

Phoenix Playmates (Nailsworth)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101852
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Miriam Sheila Brown
Setting Address	Nailsworth Primary School, Nympsfield Road, Nailsworth, Glos, GL6 0ET
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Registered person	The Trustees of Phoenix Playmates
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 Playmates is situated in a terrapin building in the grounds of Nailsworth Primary School, in the Forest Green area of Nailsworth. Phoenix Playmates serves the local community and the majority of the children attending transfer to Nailsworth Primary School. The group is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and has charitable status. The facility, which opened in 1991, consists of a purpose-designed playroom and a cloakroom area. Outside there is a fully enclosed garden. Children also have regular access to the school playgrounds and gym.

Phoenix Playmates provides full day care for 20 children aged between two and five. There are currently 37 children on roll who are cared for at varying times throughout the week. Of these, 27 children receive funding for early education. The group is open from 09.00 to 15.30 Monday to Friday during term-time.

The group employ five members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, three hold Level 3 qualifications and two hold a Level 2 qualification, in early years. The group receive support from the local authority foundation stage consultant.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children take part in a wide range of stimulating and meaningful activities which enable them to learn about good health and take responsibility for their own personal hygiene. Their understanding of how to keep healthy is expertly reinforced by staff who ensure children wash at appropriate times, provide visual reminders to do this and maintain a high level of hygiene within the premises. They are encouraged to be independent both in their personal hygiene and when changing shoes and clothes to go to the gym or outside play. All staff receive first aid training enabling them to manage any accidents or illness effectively.

Snack and meal times are very pleasant happy occasions when children take an active part in preparing their food. They decide how many pieces to cut their fruit into, spread their toast and pour their own choice of drink. This positively assists in helping them to make decisions and develop their small muscle control. At lunch times they enjoy eating with staff, encouraging their social skills and helping them to get used to eating from a lunch box, in preparation for their move to the main school. Staff offer parents information about healthy foods for packed lunches and reinforce this information throughout the year.

Children's physical development is of extremely high quality. Trained and very knowledgeable staff lead activities in the gym which challenge children appropriately to build on their physical skills and fitness. These sessions are very well planned to fit in with current topic work and children thoroughly enjoy being rockets, stars and flying saucers, moving from one planet to another. Each day, regardless of weather, children play in the groups' garden, washing the toys, playing in the sand and enjoying the sensory area. Inside they have many excellent opportunities to develop small muscle control, cutting, drawing, painting and constructing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for within an environment where risks of accidental injury are minimised because staff are extremely thorough and vigilant. They carry out detailed and regular risk assessments on the premises, equipment and activities and make daily visual checks of all areas. Children have a high awareness of safety issues and are learning about keeping themselves safe. They tuck their chairs under the table when leaving, understand about not running inside and holding hands with a friend when walking to the main school buildings. Visitors to the setting, such as the road safety unit, develop their understanding of keeping safe outside the group. This is reinforced through planned activities, for example, marking out a roadway and crossing point on the playground and using wheeled toys to travel along it. Regular emergency evacuations, some of which are in conjunction with the main school, enable children to be familiar with procedures and meaningfully equip them for dealing with this situation in real life, without fear.

Children develop good independence as they access resources freely for themselves. These are stored invitingly on low shelves and in attractive, floor level, storage units. Children's pictures and creations are beautifully displayed around the playroom creating a warm and inviting environment for children to play and feel what they are doing is highly valued and respected.

Staff demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children issues and procedures. They all receive training and the groups' policy provides clear information for staff and parents should concerns arise. This assists in maintaining children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children take part in an inspiring range of activities which help them to grow in confidence and initiate their own learning. All children are very well behaved and are forming positive relationships with each other and staff. They are learning to take turns in group times and as they choose their activities and play areas. They are encouraged to develop their independence as they manage their personal care, change their clothes for different activities and help to prepare their snacks. Children respond well to staff involvement in their play and learning, and are keen to include them in their role-play and other activities.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress from their varying starting points and staff support them extremely well through their comprehensive understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning covers all areas of learning and short term plans are expertly used to meet the needs of individual children. Observations and assessments are completed regularly by each child's key worker and form a solid basis to inform planning, resulting in challenges being appropriate to children's individual developmental needs. Planned activities are exciting, fun and encourage children to explore and investigate an extensive range of play opportunities whilst experiencing different textures and form. For example, using shaving foam, icing sugar, gloop and porridge to form letter shapes and imaginary pictures, such as butterflies and raindrops. Staff provide clear explanations of the day's activities enabling children to make choices in their play. They use props effectively to focus children's attention in a fun and enjoyable way, for example, using a flashing wand to help children count at registration times.

