

Inspection of Sunflower Montessori Nursery School

Causeway Farm, Middleton, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3NH

Inspection date: 10 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and settle well in this setting. They establish warm attachments to staff, which help them to feel safe and secure. Many children attend the stay-and-play group at the setting, which helps them to feel familiar with the staff and premises before they start. Parents describe it as a 'real home-from-home' that their children are eager to attend.

Children delight in the variety of sensory activities on offer, both indoors and in the yard. They particularly enjoy manipulating dough and working the small muscles in their hands. Children carefully sculpt and pinch dough, adding lots of googly eyes to create a dough 'monster'. They make good use of tools, such as rolling pins, cutters and modelling tools, to shape their creations. Children respond well to the structured activities staff offer. They persevere in mastering skills, such as pouring materials from one jug to another and using a grater to shred carrots. Older children concentrate as they tackle more-complex challenges, such as holding a pencil carefully as they learn to write different letters.

Children tidy without prompting. They put rubbish in the bin and return resources and toys to the shelves when they are finished. Children develop friendships. They laugh delightedly as they push each other along in a small wheelbarrow and play imaginative games while wearing cloaks.

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

- The owner, who is also the manager, uses feedback from parents, staff and local authority advisers to identify further improvement to the setting. She uses an action plan to keep track of changes and evaluate their impact.
- Parents comment that the nursery is a nurturing and exciting learning environment for their children. They praise the 'wonderful' staff and speak positively about the community events the owner organises.
- Staff know children and families well. They use this knowledge to plan activities and share ideas with parents which support children's learning further. Children demonstrate pride in their achievements and talk about their new skills, such as using the toilet, writing their own name or learning to whistle.
- Children are articulate and eager to join in and try new things. They readily share their ideas and respond with interest to concepts introduced by staff, such as hibernation and seasonal changes. Children enjoy exploring objects from around the world, such as tartan material and castanets. They are keen to share their home experiences of travel too.
- Staff promote children's thinking skills well. They ask questions effectively to help children solve problems for themselves, such as how to use construction materials to make a car that can roll.

- Children benefit from weekly visits from dance and yoga teachers. They follow directions and copy actions enthusiastically as they dance to music. They practise balancing and develop their rhythm and hand-eye coordination as they master sequences of movements.
- Although children generally behave well, sometimes staff miss opportunities to help children to gain a better understanding of expected behaviours and how their actions affect others. At times, children have conflicts with one another that disrupt their learning and upset others.
- Young children begin to grasp concepts of size and growth. They order toy animals by size and give them roles to match. For instance, the smallest pig becomes the 'baby' in their play and the bigger pigs are 'mummies' and 'daddies'. Older children confidently count objects and recognise numbers. They write numbers on paper to use as money when they play shops.
- The owner provides staff with training opportunities and information to help them develop their practice. However, these arrangements are not focused enough to support all staff to help raise the quality of their practice to the highest level.
- Children become very independent. They manage their own self-care needs, dress themselves to go outside and serve themselves healthy snacks. Staff teach children techniques to put their coats on easily and wash their hands thoroughly. They encourage younger children to practise pouring drinks and working zips.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They understand how to identify and report concerns about the welfare of a child or the behaviour of an adult. The owner ensures staff keep their knowledge up to date and regularly attend training. When appointing new staff, she carries out checks as part of the recruitment process to assure herself of their suitability. Staff also complete annual suitability reviews.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to develop children's positive behaviour and to gain a better understanding of how their behaviour affects others
- improve staff's individual knowledge and skills to help raise the quality of their practice to the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	260949
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10113087
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 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	29
Name of registered person	Smith, Lucy Victoria
Registered person unique reference number	RP512581
Telephone number	01728 648352
Date of previous inspection	22 April 2014

Information about this early years setting

Sunflower Montessori Nursery School registered in 1991. The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including two with early years professional status. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 8.30am until 3.30pm, during term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Oakley

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The owner, who is also the manager, took the inspector on a learning walk across all areas of the setting and grounds to explain how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the owner. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.
- The owner completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection. She also took account of the views of parents through written feedback provided.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020