



Privett Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY264559
Inspection date	26 January 2007
Inspector	Alison Jane Kaplonek
Setting Address	Privett Village Hall, Privett, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 3NU
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Registered person	Katherine Pritchard
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?

Privett Montessori Nursery school opened under new ownership in 2003. It operates from one room in the village hall and has a secure outside area. The group serves a wide area.

There are currently 28 children on roll from two years to under five years of age. This includes 20 three and four year old children receiving funding. Children attend for a variety of morning and afternoon sessions. The nursery school staff are able to provide support for children with learning difficulties/disabilities and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:15, and 12:30 until 15:15. An Early Bird session runs from 8:45 until 9:15 each morning and a lunch club from the end of the morning session until 13:15.

Two full time and six part time staff work with the children, four have early years qualifications. The setting attends cluster group meetings with local schools and preschools. Support and advice is also received from the Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

The education of the children is based on the Montessori method of teaching. The group operate a website, which provides links and information for current and prospective parents.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play a very positive role in keeping themselves healthy and learning about healthy living. They regularly discuss which foods are good for them during snack time and those children who stay all day are encouraged to bring healthy lunches, which staff store in the fridge. Staff talk to the children about eating their savoury food first. Children are regularly offered drinks and can access drinking water at any time from the jug provided. Effective adult support, which promotes good hygiene practice, helps them to independently take themselves to the toilet, wash their hands and help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses. Staff talk about the need to wear warm clothing when children are playing outside in the snow.

Children take part in a wide range of activities which promote their physical development. They enjoy their outdoor time in the garden when they can access a good range of equipment which enables them to practise skills such as, climbing, pedalling and balancing. Staff realise the benefits of outside play for the children and plan for them to engage in daily physical exercise. All children are gaining in coordination when using tools and materials, such as pencils, scissors and collage resources. They practise their manipulative skills during activities such as threading or picking up small pieces of pasta with especially designed tweezers. They do this well and with concentration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children thrive in the rich, child-centred, environment. They are eager to attend and enjoy their time in the setting. Space is used well and children are able to move freely around the room and access the well maintained resources themselves. Children are involved in keeping themselves safe as they learn to keep their play space safe and free from hazards by routinely tidying away toys. They know they must not run in the nursery and they practise the fire evacuation procedure regularly. Risks to children are minimised because staff use daily written risk assessments for all areas within the setting. However, staff struggle to keep the room at an adequate temperature during cold weather. They keep good records of any accidents and administration of medication and share these with parents.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection procedures and keep local contact numbers accessible. Staff ensure that parents are clearly informed of the setting's responsibilities in safeguarding children and information is displayed on the parents notice board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are provided with a wide range of activities which support learning in all areas for example, painting, craft activities and outside play. Children show a real enthusiasm for learning and enjoy their time at the nursery school, confidently selecting activities and talking to their friends and staff. Staff interact with the children very well, talking to them all the time, making eye contact, playing at their level and showing affection.

Children are relaxed and are building good relationships with the staff team and each other.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children achieve well because staff use their skill and knowledge of early years guidance, such as the Foundation Stage curriculum, and the Birth to Three framework, to provide good quality care and education. They are provided with a calm learning environment where they feel secure and able to learn. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities, allowing children to contribute actively to their learning and to pursue interests at their own pace. Staff know the children well and deploy themselves effectively providing support for all children, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Assessment is continual and the information gained is used effectively to plan children's next steps to support them in reaching new goals and to set new challenges.

Children are confident speakers using language to initiate and organise their play, both with staff and each other. They use language to explain what they are doing, for example talking to each other about how to do up the large buttons or buckles on the Montessori dressing forms. They enjoy using books and listening to stories, in small and large groups. Most children are able to recognise their names on labels when they self-register or find their place at snack time. All children use marks to represent their ideas or make lists and many children are beginning to write recognisable letters from their names.

