



Puddleducks Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338404
Inspection date	19 March 2007
Inspector	Loraine Wardlaw
Setting Address	North Warrnborough Village Hall, Priors Corner, Dunleys Hill, North Warrnborough, Hook, Hampshire, RG29 1EA
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Registered person	Puddleducks Montessori Nursery School 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?

Puddleducks Montessori Nursery School was registered in 2006 but opened in January 2007. It is a family run, private nursery school. The nursery operates from a village hall in North Warnborough, Hampshire. The nursery currently opens three morning sessions a week and will be open five morning sessions when the demand for places increases. Sessions are from 09:15-12:30. It is registered for 16 children aged two years to five years and currently there are ten children on roll, two of whom receive funding for nursery education. The Montessori and Foundation stage curriculum is followed. The two owners, employ a deputy who, like them, also works with the children. The manager/owner and the deputy are qualified Montessori teachers which is a level four qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's nutritional needs are well catered for at the nursery with staff having good regard to providing healthy snacks. Mid morning children enjoy a selection of melon, grapes, cucumber, apple and bananas and throughout the session they are freely able to access drinking water and dried fruit. Children develop good personal hygiene routines and staff wear gloves when 'toilet accidents' occur which minimises the risk of cross infection. Children have good physical play opportunities, which occurs both inside and outside. They enjoy their time in the playground gaining fresh air and exercise. Children access a suitable range of equipment which enables them to practise skills such as peddling a tricycle or throwing and catching balls. However, equipment for promoting their climbing and balancing skills is not yet in place. Children are keen and excited to move their bodies to a variety of music, such as when they pretend to be dinosaurs or birds flying in the sky. They confidently use a wide range of tools and materials, such as scissors, small teabag tongs and pencils to develop their manipulative skills and fine motor movements. Funded nursery children are gaining a good awareness of their bodies; they feel their heart beat fast when they take exercise, make comments about how they feel and can independently take care of their physical needs such as blowing their noses. Many two-year-olds are given sympathetic support by staff during toilet training which effectively promotes their physical milestones. Documentation which supports children health is very well maintained, such as medication and accident records.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe environment because staff are safety conscious and conduct many safety checks before children arrive in the mornings. They have good security and safety precautions in place such as the door alarm, staff have set up improvised fencing in the playground and use passwords at collection times for people unfamiliar to them. Children learn how to stay safe during the session by constant reminders from the staff, to walk preventing them from falling and by the safety posters which show photographs and text. For example, on how to carry a chair safely. Good use of the available space enables children to move freely and safely within the nursery; they confidently choose from well maintained, safe resources and play materials. Children will shortly be involved in regularly practising the fire drill and staff are fully aware of the fire procedure. Children are able to appreciate the interest displays, their art work on the wall and posters and photographs which stimulates interest in the children. Children are suitably protected from harm, because staff know the child protection procedure and have received appropriate training. The manager has implemented a secure page on the setting's website for parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very interested, involved in their play and are well supported by the caring staff team. They arrive happily and are keen to try the wide range of experiences and activities provided each day. They confidently self-select from the numerous resources which are arranged, at child height, around the room. They learn to take responsibility for themselves, and are learning to put away one activity before selecting another. Staff have good regard to the birth-to-three framework and are careful to adapt the environment to meet the learning and care needs of the younger child. For example, children love to explore sand and lentils or find mini beasts hiding in the soil in the 'builders tray'. Children giggle and have fun with the staff; they have built good relationships with them.

NURSERY EDUCATION.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a stimulating and exciting learning environment where children can work on their own initiative and progress at their own pace. All staff have a good understanding of how children learn. Most staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation stage curriculum and how it links to the settings Montessori curriculum, both of which is thoughtfully weaved together to meet the children's learning needs. Good plans cover all curriculum areas, are linked to the stepping stones for learning and include individual Montessori learning plans for all children. Staff have a good knowledge of children's capabilities and are involved in making anecdotal observations and assessments of the children, which includes photographs. However, not all of these are systematically filed in children's progress records to show clearly which stepping stones they have achieved. Staff demonstrate good teaching skills, particularly in storytelling, such as when children sit animatedly listening to the three little pigs story with puppets and props.

