

Saltwell Park Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY349660
Inspection date	03 September 2007
Inspector	Lynne Pope
Setting Address	Saltwell Park Montessori Nursery School Ltd, The Den, Westfield Terrace, GATESHEAD, Tyne and Wear, NE8 4LD
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Registered person	W.O.W! (Welcome to our World) Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

The Saltwell Park Montessori School is one of three provisions run by a partnership. It opened in 2007 and operates from one main playroom in a former scout hut in Gateshead. A maximum of 26 children may attend the provision at any one time. The provision is open each week day from 08.00 until 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year.

There are currently 35 children aged from one to five years on roll. Of these 21 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The provision supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The provision employs six staff. Of these, five staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a level four qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a spacious playroom where all areas are maintained well. Children are developing an understanding of good hygiene procedures as they ask to use the toilet and wash their hands afterwards. However, they do not wash their hands before snacks and lunch and share the same towels when they do wash their hands which can spread infection. An effective sickness policy is in place to protect children. Appropriate consents and records are in place for the administration of medication and the recording of accidents. Accident records are regularly monitored and steps are taken to minimise any future risk for children.

Children develop knowledge and understanding of how exercise helps them to stay healthy. They enthusiastically take an active part, learning about the importance of activity in a healthy lifestyle. Music and movement is a regular part of the nursery routine where children learn to move their bodies in time to the music. They freely choose to play with balls, fit their bodies through the tunnel and push themselves along using their feet on ride on toys.

Children are well nourished. They receive healthy snacks and staff discuss healthy options with parents and carers that can be provided for packed lunches. However, there are missed opportunities at snack time for staff to discuss the options with children and encourage them to make their own choices about what they would like.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to a very well organised environment. The premises are made welcoming with displays of children's art work, giving them ownership of the environment. Children use a broad range of toys and equipment suitable to the age and stage of their development. They are confident as they develop their independence well, accessing resources freely for themselves. Resources are stored on low-level shelves and in storage boxes at their height.

Staff have good processes in place to keep children safe. For example, the premises are kept secure, a record of visitors is maintained and risk assessments are conducted. Children show an awareness of the boundaries set within the playroom by not attempting to enter the kitchen when the door is left open. Regular fire drills are carried out with the children so that they are aware of the routine. They are well protected by staff that are confident and secure in their knowledge of child protection policies and procedures. They give high priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff in the setting provide a calm, consistent environment where children are happy and settled. Children build good relationships with staff and peers. Their self-esteem is well developed as they receive regular praise for their efforts. They are motivated and interested in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities, which provide good levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff plan for the whole age range as children are integrated into the same room. Children under three years receive lots of support and encouragement. They are able to select the activities they would like to do and staff work with

them on a one to one basis encouraging their development. For example, they make marks in the sand as they attempt to form early letters. They make jigsaws with help and attempt to cut using scissors. Staff keep written observations of all children's achievements and transfer them to their development file. All activities are evaluated and assessed to plan for the next steps in children's learning and play.

All children join together for circle time where, for example, they learn about the day of the week and what the weather is doing. They sing familiar rhymes and learn letter sounds. However, prolonged time is spent in the group which can become disruptive as children lose interest. The subject matter is too advanced for the youngest children so that individual children's needs in the group are not being addressed.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They regularly monitor and assess children's developmental progress and as a result they have a good knowledge of each child's stage of development. In practise children access all areas of the curriculum. However, information technology is not covered in the written plans.

Children are confident and settled in the nursery. They independently select and carry out their activities, being supported appropriately by staff where needed. Good relationships enable them to be confident speakers. Children enjoy talking to each other, staff and visitors about their experiences. Children co-operate well together during activities as they learn to share the resources. Their understanding of letters sounds is developing well. Writing skills are well promoted as they attempt to form the letters in their name or are successful. They give meaning to their drawings saying that they have drawn a dolphin and a shark.

Children are confident in using number in their activities. They recognise the written number and can put them in order. Knowledge and understanding of the world is a strong feature of their learning. They observe caterpillars developing into butterflies and are fascinated as they talk and look at pictures of volcanoes. Practical demonstrations reinforce their knowledge further as they watch an experiment that shows how a volcano erupts.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a positive attitude towards others and gain a good understanding about the wider world through activities, resources and outings into the local environment. For example, they visit the park, art gallery, leisure centre and library. The special needs coordinator has a good knowledge of requirements and takes steps to address, ensuring that children's individual needs are met. Children's behaviour is good. Staff support children in sharing and turn taking. They set consistent boundaries for children helping them to learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. The use of a doll called baby Daisy at circle time reinforces good behaviour as staff use her to show children how to behave. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from a two-way sharing of information between staff and parents which enhances their learning. Copies of future plans are sent home monthly so that parents and carers can continue their child's learning at home. Staff speak to parents about their child's development when they pick them up. Development

charts are sent home for their child every eight weeks and parental evenings are held twice a year. Positive feedback is received from parents and carers about the staff and service provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The required policies and procedures are in place which support the care of the children. All records are kept up to date. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff have been further developing their understanding of good childcare by accessing training such as level three and four in childcare. Children have access to age-appropriate resources in a spacious playroom to aid their development. They select their own resources with confidence. A good balance is maintained between physical exercise and rest periods. All required documents are in place and stored confidentially. However, the record of children's attendance does not record the times of arrival and departure of children.

The leadership and management is good. Staff work really well together as a team providing a consistent environment for children. Management has an overall view of how children progress by working alongside staff, planning and reviewing the service provided. Recording systems are systematic providing information about children's achievements. This enables management and staff to be aware of how children progress and which areas require further improvement. Staff's development is managed through appraisal twice a year and monthly staff meetings. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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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):

- develop snack time further so that there is discussion about the options available, therefore developing children's independence and choice further
- ensure that all children wash their hands before snack and lunch and provide individual hand drying options for children
- keep the kitchen door closed while children are attending so that they can not access any hazards
- arrange circle time so that all children benefit from it (also applies to Nursery Education)

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):

- ensure that written plans include information technology.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk