

# Chives Montessori School

Akenham Studios, Akenham, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 0HL

<b>Inspection date</b>	19/04/2013
Previous inspection date	10/12/2008

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

### **This provision is good**

- The well-qualified and knowledgeable staff have a good understanding of how children learn. They make skilful use of opportunities to extend children's learning through play, discussion and group activities.
- Children's health is promoted particularly well through the provision of freshly prepared hot meals that are highly nutritious and encourage children to make healthy choices.
- Great emphasis is placed on providing parents with information that helps them to support their children's learning at home, particularly their knowledge of letter names and sounds.
- Effective leadership from the management ensures that staff work well as a cohesive team. Their individual skills are valued and they have purposeful opportunities to identify priorities for development that help to secure ongoing improvement to the provision for children.

### **It is not yet outstanding because**

- Older children are not always provided with suitable outdoor spaces and sensible rules to fully enhance their understanding of how to use ride-on toys and scooters safely and with increasing control.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in three classrooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection and engaged in discussions with the staff and children.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journey records, planning documentation, the provider's self-evaluation form and some written policy documents.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and checked evidence of staff suitability and qualifications.

## Inspector

Sarah Clements

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Chives Montessori School was registered in 1989 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the hamlet of Akenham, close to Ipswich in Suffolk, and is privately owned and managed. The setting serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from three main classrooms and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The setting employs nine members of childcare staff, eight of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The setting opens Monday to Friday all year around. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of these sessions. There are currently 56 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special and/or disabilities. The setting uses the Montessori approach to education.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the organisation of outdoor play to enhance opportunities for older children to learn to use ride-on toys and scooters safely and with increasing control.

### Inspection judgements

#### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make good progress because they are skilfully supported by staff who have a good understanding of their individual starting points and capabilities. Staff make effective ongoing observations of the children's various learning styles and developmental needs. Using this information, they plan a wide range of play opportunities which children find consistently challenging and enjoyable. Children are able to initiate their own games and explore materials, as well as participating in more structured, adult-led activities, including popular drama, tennis and ballet sessions. The staff make good use of everyday opportunities to listen carefully to children, engaging them in purposeful conversation and helping them to make links in their learning. For example, children in the 'Green Room' join together in a circle and talk confidently about the weather. Staff actively promote the children's use new vocabulary, such as 'overcast' to describe the cloudy conditions, and help them to find relevant symbols to record their findings on the weather chart. Staff adapt their interactions well to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure all children are included and supported to achieve their full potential.

The staff celebrate children's interests and organise interesting play environments that promote these. Children in the 'Nursery Room' delight in sharing musical instruments, which builds successfully on their enjoyment of singing familiar songs and rhymes. Children are able to help themselves to boxes of resources that reflect their interests, including their love of trains and cars. Staff question them skilfully as they build tracks for the trains, extending their problem-solving skills as they help them to work out how to connect the individual sections. There are good opportunities for children to express their ideas through a variety of creative activities. They enjoy exploring a range of tactile materials and making marks in trays filled with rice, shaving foam, sand and soil. Children demonstrate strong control in their finer physical movements as they manipulate small foam shapes and position these on paper to represent the rays in their picture of the sun. A good range of props are made available to support the younger children's imaginative role play. For example, staff provide a wider selection of kitchen utensils and pans, which enables children to play together following the same theme and to relive their experiences from home.

All children relish the opportunity to access the well-resourced outdoor environment at different intervals throughout the day. Here, they develop their physical strength as they walk across stepping stones and pull along a cart. They have practical opportunities to learn how to use tools for different purposes. For example, staff show them how to use a broom to sweep up the sand on the ground.

Children actively learn the sounds and names of letters of the alphabet and begin to recognise their own names in print. Parents are given specific information about the setting's 'Letter of the Week' initiative, so that they can continue to promote their children's knowledge of letter names and sounds at home. This includes the provision of letters cut from sandpaper for children to feel with their fingers and practise the correct way to write each letter. Older children learn to recognise numbers and confidently count objects to 10 and beyond in a variety of contexts. For example, they accurately count the number of children present at registration time, and talk about there being more boys than girls. These activities ensure that children are developing strong literacy and mathematical skills, which prepares them well in readiness for school.

