

Phoenix Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403445
Inspection date	10 December 2007
Inspector	Samantha Smith

Setting Address	Merrymeade Coach House, Merrymeade Chase, Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9BG
Telephone number	01277 260 893
E-mail	www.phoenix-daynursery.co.uk
Registered person	Phoenix Day Nursery Ltd.
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Phoenix Day Nursery opened in 2001. It operates from a converted coach house in central Brentwood. The nursery serves the local and wider area. The nursery opens five days a week all year round except for three days over the Christmas. Opening times are from 07.45 until 17.45. Morning sessions are from 07.45 until 13.00. Afternoon sessions are from 13.00 until 17.45 and some children stay for the full day.

There are currently 179 children from three months to five years on roll. This includes 38 funded three-year-olds and three-funded-four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

There is 29 full-time and five part-time staff who work with the children. All the staff have an early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely clean and well-maintained environment. Their health is very well promoted as they learn the importance and value of personal hygiene through well-established routines. Washing hands before eating and after using the toilet forms an integral part of their routine, consequently, most children visit the toilet and manage their own personal needs with minimal adult support. This is further supported through activities, displays and good explanations which help children gain an understanding of what may affect their health.

Children are extremely well protected from infection through the very high standards maintained by staff, which is supported by very clear and comprehensive policies that clearly identify staff roles and responsibilities. For example, the detailed health and safety policy ensures cleanliness is maintained throughout the setting and contributes to children's good health. High levels of staff hold current first aid certificates and accident and incident records are accurately maintained to ensure children are fully protected.

Children's good health is further enhanced as they receive highly nutritious, well-balanced meals and snacks. Menus are given a great deal of careful thought and consideration, offering a variety of healthy options such as fresh organic fruit and vegetables, where possible. The setting receives and follows advice from a nutritionist when introducing new foods for children. Parents are also consulted and their views are valued and recipes shared with them. Mealtimes are thoroughly enjoyed by the children. They talk with their friends and the staff about what foods they like, which foods are good for them and about past events. Older children have opportunities to serve themselves and all children have free access to fresh drinking water throughout.

Children thrive as they enjoy an extensive range of physical activities and have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise which contributes towards promoting a healthy lifestyle. They have access to a large playground and open fields around the setting, which provide ample space and various opportunities for them to enjoy the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn to keep themselves safe in a welcoming and stimulating setting, where they are able to freely move around the learning environment across the session. Highly effective, consistent and secure measures are in place, ensuring that risks to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors are minimised. This includes clear procedures for the safe arrival and departure of children to and from the nursery. Visitors to the setting have their identity verified before they are permitted entry and they are required to sign a visitor's book. Staffs are vigilant about children's safety and ensure this by the highly effective implementation of thorough daily risk assessments and exceptionally detailed health and safety policies and procedures across the provision.

All the group rooms and communal areas are brightly decorated with children's art work and informative displays. The premises are exceptionally clean, well lit, effectively heated and ventilated, ensuring that it is a safe and stimulating environment for children. Toys, resources

and play equipment are maintained to an excellent standard. Children enthusiastically select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Play equipment is stored at child-height, promoting independence and choice. Consequently, children are cared for in an exciting, creative and stimulating environment.

Children are well protected because staff have an in-depth knowledge of child protection issues, recognise their role and responsibilities and know how to implement nursery and local child protection procedures. A comprehensive written policy is in place and staff are able to recognise signs of abuse and know whom to contact if they are concerned about a child in their care. A named staff member is responsible for child protection and they have a clear understanding of their role, through attending training and keeping up-to-date with any changes such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Parents are informed of the group's responsibility regarding child protection, reassuring parents of their child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy every moment that they spend in this fun and stimulating environment. They receive lots of cuddles and have developed strong bonds with their key workers. This significantly increases their sense of wellbeing and contentment. They clearly benefit from familiar routines whilst, at the same time being given opportunities to make choices and decisions, work at their own pace and be spontaneous and independent. Children confidently access the broad range of stimulating and challenging activities and experiences and have secure relationships with the staff and other children.

Staff have a very good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this has an extremely positive effect on younger children's achievements. Staff plan activities within this framework and have gained a secure knowledge about how children learn and achieve. Children's development is recorded and provides a clear record of their progress. This information is used to give staff good starting points for children as they approach the Foundation Stage.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff plan and present an excellent range of innovative activities and experiences which fully cover all areas of learning. They observe children's achievements and record their progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. This information is used very effectively to plan for the next steps in each child's learning. Children are making excellent progress in all areas due to staff's clear and comprehensive understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and their highly skilful interactions with children. They consistently ask appropriate questions and use discussion times effectively to extend children's learning and to develop their skills.

