

Inspection of Westwood Montessori

Spriggs Farm, Thaxted Road, Little Sampford, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2SA

Inspection date: 13 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish in this exceptional nursery. They receive high-quality care from the attentive and caring staff. Children are extremely motivated to learn and immediately become deeply engaged in the abundance of activities available to them. The outside area provides a high-quality, rich environment for children to explore and learn in. Children develop an excellent understanding of the life cycle of animals. They learn how to care for chickens, taking responsibility to feed them every day and check for eggs. Children prepare for the arrival of baby chicks. They collect straw in wheelbarrows and learn about the difference between male and female chicks. Children busy themselves planting tomato plants in the greenhouse area. They learn about harvesting foods they have grown, such as raspberries. This supports children to make a clear connection in their understanding of where the food we eat comes from.

Children demonstrate exceptional care and consideration for resources. Children carefully put toys away after playing with them. They develop strong friendships with each other, resulting in a kind and respectful community. Children are reassured with familiar faces as they interact with siblings throughout the day. They wave and hug each other as they play in the garden.

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

- The provision offers an exceptionally ambitious and fully embedded curriculum. This challenges the children to learn at the highest level. Staff know the children extremely well. They know what they can do and what they need to know next. Staff ensure that children are secure in their learning before they move to the next stage. This ensures that children's experiences are arranged to build sufficient knowledge, so they can move forward for further learning with confidence.
- Children develop a can-do attitude from an early age. They have superb opportunities to develop their independence skills for everyday living. They prepare their own snack, cutting fruit and pouring milk. Lunchtime preparation involves setting tables with cutlery and bowls and serving their own lunch. Children dress themselves and are responsible for their self-care. As a result, children are fully prepared as they start school with confidence.
- Staff are extremely passionate about the use of mathematics as they skilfully weave this into many activities. Babies learn about size as they successfully push columns into a shape sorter and explore wooden blocks ranging in size. Concepts are successfully embedded to enable children to move to the next stage. This is demonstrated as older children learn about addition and subtraction as they play with counters on a number mat.
- Children make exceptional progress in their literacy and develop a keen interest

in books and stories. Babies snuggle into staff as they share stories together. The use of story boxes develops children's expressive language skills as they use their imagination to create their own stories using props. They use words such as 'suddenly' and 'superpower sun glasses'.

- Exceptional partnerships with parents are formed. They are kept fully up to date with their children's progress and are actively involved in transitions within the nursery. Informative training sessions are provided to parents to enable them to support children with skills, such as potty training and preparing for school. They are given tools and resources to continue children's learning at home.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and support is provided to give these children the best opportunities. Detailed care plans and cohesive working with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, allows children to have expert support. This helps them make excellent progress. For example, children who spoke no words when they started can now confidently say five-word sentences.
- Management has high regard for staff. Staff receive regular and relevant supervision, and extensive opportunities to attend training to further their skills. As a result, staff's knowledge is consistently built over time, which translates to improved teaching for the children. Managers ensure that staff's long term hopes and ambitions are catered for, and they are fully supported to achieve these. Staff report high levels of support for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leadership and management have high expectations of staff, and this is followed up with extensive training to ensure all staff are fully aware of any risks to children and what action to take. There are comprehensive policies detailing information for staff to access, when required. As a result, staff are extremely confident in what steps to take if they had any safeguarding concerns. Children are encouraged to think about their own risks under the close supervision of staff. This leads to children quickly developing an understanding of how to identify risk and keeping themselves and others safe.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY337582
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10218587
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	76
Name of registered person	Wisbey, Michelle Deanna
Registered person unique reference number	RP513790
Telephone number	07811 441 615
Date of previous inspection	11 May 2016

Information about this early years setting

Westwood Montessori registered in 2006. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. They all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The owner holds early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, 8am to 5.30pm, all year round. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Emily Woodhead

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The managers joined the inspector on a learning walk. They talked to the inspector about the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors. She discussed children's progress with staff.
- The managers and inspector carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation. This included evidence of staff suitability, the complaints record and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of written 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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