Children confidently use the Montessori equipment, such as the number rods or spindles to develop their mathematical skills. They learn to count as they play snakes and ladders or complete number puzzles and many count and recognise numbers to ten. Children use mathematical language and talk about shape, size and quantity during a variety of activities, for example when completing a fraction puzzle or using the wooden rods. They learn about problem solving through practical activities such as giving out the cups and saucers at snack time or when measuring ingredients during cooking.

Children regularly explore and investigate, for example when cooking, growing plants and seeds, painting, using dough or while experimenting with the magnets. They talk about living things as they set up the nature table or watch the worms move around in the wormery. They know how to use magnets, magnifying glasses and bug boxes. They talk about the people and animals who live in other countries and are gaining an awareness of the needs of others as they raise money for charity. Children use their imaginations in a number of play situations, for example

when free drawing, mixing paints or designing and making during craft work such as collage. They explore colour as they make butterfly pictures or watch the coloured dye move up the stem of the snowdrops. Children enjoy their music and drama sessions and sing simple songs from memory. They are learning how to operate some simple equipment such as a calculator or story tape machine, although there are limited opportunities for children to use information technology to fully support their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and fully included in the routine of the nursery school. They are very keen to help tidy up, lay the table, or give out the snack. Children have high levels of confidence and self-esteem and are able to express their needs and feelings. They co-operate with each other and learn to share and take turns. They operate independently within the environment, selecting and using resources. They are supported by staff who value all children, set clear boundaries and ensure that their individual needs are well met. As a consequence of this children are very well behaved. Good systems are in place to support children who have special needs or English as an additional language and the setting has developed good links with other agencies. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. This has an important influence on children's wellbeing. Parents are provided with a wide range of information about the setting and the provision for nursery education, via a parents pack when children start at the nursery school and through newsletters and copies of the policies and procedures which are available for them in the hall. Parents state that staff are very approachable and that they gain a good insight into their child's day during verbal feedback when they collect their children. They can access their children's records of achievement at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very settled and happy in the nursery school environment provided. The effective organisation of both their care and education ensures that they are well protected and are reaching their full potential in their learning. The premises are well organised, allowing children to initiate and develop their own play and learning.

Comprehensive planning, monitoring and skilful management, ensures that the wide range of policies and procedures are consistently applied. Good essential records are kept for each child and shared with the parents, ensuring that children's welfare and care are of a good standard. Registers are kept of all children and adults on the premises, but due to the recent introduction of an early bird session on some days, there is sometimes a difference in the arrival and departure times which is not recorded. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, which are shared with both staff and parents, enables the nursery school to meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good.

Positive leadership and a clear vision for the nursery school ensures that staff work well as a team to improve the care and education for all children. They successfully monitor the provision for nursery education and are constantly striving to improve their practice. Staff receive regular appraisals to identify their training needs.

The required paperwork and documentation is maintained and is readily available for inspection at any time.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery school were asked to improve their documentation to include Ofsted details in the complaints procedure, develop a lost child procedure, ensure the parents signed the existing injury record and to further develop methods to provide parents with more information about policies and procedures, including child protection. All documentation is now in place, ensuring that children are safe and parents kept well informed. Policies and procedures are available for parents to access and child protection information is displayed on the notice board.

To improve the nursery education, the school were asked to increase the opportunities for children to engage in role play based on their first-hand experiences and to write for a purpose during play situations. Children have opportunities to dress up and role play during certain topics or when other people visit the group, such as the policeman or doctor. Children have writing equipment available at all times for them to make lists or begin to make marks while they play. These improvements enable children to use their imaginations in their play, dressing-up as someone else and making lists.

The nursery were also asked to increase the opportunities for children to operate simple information and communication technology. Since the last inspection a computer, laptop and digital camera have been provided for the children's' use. Children can now readily access a calculator and story tape although access to other IT equipment is still limited.

Lastly, the group were asked to improve the book corner to provide a comfortable area where children and adults can enjoy books together. They have now purchased a small sofa and cushions and children and staff sit and read books together.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 rooms used by children are maintained at an adequate temperature at all times.
- ensure that registers contain children's times of arrival and departure.

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):

- continue to develop opportunities for children to use simple information and communication technology equipment to support their learning.

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