

Inspection of West Acre Montessori School

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

Inspection date: 18 June 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

This outstanding setting follows a Montessori ethos blended with a range of free play and rich learning opportunities for children. Staff provide time for children to develop their independence and encourage them to take responsibility for themselves and their own learning. This supports children's extremely high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Children's behaviour is exceptional. They develop their understanding of sharing and turn taking from a young age. During snack time, children demonstrate excellent self-control as they wait patiently to serve themselves fruit and pour their own drink. Staff encourage children to be responsible and respectful. Children demonstrate this as they handle resources carefully, tidy away when they have finished and drink from a glass. Furthermore, staff model expected behaviours and treat children and adults alike with respect and courtesy. Children learn from this and develop their awareness of others. Older children support their younger peers, offering their help when pouring a drink and helping their friend to pick up the items they have dropped on the floor.

Children demonstrate remarkable social interactions from a young age. They play together with peers, making up stories and sharing their creative ideas. Children enjoy building with the bricks, working as a team to solve problems. They build a swimming pool and use figures to act out simple story lines and games. When there is a disagreement, staff offer advice but encourage children to talk about their differences and find a solution. This is demonstrated when children are waiting for a turn on the swing. Staff suggest they talk through their problem and children compromise and come to an agreement that they will both enjoy the swing together.

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

- Staff's excellent understanding of child development helps them to plan for children's effectively. They adapt their teaching to vary learning opportunities and meet the needs of all children. Staff skilfully judge when it is appropriate for them to join children's play, incorporating more difficult and challenging opportunities to extend learning. This supports the excellent progress that children make.
- Staff provide a large reading area where children can choose to read independently, with a friend or listen to staff. Children use this area throughout the day to look at books and make up their own stories using the pictures as a prompt, demonstrating their love of reading. They also enjoy cuddling up on the sofa and listening to a story when staff are reading. Staff skilfully talk to children about the story, the author and give background information to ensure children

are fully engaged before starting. Throughout the story staff ask questions, such as 'What do you think will happen?', to extend children's creativity and thinking skills to the highest possible standard.

- The outdoor area has been extended, and children now have access to a vast space to run, explore and develop their gross motor skills to an extremely high standard. Staff provide various equipment to encourage children to climb, balance and move in a variety of ways. Furthermore, children begin to take risks and develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they climb and jump from large logs.
- Children explore and develop a deep knowledge and understanding about the world around them. They listen carefully to the noises they can hear outdoors. Children identify different animals and birds and learn more about their behaviours. They explore the bushes, looking for bugs with magnifying glasses. Staff extend children's knowledge of these insects, discussing why there is an empty cocoon left on the plant.
- Staff provide a language-rich environment, where they talk and engage in conversations with children throughout their learning and play. Staff introduce new vocabulary and have high expectations of the words children can learn. Children share exciting news from home and from different events that they have recently experienced. They demonstrate excellent language and conversational skills from a young age.
- Parent partnerships are a key strength and staff have recently improved this even further. Staff regularly share information about children's learning with parents. They provide a wealth of ideas for parents continue their children's learning at home. Parents are regularly invited to the setting for a range of events.
- Staff promote healthy eating at all times in the setting. Children grow different fruits and vegetables and discuss at mealtimes the impact different foods have on their bodies. Staff share their expectations and work closely with parents to ensure children have access to healthy and balanced meals.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	254343
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10398059
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 at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	18
Number of children on roll	19
Name of registered person	West Acre Montessori School Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP903612
Telephone number	01760 337316
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

West Acre Montessori School registered in 1993 and follows the Montessori ethos. The setting employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level three and Montessori teacher qualifications. The setting opens 8.30am to 4pm, Monday to Thursday and from 8.30am to 1pm on Friday during school term times. The setting provides government funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Vikki Reynolds

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector spoke to a small sample of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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