

Inspection of Sunflower Montessori Nursery School - Aldeburgh

Playgroup Building, Crescent Road, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5HW

Inspection date: 3 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children develop close relationships with staff, who greet them with a cheerful 'good morning'. Children who have recently started attending the nursery receive close attention and support. This helps them to settle swiftly, as they get to know and understand the rhythm of the day.

Children make choices about what they want to do within the calm and orderly environment. They play outside in the fresh air, regardless of the weather. Children are becoming increasingly independent. Staff model learning with younger children, demonstrating how to use resources. As a result, children know how to select, play with and replace items back on low-level shelves. They take an active part in the daily routines as they help themselves to a snack, wash up and recycle their rubbish.

Children understand how to behave. Staff teach them to be considerate with each other and their environment. They step in to help the youngest children when they find it difficult to share. The most-able children are supported to resolve their own minor conflicts. Even small achievements are celebrated by staff, who praise the children, building their self-esteem.

The staff are sensitive to the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During national restrictions, they supported families and children. This included sending activity ideas via post, so that children opened these themselves. Parents, including those whose children have recently started to attend, are complimentary about the nursery.

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

- Children engage in a broad range of activities which capture and sustain their interest. They follow topics as they learn all about birds and animals. Children use tools, such as scissors and spanners, safely. They work out how to correctly fit pieces of a puzzle together, and practise turn taking as they play games such as dominos. Children count, sort and sequence items. They practise pre-writing skills as they handle crayons and paint freely. Children build their muscles as they pedal their tricycles, giving their friends 'a lift' in the attached trailer.
- Observations and assessments of what children can do are used effectively. Gaps in children's development are swiftly identified. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered good support. She is swift to work in partnership with parents, and other professionals, in order to help these children reach their full potential.
- All children benefit from a language-rich environment. Staff talk easily with the

children. They sound out the beginning of words as they help children to name the different birds. Staff correctly repeat words that children may mispronounce. However, children who have little or no language do not always get enough opportunity to practise speaking. That said, children listen to stories and join in with songs. They hear new vocabulary, such as 'oval' and 'pentagon', as they attempt to correctly match different shapes.

- Children are given a broad range of additional opportunities to extend their personal experiences. They learn to listen and follow instructions as they 'waddle like a penguin', during a weekly online music and movement sessions. Children learn about planting and growing during 'gardening club'. They further develop a love of books when taking trips to the local library. Children find out about other people within their community, building relationships with residents at a local care home.
- Staff are well supported by the nursery owner, who is also the manager. New staff are appropriately inducted with regard to the Montessori approach that the nursery follows. Staff know and understand their roles. They attend meetings, receive supervision and complete mandatory training. However, supervision arrangements do not focus enough on further enhancing their knowledge and skills. This is particularly with regard to how to best support those children who are slower to speak.
- The manager and staff work closely with parents. They regularly share information about the children's learning and their progress, making good use of an online application to do so. Parents are provided with some ideas to extend their children's learning at home and have previously been provided guidance on healthy packed lunches. However, this approach has not been wholly successful with all parents. There is scope to enhance practice further, including encouraging a love of reading, at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has recently reviewed and improved safeguarding arrangements within the nursery. There is a designated person to take a lead on safeguarding, and back up is provided should the lead not be present at the setting. All staff have completed child protection training. Policies and procedures are clear and are accessible to all. Staff have a secure knowledge of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. They know the procedures to follow should there be a need to report concerns about children's welfare. Safe recruitment and selection procedures are followed when appointing staff. There are clear procedures in place to deal with accidents.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- make better use of supervision arrangements to encourage staff's continuous professional development and enhance their knowledge and skills, particularly with regard to supporting children who are slower to speak
- work more closely with parents, supporting them to extend their children's learning at home, including fostering a love of books. Also provide further information so that children are given clear and consistent messages regarding healthy choices around food.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY551495
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10173999
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	18
Number of children on roll	22
Name of registered person	Smith, Lucy Victoria
Registered person unique reference number	RP512581
Telephone number	01728648352
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Sunflower Montessori Nursery School - Aldeburgh registered in 2017 and is situated in Aldeburgh, Suffolk. The nursery employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It follows the Montessori educational philosophy.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Dawn Pointer

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection that the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the nursery manager and has taken this into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector and the nursery manager met to discuss and understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed staff interaction with the children, both inside and outside, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of staff qualifications and suitability.
- The inspector spoke with the staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with a sample of parents and considered their views.

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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