Parents participate fully in their children's learning due to strong partnership working. Staff meet with parents frequently to share children's learning journeys and discuss how well children are progressing. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute resources to enhance children's activities, including library books about the weather and bottles to make rain gauges. Such continuity in learning contributes to children's good achievements.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

All children show a strong sense of security and belonging within the setting. It is evident that all children have warm and trusting relationships with their key person and the other staff, as they are keen to involve them in their play and often seek them out for comfort. Staff are effective in creating opportunities within the daily routine to promote children's independence. For example, at meal times, older children are actively involved in setting the table and serving food to one another. The children are proficient at carrying out these

tasks because staff guide them with supportive instructions, and have confidence in their abilities. Younger children can be seen developing these same skills as staff provide targeted challenges for them to pour their own drinks and gain confidence in using cutlery. The atmosphere within the setting is calm, and children's behaviour is good due to the consistent praise and encouragement they receive from the staff. They are very kind and caring towards one another as they show concern when others are upset, and take time to find slippers for their friends.

The setting has very recently introduced purposeful initiatives to ensure children benefit from a nutritious diet, including the provision of a freshly prepared hot meal each day. These meals are carefully balanced and tailored to meet children's individual dietary needs. Children have plenty of opportunities to exercise, which contributes further to a healthy lifestyle. The outside environment offers them good physical challenges as they pedal, ride on bikes, balance on low stilts and dribble balls across the ground. Overall, children show a good awareness of risk as they remind each other to walk carefully down the steps, and talk about the importance of using scissors safely. However, on occasion, older children are not provided with designated outdoor spaces or positive rules to encourage them to use ride-on toys and scooters without the risk of bumping into others.

Children are very well prepared for the transitions they make to new rooms within the setting. They make a number of visits with their key person, who provides reassurance as they get to know their new surroundings. Information is readily passed on about children's learning, development and welfare to ensure children continue to experience good levels of continuity in their care. Staff also provide effective support to help children who are moving on to school. They share photographs of children wearing school uniform, and make arrangements for children to meet teachers who visit from some of the local schools. Informative parents' evenings go further to provide parents with practical ideas which enhance their children's smooth transition into school.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision**

The leadership and management of the setting is effective. Arrangements for safeguarding children are fully embedded and effective in protecting children from harm. There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place, which has been fully updated since the last inspection to include a procedure for dealing with any allegations against staff. The manager follows effective procedures to recruit staff who are well qualified and suitable to work with children, carrying out all necessary suitability checks and monitoring staff in the early stages of their employment. A thorough risk assessment is routinely completed in all areas of the provision, resulting in a number of effective safety measures and procedures which keep children safe. In addition, the provider demonstrates a clear understanding of the requirements in relation to staff to child ratios and deployment of staff, ensuring that there are sufficient staff present to meet children's needs at all times.

Regular appraisals and supervision help staff to identify priorities and passions for their own professional development, and ensure they continue to hold the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs successfully. Management routinely check the quality of children's

learning journey records, ensuring staff are observing children regularly across all areas of learning and checking that the educational programmes continue to offer children sufficient challenge. All staff have good opportunities to be involved in the evaluation process through regular staff meetings. As a team, they take time to reflect on what is working well by identifying their strengths and priorities for improvement. For example, following constructive comments from staff and parents, the setting has secure plans to invest time in developing the learning environment for children in the 'Green Room'. This shows they are committed to maintaining continuous improvement.

The staff actively share information with parents about their children's routines and the activities they participate in. They do this by exchanging comments in the younger children's daily diaries, sending out newsletters, and sharing children's learning journey records. Feedback from parents is encouraged and the manager is very open to gathering their suggestions more formally in regular questionnaires. Parents comment very positively about how well their children settle at the setting, and clearly value the staff's commitment to supporting their children's learning and development. The setting's special educational needs coordinator works hard to foster partnerships with a number of outside professionals. As a result, children receive timely support and specialist intervention to ensure their ongoing progress.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY290559
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	909156
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	42
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	56
<b>Name of provider</b>	Carolyn Olive Juliet McNeill
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10/12/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 212 448

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools



and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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