

Inspection of Munchkins Nursery and Pre School

The Pavilion, King George V Playing Fields, Wivenhoe, Colchester, Essex CO7 9AB

Inspection date:

28 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive in this setting and are highly motivated to join in with the stimulating, hands-on experiences. They are cared for by committed and dedicated practitioners who hold high expectations for children's learning. They provide exciting and enticing learning experiences for children to freely explore and investigate, both inside and outdoors. This sparks children's sense of awe and wonder and provides them with fantastic learning experiences across all areas of development.

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that ensures every child has the best possible start to their education. Practitioners have a superb understanding of what each child already knows and what they need to learn next. Practitioners are skilled at knowing when to intervene in children's play and when to stand back and observe. They work closely with parents and other agencies to make sure that all children make excellent progress in their learning and development, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Practitioners show the utmost respect to children and each other, demonstrating the behaviour that is expected. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary. They have a high level of regard for their friends. For example, children spend an extended period acting out a story in the garden together. They decide what will happen next. Negotiating harmoniously with each other about the roles they will adopt and the dialogue they will use.

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

- The passion and commitment of leaders influences all aspects of the setting. The whole team is highly committed to providing the best possible care for children. They share a clear vision to support children to become ready for their next stage of learning. Practitioners constantly reflect on the provision and make continuous improvements that benefit the children.
- Practitioners skilfully monitor children's learning. They rapidly identify children who need additional support. Practitioners work closely with outside agencies to implement shared strategies to ensure that children make the best possible progress. Leaders use additional funding to target specific areas of development for children and reduce any differences in their learning.
- Practitioners place great value on encouraging children's communication and language. They make effective use of sign language to support all children. Children have very good language skills for their age and use them very effectively to communicate their ideas as they play. Children recall and discuss knowledge that they have learnt. For example, they confidently talk about the lifecycle of a frog. Practitioners skilfully weave new words into their vocabulary

by informing them that the eggs they referred to are called frogspawn. During play, when children say couch, practitioners tell them they it could also be called a sofa. This is highly effective in helping to extend children's vocabulary.

- Children are supremely self-sufficient and adept at doing things for themselves, even the youngest children competently serve their food at mealtimes and peel their own fruit. Older children successfully assess risks when climbing trees and when standing on crates. When children ask for help, practitioners skilfully guide them to try things for themselves. For example, they model to them how to roll clay into a ball, children copy them and show delight when they can do it themselves. This helps build children's confidence in their abilities and encourages a positive attitude to learning.
- Partnership working with parents is exceptional. Clear lines of communication, including detailed verbal handovers and regular meetings, ensure a two-way flow of information about children's development and progress. The information helps practitioners decide what to teach children. Parents appreciate that practitioners know their children as individuals and tailor learning to their specific needs. Parents are frequently provided with activities they can do to support and extend their child's learning. Advice is readily available about topics such as, toilet training and new siblings so parents can support their children through these transitions.
- Practitioners report their morale is high and they are proud to be part of a team that puts children at the heart of what they do. They benefit from excellent training and support they receive through coaching and mentoring. Leaders take their responsibilities towards practitioners well-being very seriously. They value and respect practitioners, ensuring they are involved in all aspects of the provision. Practitioners are motivated to provide excellent care for children. This is clearly evident in their practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All practitioners, including apprentices, clearly demonstrate a secure understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. They display a deep knowledge of the indicators of abuse. Practitioners are aware that certain types of abuse are more prevalent in the area they are based and ensure their knowledge about this abuse is current. They are clear on the procedures they need to follow if they have concerns about a child or the conduct of a staff member. Practitioners demonstrate a secure understanding of risk and use this to keep children safe. For example, they provide children with encouragement and guidance to take calculated risk in their play, such as when climbing on and jumping off equipment.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY222657
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10313314
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	77
Name of registered person	First Steps Montessori Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910816
Telephone number	01206 827126
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2018

Information about this early years setting

Munchkins Nursery and Pre School registered in 2003 and is located in Wivenhoe, Colchester. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lyndsey Barwick

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 leaders and the inspector discussed how the setting organises their early years provision, including the aims and rationale for their early years foundation stage curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of 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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