

April – June 2008

MONTESSORI INTERNATIONAL Nursery Food Awards

Nursery scoops national award

CHILDREN at **Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School** in Islington, London, were revealed to be among the best-fed youngsters in the UK!

The lucky youngsters at Hopes and Dreams were celebrating after the Nursery School was named one of just 12 commended nurseries in the very first Nursery Food Awards.

The nursery beat off stiff competition from nearly 70 other nurseries in the national hunt to find the nurseries that provide the best food.

Meals and snacks at Hopes and Dreams are freshly prepared on the premises by a Chef and all



food is organic and free range. They also purchase as much as possible from local suppliers to support the community and to reduce the carbon foot print left on the environment by reducing the miles the food travels before reaching the Nursery School. The menus are updated seasonally and are carefully planned to ensure all is nutritionally balanced.

The awards, which are the first of

their kind, were run by pioneering food company Organix, in partnership with the Soil Association, following on from their successful School Food Awards, and supported by Hobart and Nursery World magazine.

Over a million children in the UK attend nurseries, aged between three months and five years. What they eat affects their long-term health as well as their daily wellbeing.

Peter Melchett, Policy Director at the Soil Association, said:

"Nurseries can play a vital role in helping parents familiarise young children with fresh, healthy food and where good food comes from.

Too many of today's children are growing up thinking that food is something plastic-wrapped that comes from a supermarket."

Jeanette Orey, the Soil

Association's school meals policy advisor; Liz Roberts, editor of Nursery World magazine, and nutritionist Annie Seeley, together with Organix founder Lizzie Yann, formed the judging panel.

Lizzie Yann, founder of Organix, said: "Nurseries have been overlooked in the radical review of school meals that has taken place since 2005. We are launching these awards to showcase best practice and inspire other nurseries to look at the health of the children in their care, especially as it relates to the food they eat whilst at nursery."

Over the coming months, Organix and the Soil Association will be carrying out a report into the state of nutrition in UK nurseries.