



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 507891

DfES Number: 510088

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 28/09/2004
Inspector Name Catherine Hill

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Village Montessori Nursery School
Setting Address Cock Lane
 Bradfield
 Reading
 Berkshire
 RG7 6HW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Jacqueline Diana MacLean

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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

The Village Montessori Nursery School opened in 1992. It is situated in the rural village of Bradfield between Newbury and Reading. Children attend the nursery school from the local area. The premises have been purpose built and there are two base rooms which the children have free-play access to. There is an enclosed play area with fixed climbing equipment and supervised walks are taken in the adjoining field areas which are part of the overall premises.

There are currently 43 children on roll. This includes 19 funded 3-year-olds and 12 funded 4-year-olds. There are 30 places available at each session for children aged from 2.5 years to 5 years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open term-time only from 09.15 to 15.15 Monday to Thursday with the exception of a Wednesday where the group stays open until 15.30. The group offers, morning, afternoon and all day sessions.

Six members of staff work with the children. All the staff are qualified and most have had Montessori training. Staff are first aid qualified. Training and support is accessed through The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Montessori open evenings are held by the nursery school for parents and professionals in early years settings. The nursery also has links with local schools and other educational settings.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Village Montessori Nursery School is an acceptable provision and of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards all early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. Staff use a range of teaching strategies effectively to develop and extend children's knowledge and skills. They organise and maintain a calm but stimulating learning environment where children have access to an excellent range of good quality resources to support activities. Planning and assessment records are detailed and staff use them to ensure challenging but achievable activities are provided where children can progress at their own pace. Staff have excellent relationships with children and every child's efforts are valued. They sensitively support them and their knowledge of individual children allows them to know when to extend targets and when to step back and allow children independence with their learning. They have high expectations with regard to behaviour and act as positive role models. Children, as a result, have excellent manners and behave very well.

Leadership and management is very good. Staff are well deployed throughout the nursery. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work very well as a team to provide constant support and encouragement to all children. Professional development is ongoing and the owner/headteacher regularly reviews practice to ensure the nursery's high standards are maintained and developed. The nursery are continually improving the learning environment and resources available to children.

Partnership with parents is very good. They receive regular, detailed information regarding nursery practice and are kept very well informed of their child's progress. They are positive in their praise of the nursery and have good relationships with staff. They are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning and are welcomed in to the nursery to share skills and to attend, for example, birthday celebrations.

What is being done well?

- Organisation of the setting is excellent. Staff are well deployed and provide a positive well resourced learning environment for children. Children are happy and enthusiastically investigate the wide range of learning opportunities planned and provided for them. Documentation to support practice is detailed and well maintained.
- Children have very good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They enjoy investigating objects and materials and learn about diversity through visitors to the group and planned topic work. Staff make excellent use of the outside environment to reinforce and develop children's awareness and knowledge of the natural world.
- Staff are dedicated and skilled in the use of a range of teaching strategies to

ensure all children are making very good progress in all learning areas. They sensitively support children and provide them with the security to independently achieve. Children, as a result, are confident, motivated learners with well developed independence skills.

- Partnership with parents is positive and contributes to children's progress. Parents are well informed about nursery practice and share information about their child.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to reinforce and further develop their understanding that print carries meaning could be enhanced by the display of key word labels throughout the setting.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made very good progress since the last inspection, when it was recommended that consideration be given to ensuring use of the new assessment system linked to the early learning goals. Staff maintain detailed individual assessment records to inform future planning for children's development. They use West Berkshire's Foundation Stage profile records to clearly show children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. These records are used in conjunction with Montessori curriculum records and ensure all children have good opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills as appropriate to their individual needs.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, motivated learners who actively occupy themselves throughout sessions. They concentrate and persevere with activities until completed. They have very good relationships with one another. They show care, consideration and respect for each other and their environment. For example, they leave resources neatly ready for others to use and help each other at the computer. They behave well and have excellent manners. Their independence skills are very well developed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's phonic knowledge is excellent. They recognise written letters and are able to sound out simple words. They understand that print carries meaning and good use of their name labels on coat pegs and at snacktime helps develop their word recognition skills which could be even further developed by the use of key word labels in the setting. Their writing skills are good. They write their names on their work with clear, recognisable letters and carefully copy words to practise their skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count confidently to ten and beyond. They understand the sequence of numbers, recognise written numbers and correctly match sets of objects to given numbers. They are familiar with different shapes and sizes and use comparative language correctly. They can identify the longest and shortest in a group of objects and are developing an understanding of calculation during practical activities such as working out how many more chairs are needed in a line for all children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children absorb themselves in exploring the possibilities of differing resources. For example, they discover that big stones will not pass through tiny holes in a sieve and the noise made when tapping metal against metal. Excellent use of the outdoor environment develops children's knowledge of the natural world. They use a purpose built look-out to observe local wildlife and learn about plants through growing herbs. They have a good understanding of the passage of time.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move confidently and freely throughout the setting. They enjoy running, climbing and balancing activities. They show skill in negotiating ladders during outdoor play and in manoeuvring around each other when pushing wheelbarrows. They are aware of their own needs and have a drink when thirsty and put on jumpers when feeling cold. They are able to use a range of equipment with skill and confidence and their fine motor skills are very well developed.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enthusiastically join in with songs and match actions to the words. Some sing unprompted whilst at play and planned activities give them good opportunities to learn about different musical instruments. They use their imagination well and act out their own story lines, for example, when playing with farm figures. They design and make pictures using tap-a-shape resources and make playdough cakes, inventively using the end of the rolling pin to make holes in their dough.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses but consideration should be given to improving the following area:
- providing opportunities for children to reinforce and further develop their understanding that print carries meaning by displaying key word labels throughout the setting.

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.