



# Bobtails Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113380
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 July 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Karin Lane
<b>Setting Address</b>	Adversane Hall, Adversane Lane, Adversane, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9JN
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<b>Registered person</b>	Eleanor Bradley and Patricia West
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bobtails Montessori Nursery School is privately owned. It opened in 2000 and operates from one room in a community building in Adversane, West Sussex. A maximum of 16 children may attend at any one time. The setting is open Monday to Thursday from 09:00 until 16:00 and on Friday from 09:00 until 12:00, term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children on roll. Of these, 27 receive funding for early

education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports children with disabilities. Currently no children who speak English as an additional language attend.

The setting employs seven members of staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a further qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from vigorous exercise every day to develop their large muscles. They gather together for brain gym; listening to lively music they are led by staff and move their bodies well. Although the size of the outdoor area is restricted children enjoy riding tricycles, rolling balls and throwing beanbags. Children are protected effectively from the sun by a gazebo. Hygiene is well-promoted. Toilet facilities are clean and children use facilities independently. They use a footstool to reach the hand basin and dispose of used paper towels in lidded bins. Children wipe the tables at meal times and wash their cups. They help themselves to tissues when they need to blow their nose.

Children's health is promoted well, for example parents were advised of a recent outbreak of impetigo. Staff have appropriate first aid training and manage minor accidents effectively by comforting children and good procedures are followed when children require medicines. Children are encouraged to help themselves to drinks regularly. They use a pump dispenser for water and ably pour milk or juice from jugs. Snacks, in line with parents wishes and dietary needs, are provided and include fruit and cheese. Children spread butter on their crackers and when eating their packed lunches children open the packaging independently. Children mostly enjoy a comfortable temperature at the premises. For example staff open windows and fans are used to give ventilation during warm weather.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are mostly kept safe because the setting undertakes regular risk assessments to identify and minimise hazards. For example, the outside area is enclosed, the front door is secured by a chain and fire equipment is well-maintained. Regular fire drills which are reviewed for effectiveness contribute to children's safety. Although children are very well supervised at the premises there are risks posed from the child gate at the kitchen doorway not being closed, cables from portable fan heaters and some unprotected electric sockets. The premises are well-maintained and children have sufficient space. Outings enhance children's knowledge and are planned effectively to ensure high adult: child ratios are maintained. Children benefit greatly from an excellent range of safe, good quality toys and resources which are easily accessible to them. Tables and chairs are the correct size enabling children to

sit comfortably. Children's welfare is promoted because staff have attended child protection training, understand the procedures to follow which are in line with local guidelines.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Younger children are helped to develop very well. They receive plenty of attention and support from the very friendly and welcoming staff. Children enter the setting with confidence and part happily from their parent or carer. They like the activities and choose what they want to do from the interesting and attractive resources. A young child chooses a puzzle and staff know she has not attempted it before. They give the child one to one support getting her to look at the shapes and colours. After much concentration, great pleasure is shown by the child when the puzzle is successfully completed. Children make marks using chalks, paints and outside they use large and small brushes to paint the ground with water. They choose number rods and sandpaper number cards to begin to count. They explore damp sand and measure rice and water using a variety of containers. Children design structures using wooden blocks in different sizes.

Staff recently attended training on the "Birth to three matters" framework, they understand its principles and have started to use it in daily practice which is beneficial to children. Children's individual development is assessed to ensure younger children benefit from suitable activities. For example they use the base level of Montessori equipment initially. Younger children enjoy joining appropriate whole group activities such as action rhymes and story. Staff ensure they are fully included, this is effective as this is a small setting.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's learning is enhanced because staff have good understanding about the Foundation Stage and deliver it effectively. They plan a balanced range of activities which are flexible to encompass children's interests. Staff are very competent and understand that children learn by doing; children explore and investigate the interesting resources which promotes this very well. Observations are used effectively to assess children's development and help them progress. Repetition helps reinforce children's learning. Most activities are child led and staff intervene appropriately, for example by asking open ended questions to extend learning. Whole group activities are well-led as staff engage children's interests effectively.

Children thoroughly enjoy books and choose from a good range of fiction and non-fiction books in the book area. They sit together attentively for well-told group stories and anticipate what will happen next. A book called "guess what I am?" encourages the children to look, listen and think. Children use a good variety of materials for mark making, although there are limited opportunities for them to do so in the role play area. Children use sandpaper letters and trace the shape with their fingers. They can identify letters and name them. Props and flashcards used together help them begin to read and more able children are able to read simple words in