Children are learning to be confident communicators; the older or more able child engages easily in conversation with adults and often asks questions. They use speech to connect ideas and to recall home experiences and knowledge. Staff are skilled at promoting language development. Children are keen to recall the stories they have enjoyed; particularly when they can use the props that the staff have effectively introduced to them at story time, such as the Hungry caterpillar or the Chinese zodiac story. Children learn to recognise their names through daily self registration and learn the names and sounds of the alphabet through quality resources. Children's mathematical development is good; this is well supported by the Montessori methods, equipment and the well planned enhanced curriculum. Four-year-olds have opportunities to complete simple subtraction or addition tasks in practical activities and routines such as when observing the stick insects, during registration or spontaneously during water play with yellow ducks. Children touch and describe solid shapes learning about the corners and sides and names, such as a cube.

Children use all their senses to explore and respond to colour, texture, shape and form during a wide variety of Montessori activities and the enhanced curriculum, such as string painting and cooking. They enjoy very regular music sessions, using instruments to learn about loud and quiet songs and are developing excellent listening skills through the staff's effective use of a puppet. Children enthusiastically take part in singing familiar and unusual, new rhymes.

Children have opportunities to role play in situations such as the bakers shop and have access to dressing up clothes. Children experiment with natural materials and observe living things. For example, they experiment with lentils and sand, noodles and rice. Children inquisitively look through magnifying glasses for mini beasts in the playground and make observations about the stick insects. Children have good opportunities to learn about other cultures and beliefs; they dance excitedly with ribbons to Chinese music, make paper dragons and look at Chinese artefacts on the interest table. Children learn to use the tape recorder themselves, putting a tape in, and switching it on independently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and fully included in the life of the nursery because staff have a good understanding of equality of opportunity. Children's specific needs are discussed and recorded on entry to the nursery and the small staff team are informed to ensure children's individuality is respected. Children have access and can play with a suitable range of resources and activities which reflect diversity and acknowledges differences, but these do not currently include positive images of disability. Children make choices and decisions while they select activities and resources. They learn to look after the equipment and tidy away one resource before playing with another. Children are learning the behaviour boundaries from staff who are firm, consistent but sympathetic in their approach. Children receive plenty of praise and encouragement from the staff, who are excellent role models, which facilitates good behaviour. Children are learning to work together during tidy up time; when they hear the bell, it encourages them to sing the tidy up song and pack away resources. All children are busy and well motivated by the exciting activities on offer to them; they have a good amount of time to persevere and concentrate on activities. Children take part in activities to help the wider world and those who are less fortunate than them. For example, they take part in a sponsored silence for Red Nose day raising money which is well supported by the parents. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff have built very strong relationships with the parents in a short time because they are open, friendly, approachable and communicate regularly with them about the children's care and education. Good systems are in place which helps with the initial transition from home to nursery such as the news book. Parents become involved in the nursery by supporting sponsored events and taking the settings 'Archie duck' home at the weekend and recording in his record book. Parents receive all the groups policies, either by accessing the groups informative website or in the form of a hard copy. They are regularly issued with newsletters about themes and events. Parents also receive very good information on the Montessori and Foundation stage curriculum. Staff effectively link the learning to home by encouraging children to bring in items of interest linked to the theme and encourage them to care for 'Archie duck' when they take him home. Staff regularly share the children's assessment records and learning plans with parents which ensures that they can follow their child's developmental progress. A daily wipe board informs the parents what children have been learning each session.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are clearly happy and settle extremely well in the very organised, nurturing environment. Staff set up the room daily, making excellent use of space and work hard to prepare a safe, welcoming, stimulating environment for children. Staff have a clear sense of purpose and their deployment is good ensuring that children are well cared for. High staff to child ratios are kept which ensures that children have good supervision. Staff have identified and are booked onto short courses to update their knowledge and skills, such as toxic play and music workshop. A good recruitment and vetting procedure is in place which ensures that only suitable people are employed to work with children and a good set of policies and procedures underpins the practice. Documentation and record keeping is up-to-date and is easily available for inspection. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. Although the setting has only been open for a short time the management team and staff work very well together to deliver good quality nursery education. They are constantly communicating together, evaluating and adapting the provision to ensure it meets the learning needs of the children attending. The manager, who is experienced and knowledgeable is passionate about her work and has high expectations about the service they wish to offer; she has a good future vision for the nursery. The group is still evolving and consequently some systems are at the development stage. For example, the annual staff appraisal/development system and coffee mornings for parents. The manager attends local meetings to share good practice and keeps well up to date with information from Montessori, the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the local authority.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

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. 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.

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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):

- ensure children have regular opportunities to climb and balance
- extend resources to include positive images of disability and people with learning impairments

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):

- develop the assessment system to ensure that children's records clearly and systematically show, through staff observations and photographs, the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage children have achieved.

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