

Phoenix Activity Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY402875
Inspection date 22/04/2010
Inspector Timothy Butcher

Setting address St. Andrews C of E VA Primary School, Northampton
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The Phoenix Activity Club was re-registered in 2009 and is based at St Andrews C of E VA Primary School in the centre of Bath. The club is held in a school classroom with access to the school hall, toilet and kitchen facilities. Children have use of the school play grounds. The club is run by the local community centre and provides after school care for up to 16 children between the ages of four and eight years. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The club is registered to care for a maximum of 16 children at any one time. The club is open Monday to Friday from 3pm to 6pm during term time only. Children from St Andrews Primary School attend. Children over the age of eight years also attend the club. The club supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who have English as an additional language. The club employs a play leader who holds a Level 3 qualification in child care and play work. She is supported by another member of staff who holds a Level 2 qualification. There are currently 18 children on roll and of these, three are within the early years age group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves at the after-school club and have their individual needs closely met. They make good progress in their learning and development through play because they have a good range of activities to choose from. The whole staff team are focused on the continuous and ongoing development of the setting to the benefit of children. Children have excellent opportunities to make a positive contribution because they play an active part in the group's self-evaluation process. An excellent partnership with parents and others is established.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to develop the use of the outside areas to enable children further opportunities to freely explore and use their senses across all areas of learning
- develop the process of self-evaluation further to identify a clear action plan.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff have a clear awareness of how to protect children and all other aspects of children's safety is successfully promoted. Comprehensive assessments of risk ensure that children have a very safe environment in which to play as visual checks are consistently undertaken and robust processes ensure hazards are

minimised. Comprehensive policies and procedures are consistently implemented and strongly contribute to the safe and smooth running of the setting. All staff working with children are suitably vetted. Excellent communication with children helps them to recognise how to keep themselves safe.

A particular strength of the setting is the exemplary relationships with parents and carers. They report very positively about all aspects of the provision and its staff. They are kept very well informed about their child's activities and well-being. Warm and friendly discussion takes place at the point of pick up. Parents and children have their views regularly canvassed and acted upon. Additional information about the club and its activities are provided through attractive displays. Useful information about wider community support is also on display. A highly effective partnership is established with the school. There is an excellent two-way exchange of information about children's progress. This successfully promotes children's learning and welfare, and strongly contributes to the very good continuity of care.

A particular strength of the provision is in the play leader and staff team that work very closely together. The inclusive ethos of the setting is shared by all staff. High levels of communication between staff and secure planning processes ensure a consistent approach. Although reflective practice forms an integral part of the planning routines and leads to improvements in the outcomes for children, some aspects do not have timescales to the action plan. The staff place children at the centre of all they do. They very actively promote equality and diversity. All children are highly valued, are able to fully participate and have a positive view of their own and each other's identity. They have excellent opportunities to learn about the wider world through a range of planned and spontaneous activities, such as the creative activities around the celebration of the Chinese New Year and at snack time. Children enjoy the good range of resources. These are made easily accessible so that they can make choices in their play. Many reflect diversity. The comprehensive planning and provision of resources is securely linked to children's interests and is further enhanced by staff that are responsive to children's play and know when to play an active role. Good use is made of the school playgrounds and school hall for physical play and exploration. However, the general provision when children take their play outside, although often exciting, does not always equal that of the provision inside.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children strongly benefit from the welcoming and stimulating play environment. A well organised planning system based on children's interests provides some rich and imaginative activities for children to choose from. Children make good progress in their learning and development given their starting points because staff know children well and provide good quality interaction. Information gained from the close partnership with the school contributes to staff's knowledge of children's abilities. Accurate observation is made and contributes to the planning process which covers each area of learning. Although this information is also used to inform the end of year assessment, it is not always used effectively to identify each

child's next steps in development. This somewhat limits the focus on children's learning.

Children are settled and very happy at the club. They all thrive in the harmonious and relaxed atmosphere that is created. The multi-cultural group of children are very sociable and value one another as individuals. Both older and younger children include each other in their play and conversations, such as when deciding how the marble run is put together. They develop the personal qualities that enable them to take responsibility for small tasks, such as clearing away toys. They show through their behaviour that they have a very strong sense of belonging and play a very active part in the setting. Children exercise choice in a good range of free-play activities, such as in their use of large wooden blocks to make a den. They explore and investigate independently, such as when using construction blocks and small world figures to enact scenarios that they think up. Children make good progress in their communicating and literacy skills because staff are interested in and engage them in discussion during their play. They cooperate and take turns such as when using the computer. They have a good range of books made easily accessible. Overall they are well equipped with the skills they need in order to secure future learning. Children have a wide range of creative activities that grab their interests such as clay modelling and Chinese calligraphy artwork.

Children thoroughly enjoy the good opportunities to take their play outside, in particular the excellent opportunities to develop their physical skills, get fresh air and exercise. Children and the staff are enthusiastic participants, such as when playing ballgames. Children climb and balance on the playground equipment. All children have exceptional opportunities to develop their understanding of healthy eating. The club consistently provides a rich variety of healthy snacks that are also culturally diverse. Children thoroughly enjoy the eating experience and staff discuss with them children's understanding of different cultures and of nutrition. Children's health is promoted very well. They routinely wash their hands before they have their snack. Children have a clear understanding of the club rules and how these keep them safe. They successfully negotiate space and keep as a group when going outside. Staff are on hand to supervise, for example, the use of the monkey bars and when children take themselves to the toilet.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met