

Inspection of Chives Montessori School

Akenham Studios, Akenham, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 0HL

Inspection date:

15 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are happy at the setting. They show familiarity with the routines and understand what is expected of them. Children behave well. They are learning to share and take turns. However, weaknesses in leadership mean that children do not yet receive the education that they deserve. Weak oversight and monitoring in the setting mean that some aspects of practice are not yet good. Children do not always receive appropriate challenge in their learning because some staff are not ambitious about what children can achieve.

All children have a key person assigned to them. However, there is not a clear plan in place for some children about what they need to learn next, to help them progress in their learning journey. Nevertheless, children show that they feel safe and secure. They have built trusting relationships with staff and are confident to seek cuddles should they need reassurance. Children are generally interested in the activities provided and show that they are keen to learn. Children build independence in some skills over time. From an early age, they learn to pour water into cups, help to tidy up and identify their belongings in order to put on their coats and shoes.

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

- Although the provider has taken action to address concerns identified during recent visits from Ofsted and other agencies, weaknesses remain. The provider is not able to identify weaknesses as they arise and take prompt action to resolve them effectively. The arrangements for supervision of staff are not effective. The monitoring of staff practice is not robust enough to help staff develop the knowledge they need to become skilful practitioners.
- There is a clear curriculum that blends aspects of the Montessori approach and helps children build on what they know and can do. Children have time to practise a range of skills that build the foundations for future learning. For example, they develop hand-to-eye coordination from the start, using safety knives to chop fruit for snack under adult guidance and supervision. They learn to manage their intimate care routines independently.
- Staff working with babies are kind, nurturing and attentive to ensure babies' individual needs are met. They provide a calm environment where babies safely explore and move about. Staff talk to babies as they play, naming toys and resources. They sing songs throughout the day and read stories. Staff know that singing not only soothes children and is joyful, but it is also a key part of helping children to build good communication and language skills.
- Staff talk to children as they play. They introduce new words to help children build a wide vocabulary. For example, when younger children identify oranges in their snack, staff explain the oranges are small and known as 'clementines' or

'satsumas,' and show them how to separate the segments. Children receive lots of encouragement to share their ideas. For instance, at circle time, older children excitedly talk about their plans for the festive season.

- When it is time for children to move to the next room, staff plan well with parents to ensure children's emotional well-being is supported. Children gain familiarity with key routines which are followed in each room, such as behaviour and mealtime expectations. This provides children with some consistency and helps to reassure them as they progress and move on to the next room.
- Overall, staff work well with children to help them move on in their learning. However, sometimes, children's progress is limited because staff do not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve. For example, staff do not always encourage older children to count objects or extend their counting skills. Some staff do not always identify what is next for their key children when they appear to have achieved what is expected for their age.
- Parents are positive about the setting. They state that they believe their children are happy and well cared for. Parents appreciate the different methods of communication that staff use to share information about their child's day and achievements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have received training about child protection and safeguarding issues. They know the possible signs of abuse and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Staff understand the process to follow should they have concerns about other staff working with children. The provider has improved their knowledge of the local safeguarding partners' requirements should an allegation of abuse against a member of staff be received. Appropriate recruitment processes are followed that help to assure the suitability of adults working with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
improve the effectiveness of supervision arrangements to improve oversight of all aspects of staff practice, and provide coaching, support and training to improve children's experiences.	19/01/2023

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

- enhance staff understanding of how to deliver the provider's ambitious curriculum, to help children achieve at the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY290559
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10266382
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 at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	78
Name of registered person	McNeill, Carolyn Olive Juliet
Registered person unique reference number	RP512589
Telephone number	01473 212448 and 07771 892101
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

Chives Montessori School registered in 1989. The setting employs eight members of staff, four of whom hold qualifications at level 2 and above. The owner holds appropriate qualifications at level 6. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery follows the Montessori approach.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Gail Warnes

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk, and talked to the them about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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