isolation. Many children are able to write their name and they are encouraged to write their names on their work. Children are confident to speak in group situations. For example they are happy to share information at circle time and talk sociably at snack. They concentrate well on self chosen tasks. Using scissors, paper and sticky tape they persevere to make hats and proudly show adults their achievements. Children count and calculate together when singing familiar rhymes. They use spindle boxes and count confidently from 1 to 10. They count the number of snails they have found in the garden. Children are beginning to learn to calculate more and less aided for example by using number rods. Good opportunities help children learn about volume. They experiment pouring water between different size containers which also helps develop mathematical language such as "more", "less", "full" and "empty". Children make patterns using brightly coloured paints, holding fat paint brushes appropriately. They are learning about symmetry and paint one side of the paper. They fold it and with staff assistance, examine the similarities when it is opened out. Children enjoy using wooden blocks to make ramps and investigate how different objects roll. They like recalling past events when looking at photographs such as a recent farm trip. Children make effective use of technology as they hold imaginary telephone conversations in the role play area and develop eye and hand co-ordination as they use remote controlled robots. They use tools such as scissors and screwdrivers safely and with control. Children are learning to control their bodies, for example riding a tricycle without running into anyone and they are able to find sufficient space to sit for group activities.

Children benefit from well planned real life experiences. For example, they have grown potatoes in a polythene sack and are all involved at harvest time. Good questioning from staff enables the children to think about how the potatoes have grown; they examine the leaves, roots and potato tubers. They have a wonderful time delving in the peat to find the potatoes and are fascinated by the slugs and snails which are also found. This is an excellent way to enhance children's learning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are very well-met because staff ensure they have good knowledge about them and include them within activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Toys and resources appeal to both boys and girls. There are effective ways for children to learn about others. For example, the setting sponsors two children in India and the children at the setting have learnt their lives are very different. There are posters written in different languages, ethnic dolls and puppets to enhance children's knowledge of others. Children are encouraged to share their experiences, for example wearing a costume from a recent Turkish holiday. Independence is encouraged well as children help themselves to resources from low shelves and tidy away when they have finished. Children with special needs are given very good support with activities adapted to make sure they are fully included. Parents provide excellent information and work in together with staff and outside agencies which benefits children greatly. Written reports made after each session assess a child's achievements and plans their next step of development. Children with special needs have one-to-one attention and are made very welcome

by both staff and children.

Children behave well; they play harmoniously together and share their toys. Staff are good role models and have realistic expectations about children's behaviour; they gain children's attention by putting up a hand and calling one, two, three. This is effective as children stop what they are doing and listen. Children are given clear explanations to help them understand how their actions effect others. For example explaining to a child he will spoil another child's chalking if he rides his tricycle over it.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Good relationships with parents are developed effectively promoting the well-being of children. Parents are provided with an informative leaflet which details the Montessori aims and philosophy and how the setting delivers the Foundation Stage. Good information is sought from parents prior to their child starting at the setting; relevant questions include the language spoken at home, does your child enjoy books and can they manage the toilet alone. This information is used effectively by staff to help the child settle in. Information is shared well at informal discussion at the beginning and end of the day; by newsletters; meetings and individual end of year reports. These well-written reports give parents a clear picture of how their child is progressing. Parents are very happy with the care, their children's progress and education. They praise the friendly staff and know they can ask to see their child's records at any time to find out how they are developing.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting is well-organised. All required documentation is in place and well maintained. For example, children's arrivals and departures are detailed accurately, and policies and procedures relating to the setting are accessible in a folder. Children are protected because they are never left alone with visitors or persons who have not been checked. Children benefit as the premises are organised effectively, including a comfortable reading area enabling children to look at books in a quiet environment. Time is well-organised, for example there are opportunities throughout the day for children to choose activities, enjoy circle time, outside play and a quiet time after lunch. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children.

Leadership and management is good. The registered providers employ well-qualified staff who benefit from additional in-house and external training. Staff follow a good induction procedure and have regular appraisals to identify training needs, which enhances their knowledge of children's care and learning. Recent relevant training includes bringing the Foundation Stage alive and a short brain gym course. Written information about their role and duties, as well as monitoring by the registered providers helps staff deliver the Foundation Stage effectively. Staff are aided by charts which show how Montessori equipment is used in relation to the early learning goals. The registered providers have a hands on approach which enables them to observe daily practice, work with their staff and parents; thus promoting children's well-being. Regular reflection takes place to improve daily practice and the setting has worked hard to achieve the West Sussex Kite Mark.

The nursery school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it cares.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to improve the organisation of group activities to maximise the time all children are actively involved.

An action plan has been implemented which includes ensuring staff are aware to actively include all children; to ensure adequate equipment is available for all those involved and planning peripheral activities which children can pursue whilst waiting their turn. Since the action plan has been instigated the setting has reflected on its daily practice and little small group work currently takes place. Children are either actively involved in whole group activities; but mostly participate in self-chosen tasks from a wide range of resources and benefit from one-to-one attention from staff. The setting is small and children are interested and well-stimulated in whole group activities, such as harvesting their potato crop or brain gym. Staff intervene appropriately during children's self-chosen activities, they allow them to experiment and explore to help develop and expand learning. All children are well-occupied throughout the session.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints since the last inspection.

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

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **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):

- improve children's safety by ensuring they do not have access to hazards in the kitchen and by protecting them from fan heaters cables and electric

sockets

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

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

- improve mark making opportunities in the role play area.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)