

West Acre Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	254343
Inspection date	08/10/2008
Inspector	Melanie Calway / Anne Walker
Setting address	The Old Chapel, East Walton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE32 1PU
Telephone number	01760 337316
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

West Acre Montessori School has been established for 21 years. In 2001 it moved to the village of East Walton to the south east of King's Lynn. It operates from the main hall and associated rooms of a converted chapel. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. The school is open each weekday during school term times, on Monday and Friday from 9.00 to 12.00 and on Tuesday to Thursday from 9.00 to 15.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children on roll, who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting is also registered to care for children over five. This is registered by Ofsted on the Childcare Register. The provision is accessible for people with disabilities.

The school employs four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and the manager is currently working towards achieving Early Years Professional status. The setting has been awarded the Norfolk Quality Assurance scheme. They are supported by the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

West Acre Montessori School provides very effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are valued and respected as individuals and children with additional needs are fully included. Staff are skilled at communicating with children and use their knowledge of children's development to help them to progress. Children's independence is promoted well, enabling them to be fully included in the life of the setting. The manager and staff team have a clear vision for the setting and continuously seek to improve their service by using training opportunities and by taking into account the views of parents.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to develop the assessment system to take into account information provided by parents about children's starting points and more fully involve parents in the assessment process to create an on-going dialogue about their children's learning and development
- further extend the planning to more clearly identify how the next steps for individual children are taken into account

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, learning and development are promoted well because there is effective leadership. The staff team is well-established, experienced and fully

qualified. There is a strong commitment within the setting to improve their knowledge and skills. The manager has recently begun training for Early Years Professional status and other training for staff members is planned. The setting also recently achieved accreditation through the Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme. Regular self-evaluation is carried out which enables the setting to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and reflect on its practice. Parents are included in this process and their views are actively sought. Parents are made to feel welcome and encouraged to share their skills and to extend children's learning at home.

Children are effectively safeguarded as there are good procedures for vetting and recruiting staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to refer any concerns regarding child protection and the child protection policy provides clear guidance on what action to take. Regular training is undertaken to ensure that staff are up to date in this area. Children are kept safe as regular risk assessment is carried out on the indoor and outdoor environment. Policies and procedures are regularly updated and all the required documentation to ensure the welfare of children and the efficient running of the service is maintained.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with opportunities to make good progress in all areas of learning. The planning and routines are flexible to take account of individual children's needs. Topics take account of children's own interests and follow up on projects they have started at home, for example a papier mache globe, made at home with parents, is brought in and this activity is extended by looking at maps and talking about other countries with the children. Staff are extremely skilled at talking and listening to children sensitively, which promotes their language and communication skills as well as their confidence and self-esteem. Children's independence is fostered very well. They put on their coats and boots to go outside, they help to prepare fruit for a snack and wash up the plates and cups from snack time. Resources are organised to enable children to choose and put items away. Children work well independently, selecting the Montessori equipment, concentrating on the task and putting it away again. Staff use effective questioning to help children to reason and to problem-solve, skills which are also fostered by many of the Montessori activities. Children's creativity is fostered as they are encouraged to make their own creations using different media.

Planning is geared to what individual children are achieving. Observations of children's development are recorded and the next steps for their progress are noted. Staff know the children very well and work with them to help them to progress. Plans show how to move children on with regard to specific tasks but some observations of next steps are not consistently used in the planning process to provide an effective tool for staff. Key workers communicate well with parents so they are involved in their children's learning. Some activities go home for the children to practise their skills at home. The 'All about me' books give staff useful information about children's likes and dislikes and their back grounds. Key workers discuss children's starting points with parents when they first come and parents are

provided with information about their children's progress. However, parents are not yet contributing to the assessments on a regular basis as part of an on-going dialogue to fully involve them in the process.

Children's welfare is promoted very well. Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy as they enjoy a healthy life style. Good hygiene is encouraged and children learn why it is necessary. They concentrate well as they are involved in a hand washing activity, learning why and how to wash their hands. They develop physical skills as they run and climb outside. Children's differing needs are catered for. Staff respond promptly and appropriately to emergencies and all are trained in first aid. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Regular risk assessment takes place to ensure that children are safe. Children learn about safety as staff talk to them about how to use the equipment appropriately. They behave well and are forming positive relationships with each other. They learn how to negotiate and communicate. Good manners are particularly encouraged and children respond suitably as they are given good role models.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.