Children thoroughly enjoy group times when they eagerly join in with stories and recount what has happened in them, questioning parts which they found worrying or exciting. Children discuss recent events in their lives helping them to make connections between their homes and the group. Most children recognise their own names and some are starting to write letter shapes correctly. They confidently join in with completing the calendar, choosing the correct numeral and identifying the season and weather. Children's awareness of number is enhanced as they count backwards to 'blast-off' whilst being rockets in the gym and when deciding how many pieces they are going to cut their fruit into at snack time. Their understanding of shape, space and measure is well supported whilst they play with jigsaws, matching games and build using bricks, construction sets and recycled materials.

Children's awareness and understanding of the natural world is significantly enhanced through their daily use of outside areas. Here they grow vegetables for snack time, make their own compost, climb and use a wide range of other outdoor equipment. The newly developed sensory area increases their awareness of different smells, textures and sounds. Children enjoy a broad range of rich and stimulating creative activities which excite their interest and encourage them to use their imaginations. In the role play area they can be astronauts, at the craft table they freely create a range of pictures and models, whilst outside they can be a car wash or a digger in the sand. Use of everyday technology is well supported through play with a range of battery

operated and programmable toys together with use of a computer and freely accessible digital camera.

Children are secure and settled within the setting and enjoy superb play experiences that help them to develop and achieve.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents have excellent information about the setting and their children's progress. This is offered through open evenings, written observations, assessments and reports and clear and comprehensive guidance information about the stepping stones and Foundation Stage curriculum. This assists in developing parents' interest and understanding of how their children learn. Key workers are available each day, before and after the sessions, to informally discuss children's activities and progress. The day's activities are displayed for parents' information. Familiarisation visits are organised for all children and times of attendance is negotiable according to individual needs. Children requiring specialist help are well supported and parents take an active part in their ongoing assessments and programmes of work. Staff encourage parents to assist their children by taking reading books home and caring for 'Take home Ted'. Staff are welcoming and friendly and children keen to come to the setting each day. Discussion with parents demonstrates they are fully supportive of all aspects of the setting and find staff approachable and supportive. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The dedicated staff team work very effectively together and have a clear vision of the care and learning they aim to provide. Staff are well trained and experienced and continue to develop their knowledge through ongoing training. The group receive and welcome support from the early years consultant attached to the local authority. All aspects of required documentation are in place and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been effectively addressed. All staff are in receipt of appropriate clearance and recruitment and induction procedures are robust.

Leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. Children's learning is of a high standard and they are making rapid progress from their individual starting points. Systematic coverage of the six areas of learning and the stepping stones is indicated throughout planning documents and inspection evidence. Individual assessments and observations are used effectively to ensure children are encouraged to move on from what they know and can do. The play leader offers herself as an excellent role model for the staff team and the chairperson and committee are proactive in their support of the group. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group agreed to update some of their policies and paperwork, improve methods to reduce risks of cross infection, introduce a key worker system and deploy staff more effectively.

The group have made very good progress with each of these recommendations. All policies and procedures have been recently reviewed and some, such as the policy for safeguarding children, have been extended to provide clearer information for staff and parents. A key worker system is now in place. This helps to ensure children's individual needs are effectively addressed and gives parents a specific point of contact within the setting. Staff and children's attendance is now recorded and staff ensure they are actively engaged with children throughout each session. The risk of cross infection is minimised because staff now have clear routines and procedures to maintain health and hygiene within the setting.

At the last education inspection the group agreed to develop planning to indicate learning intentions for activities and make better use of assessments to differentiate activities for varying abilities. They also agreed to provide clearer information for parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum and develop the use of everyday technology.

The group have made excellent progress with each of these recommendations. Key workers complete regular assessments and observations of children which are dated and linked to the stepping stones within each area of learning. These are used to inform planning to ensure challenges are provided that are appropriate to each child's stage of development. Written information about the curriculum is provided for each parent and is supported by parents evenings. This is very clear and helps parents to understand how the curriculum is used to assist in their children's learning and development. Children now have many exciting opportunities to experience everyday technology. They play with programmable robots, use a computer and digital camera, play with magnets and wonder at how water becomes ice in the refrigerator and then turns back to water.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st April 2004 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 records 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