Children have excellent opportunities to find out about the natural world and they enjoy exploring their environment, for example, gardening and growing plants. They are developing a good awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment, such as the computer, cameras, telescopes and magnifying glasses. They talk with interest about their own lives. Children's imaginations and free expression are encouraged when playing musical instruments, singing, painting, role play and craft activities. Their physical skills are successfully promoted through an extensive variety of equipment, for example, balancing beams, balls, hoops and large wheeled toys. They move safely around the building both indoors and outside and they enjoy going playing outdoors in the wet weather and appropriate clothing

is always worn. Children have extensive opportunities to practise and develop their finer manipulative skills such as gluing, threading, play dough tools, scissors and puzzles.

Many children are able to recognise familiar words and write their own names. Children make excellent progress in their understanding of letter sounds as they discuss the letters of the week and regularly revise and build on their existing knowledge. They receive lots of encouragement to write for various purposes. Children count in a wide range of daily routines and practical tasks such as setting the table. They count the number of bowls and spoons needed for all the children seated at the table. They use and recognise numerals and shapes, regularly discussing them with staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery which helps them to feel happy, secure and settled. Children benefit from having access to an extensive range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity. Children also participate in activities which promote their awareness of different festivals and cultures. Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, other people and the world around them through well-planned activities. Each child is valued and respected as an individual and the staff know children's individual personalities very well. Their developmental needs receive excellent support as highly effective relationships exist between parents and staff. Highly effective strategies are in place to support children with additional needs.

Children are clearly at ease and comfortable here because staff's management of their behaviour is exemplary. They receive an abundance of praise for their efforts and very careful explanations are given to help them understand unacceptable behaviour. Group teaching times are successfully used to reinforce concepts such as right and wrong, turn-taking and consideration for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The excellent partnerships that staff share with parents and carers contribute positively to the well-being of all children attending the nursery. Children benefit from their parents being informed about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum and parents receive up to date information about their child's progress throughout the day.

The partnerships with parents of funded children are outstanding. Staff pay high priority to establishing and securing the links between home and nursery, ensuring parents are actively involved in their child's learning. Parents receive extremely detailed information about the curriculum and aims and ethos of the nursery, which helps them to understand how their child learns and develops through play. They receive extensive support in extending their child's learning at home, for example through practical play experiences. Parents are fully involved in the planning for their child, which helps to ensure this is centred around individual interests. They work together with staff to assess their child's ongoing achievements and progress, and agree next steps for development. This helps to ensure all children make excellent progress and allows parents to play a full part in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Overall children's needs are met. Children are cared for in an extremely child-friendly environment where space is used effectively to provide an excellent variety of play experiences.

Children have independent access to an extremely broad range of innovative and inspiring resources and a rich and diverse curriculum. Sessions are very effectively and efficiently organised to ensure that children enjoy themselves and make outstanding developmental progress and personal achievements.

Highly effective organisation of records and documents ensures children's welfare and enables parents to play an active role in their child's care. Excellent staff ratios provide children with a great deal of adult attention and all practitioners work exceedingly hard to promote children's development as they play and interact with them.

The leadership and management of the nursery is outstanding. The management team comprises of the provider, a nursery, manager, deputy manager and senior nursery nurse. They are highly motivated, conscientious and dedicated to improving outcomes for all children and providing positive early years play experiences. They evaluate the success of the provision effectively and all staff are entirely committed to the continuous evaluation and improvement of their practice. The management team are inspirational and lead by outstanding example.

Staff induction and appraisals are robust and effective, ensuring staff feel fully supported and valued. Self-evaluations forms are completed by staff on a regular basis and this is used to identify staff's training needs and improve the quality of the care and education, ensuring that current childcare practices are consistently updated. Staff have an excellent awareness of the policies and procedures which are in place. Consequently, children are cared for by knowledgeable, experienced staff and they benefit from continuity of care.

Staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities such as equal opportunities, behaviour, management and health and safety in which they carry out their roles effectively. They are committed and enthusiastic in their work. The impact of staff's knowledge and understanding and their commitment to ensuring they are proactive in promoting children's welfare is very clear. They work extremely effectively in close partnership with parents and other professionals and children clearly learn, develop and enjoy themselves whilst being cared for by thoughtful, reflective and enthusiastic staff.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the setting have taken positive steps to ensure all parents are involve in their child's learning. Through regular parents' evenings and daily communication information is exchanged regularly. The setting also provides parents with observation sheets where they can share observations they have made at home with staff and these contribute towards their children's development profiles.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk