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs 19 staff. Thirteen of the staff, including the manager holds appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification. In addition there are three specialist teachers. The Montessori method of teaching features in the curriculum. The nursery receive support from the Local Authority and the Montessori training colleges.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a healthy balanced and nutritious diet that takes into consideration their health and dietary requirements. Meal times are pleasant experiences for children as they serve themselves, sit with their peers and staff, and share their news with each other. Babies' needs are met well, as they are being bottle fed according to their individual needs. Records of babies' food intake and other care routines are kept and shared with parents. This ensures that babies remain healthy.

Children are healthy and well cared for. They follow good personal hygiene routines helping to prevent the spread of infection and independently wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. The procedures for promoting good hygiene practices are generally good through the use of policies and notices. However, soiled materials such as tissues and used hand paper towels are not always safely disposed and are accessible to children in some areas of the nursery. There are clear policies in place to ensure appropriate actions are taken to care for children who become sick in the nursery. Staff hold current first aid certificates ensuring that their knowledge is kept up to date in the event of children being involved in minor accidents.

Children enjoy daily periods of outdoor play throughout the session. This ensures that all children have opportunities to participate in adventurous play, exercise and receive plenty of fresh air for their health. They use a broad range of play equipment such as tricycles, large and small scale climbing frames, bats and balls all of which promotes their physical development. Younger children have opportunities to experience active play and acquire physical skills as they are supported to use mini trampoline and push and pull-along toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children work and play in a secure, and safe environment. Good security measures are in place and as a result of this children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Children move freely and safely around the environment, both inside and out. This is because staff are highly responsible for minimising potential hazards and promoting children's safety. The premises is bright, well maintained and in good decorative order, which means that all children can play, learn and explore without danger. Children's work is attractively displayed in the rooms and hallway. Children learn to take responsibilities for keeping themselves and the environment safe, for example they carefully move around each other, willingly assist with tidying up and they collect and return toys and equipment back into the appropriate places.

Children are provided with a good range of age appropriate toys and equipment that conform to safety standards and are well maintained. There is a variety of suitable furniture to support babies and toddler's physical development and sufficient bedding and mats that allow children to rest and sleep safely and in comfort. Children have easy and safe access to toys and equipment that are well organised in all rooms. This helps to promote children's independence. Space is used effectively to allow children opportunities to be active, adventurous and relax.

Staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what actions to take if they have any concerns about a child in their care. This supports children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's needs are known and followed and this ensures that the younger children in particular gain security and confidence within the environment. Staff are beginning to use the Birth to Three matters Guidance to offer a range of opportunities to promote language and communication skills, creativity and physical play experiences for babies and children under three years. Young children have good opportunities to listen to music, explore instruments and dance and move to action rhyme songs and musical tapes. They are learning to express themselves imaginatively, develop their hand and eye coordination and explore different sounds.

Children's language and early reading and writing skills are encouraged through activities such as mark making, the wide availability of books, good labelling on walls and equipment and the sharing of news at group sessions. Staff provide a stimulating range of equipment and their good knowledge of how children learn help to develop children's mathematical thinking. All children enjoy and learn from a broad and balanced range of adult directed activities and the valuable support from staff to those they initiate themselves. Children's self selection of resources allow them to be independent in their surroundings, and they are motivated to learn.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel settled and confident through the good partnership the staff have with parents. Staff have obtained detailed information from parents about each child and have received all appropriate consents to ensure children's welfare are promoted at all times. All children are valued and given equal time and attention. Children with special needs are well supported through the use of carefully planned activities, suitable resources and close liaison with parents and outside agencies to ensure all their needs are met. Staff provide parents with detailed written information about children's progress on a formal and informal basis; they encourage parent's feedback and their contributions to topics and sharing of specific skills. This enhances children's learning. Staff give daily sheets to parents about young children's food intake, nappy changing and sleep routines. This ensures continuity of care.

Children are polite and kind to each other. Older children are encouraged to support and assist their younger peers. This helps children to show care and concern for others. Children are familiar with group rules, play well together and work cooperatively through sharing and taking turns in activities and games. The procedures in the nursery encourage children to look after equipment, property and themselves. All children behave well and benefit from the constant praise and encouragement. Suitable activities, discussion and books help children to become aware of differences and similarities from within their environment and the local community. Well planned topics help children to understand and appreciate other cultures. This encourages children to develop a positive attitude towards diversity.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised environment that enable them to gain confidence, become independent and build on their self esteem. The day is well planned allowing children time for quiet, active, indoor and outdoor play. They learn and develop through suitable methods of teaching that combines a structured learning environment alongside those which children choose and initiate themselves. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities throughout the session. They lead adult directed activities, interact with children and assist where necessary to support children in their all round development, work and play. There are effective recruitment procedures in place, and the management actively encourage staff to undertake further training both in-house and on external courses. Support staff responsible for preparing and cooking food receive appropriate training. Although childcare staff regularly assists with the serving of food at snack and lunch times, the training for food and hygiene is not yet included in staff training.

The management is committed to reviewing their policies and procedures to improve the quality of care and education for children. Staff participate in regular team meetings to talk about how each child is progressing and plan stimulating activities for all children's learning and development needs. Apart from the system for recording children's daily attendance all other required documents to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are regularly updated and maintained.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaint other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop health and hygiene practices through ensuring safe disposal of soiled materials, and include food handling and hygiene procedures in staff training
- keep accurate records of children's arrival and departure times

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk