

Inspection of West Acre Montessori School

The Old Chapel, East Walton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE32 1PU

Inspection date: 2 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive confidently and happily greet staff. They are very well settled and know what to do when they arrive. The ethos of the setting is to provide children with a blended mix of play and learning activities based on the Montessori philosophy. Staff have high expectations for each child. They take time to get to know children well. They plan learning experiences to help each child make good progress and to reflect their emerging interests. For instance, children create clay hedgehogs and talk about the changing seasons. Staff encourage children to share what they know about life on a farm and how the season affects sheep and crops.

Children behave incredibly well and demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. They benefit from the calm and positive atmosphere that staff create. Children from an early age know what is expected and show high levels of self-control. They learn to share and take turns. Staff give children clear explanations to help them understand their feelings and how their actions may affect others.

Children freely choose activities, including traditional Montessori tasks, that help them to develop their knowledge and skills. They show very positive attitudes to learning. They gain the key skills required to support the next stage in their learning and to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager is extremely well organised and values her staff team highly. She makes effective use of regular supervision meetings with staff to enthuse and inspire their practice. Staff seek targeted training to help develop their knowledge and skills. For instance, they identify and gain professional qualifications to improve how they may help children with communication and language delay. They use a range of strategies that help children to catch up with their peers.
- Staff work very well in partnership with parents. From the start, they gather a wide range of information that helps them to establish what children know and can do. They share information with parents regularly, using a variety of methods to ensure all parents know precisely about their child's progress. They share ideas with parents about how they may support their ongoing learning at home. For instance, staff work with parents to provide innovative ways to help children learn about letters and the sounds they represent.
- Staff plan very well to help children make good progress. There is a clearly sequenced approach that supports children to build on what they know, remember what they have learned and use it in a range of situations. For instance, children hear lots of mathematical language as they play. They count the number of legs on a spider accurately and know how many more girls are

present than boys. They use mathematical words to compare the size of sunflowers that they grow at home.

- Children listen to staff and follow instructions well. Staff act as very good role models for children. They treat children and each other with the utmost respect. Children are well-mannered and welcome visitors to the setting. For instance, at lunchtime children politely provide the inspector with a plate from which to eat her lunch and a glass of milk to drink.
- From the outset, staff encourage children to be independent and learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, children skilfully pour water and milk from glass jugs, carry chairs and scissors safely and put on their coats and shoes to play outside.
- Children sing happily with staff. They choose the songs and perform the associated actions confidently. They show good attention skills as they listen to stories, anticipating familiar words and phrases. Staff build on children's interest to read and write. Children learn the sounds that letters represent and begin to write their names. Older children read simple stories.
- Staff provide children with a good range of activities and experiences that help them learn about people and communities that are different to their own. For instance, children learn about their similarities and differences. They explore customs and faiths that are different to their own, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.
- Although children have regular opportunities to play outside, staff do not provide a wide enough range of learning experiences to support and engage those children who prefer to learn outside.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are deeply committed to safeguarding children. They attend regular and varied training and receive updates about child protection and wider safeguarding issues. They confidently fulfil their role to protect children from harm. They know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. The premises are safe and secure. The manager implements robust recruitment processes to assure the suitability of adults working with children and has good systems in place to check adults' ongoing suitability.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- enhance the outdoor learning provision to support and engage those children who prefer to learn and play outside.

Setting details

Unique reference number	254343
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10106213
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 3
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	West Acre Montessori School Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP903612
Telephone number	01760 337316
Date of previous inspection	23 June 2015

Information about this early years setting

West Acre Montessori School registered in 1993. The school employs four members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The manager and deputy manager both hold Montessori teacher qualifications. The school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am to 3.15pm each Monday to Thursday and from 8.45am to 12.45pm on Fridays. The school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The school follows the Montessori ethos.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Gail Warnes

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the premises with the manager and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- A joint observation was completed with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the setting.
- A number of parents spoke to the inspector or provided written feedback and their views were taken into account.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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