



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 507939

DfES Number: 519745

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	17/09/2004
Inspector Name	Loraine Wardlaw

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Phoenix Pre-School
Setting Address	Riders Infant School Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park Havant Hampshire PO9 4RY

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Phoenix Pre-School Committee 1080867
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Phoenix Pre-School Committee
Address	c/o Riders Infant School Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park Havant Hampshire PO9 4RY

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Phoenix pre-school opened in 1981. It operates from two classrooms within the grounds of Riders Infant School, situated in the Leigh park area of Portsmouth. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee, made up of parents and carers.

There are currently 59 children from 2 years 9 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 40 funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens ten sessions a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15-11:45 and 12:30-15:00.

Six full time and three part time staff work with the children. Eight staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Level two or three. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Phoenix pre-school provision is of high quality. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff manage children's behaviour very positively and with understanding. Their interaction with the children is very good; they are perceptive to children's needs, and encourage child-led activities. Some staff, however, are not as confident as others in promoting some areas of maths and literacy. Planning and assessment is effective, both in the key group activities and the continuous curriculum. Staff, on the whole, have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage which is reflected in the clear learning outcomes of each activity. Good equipment which is well labelled, easily accessible to children and the effective use of time all contribute to the quality learning that takes place. Children with special educational needs (SEN) are very well supported at the setting.

Leadership and management is very good. The two supervisors provide good support to the staff and together they monitor the educational curriculum to ensure that all areas of the Foundation Stage are covered. Training is very much encouraged, both in house and externally, to ensure that good practice is shared. The voluntary management committee are wholeheartedly supportive of the staff.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents receive written information of the Foundation Stage and regular letters are given out about planned activities. Staff work hard to build strong relationships with parents and keep them fully informed of their child's developmental progress.

What is being done well?

- Staff create a high quality, stimulating environment where children learn through a wide range of practical play activities. An excellent amount of time is given for free play, allowing children to freely move around, making decisions for themselves and flourish at an activity of their choosing.
- Children are making very good progress in all six areas of learning, but excel, particularly, in personal social and emotional development; providing a very good foundation for their future learning. They are enthusiastic, well motivated and are quick to help others. For example, four, three year olds roll up the play mat and carry it across the room to put away.
- Planning of the curriculum is very good. It is often child led, such as the topic about space, initiated by a child's interest in the moon.
- Practitioners extend children's play, effectively building on the child's own experiences such as the child who was 'the builder who painted a wall, used tools and spoke on his mobile phone'.

- Staff confidently teach and support children with special educational needs. They liaise closely with parents and outside agencies and are pro-active in making adjustments to meet the child's additional needs. For example, the staff were trained and then introduced the Picture Enhanced Communication System programme for a child.
- Leadership and management is very good. The two supervisors are very knowledgeable and experienced in pre-school education and have good leadership skills. They are very good role models and are strongly committed to providing a quality service.
- Partnership with parents is very strong. Home visits are made prior to children commencing pre-school enabling parents to comfortably share their knowledge of their child with staff. The 'share a book' initiative and 'pet pals' involves parents in the children's learning at home. Staff constructively advise parents on behaviour issues through videos, and information on developing language whilst on visits.

What needs to be improved?

- the monitoring of individual staff's practice.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The group have successfully put into practice the action plan, addressing three key issues; to develop staff's knowledge in maths, to extend the programme for physical development ensuring progressive development of skills and incorporate the sounds and letters of the alphabet in the planning.

The supervisor has been on two maths workshops and cascaded information to staff. Other staff have been on numeracy training courses. The early years teacher came in to the setting and demonstrated to group teaching methods in how to develop children's maths along stepping stones. Staff are now, on the whole, more confident to develop children's maths skills, and children's progress in this area has improved.

The physical development programme has been improved ; children regularly access the large hall for movement and large, small equipment activities. The playground has been built and new wheeled toys have been purchased. The children are very keen to practice their physical skills and are making strides in their development.

Sounds and names of the alphabet are introduced to children when they are developmentally ready and in the key groups.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing very good attitudes to learning. New children positively approach activities. They have a good sense of belonging to the group. Children relate well to their peers and are beginning to make attachments, to share and work together. They display good behaviour, respond well to expectations within the setting and have concern for others. Children are able to take initiative with self chosen activities and work independently. They are able to talk about their home experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing their communication skills well. They are able to talk through their imaginative ideas and recall experiences. Children take part in rhyming activities. They show a good interest in books and are able to join in with elements of the story. Children have good opportunities to practice mark making and emergent writing in their play. They are aware of printed words in the pre-school.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have opportunities to count and recognise numerals. They are learning to solve simple number problems, such as comparing the amount of cotton reels on a string, or how many monkeys left on the mat. Children learn about pattern, shape and size in everyday activities. Mathematical vocabulary is introduced to children through regular activities such as water play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children experiment with water and the floating and sinking of objects. They enthusiastically explore the sand, moving it with diggers, building sandcastles. They collect natural materials such as leaves, feathers and talk about them. Children have good opportunities to use the computer, to make their own models using construction sets and recyclable materials. They are developing a sense of time, through discussion and topic work. Children learn about other peoples beliefs and cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a good awareness of space. They are developing good physical skills by regular sessions in the large hall, using their bodies to move in a variety of ways. Children are learning to care for their own physical needs, such as using the toilet unaided. Topic work covers healthy eating and looking after your teeth. Children confidently manoeuvre the trikes forwards, backwards and are developing good climbing skills. They have excellent opportunities to practise the cutting with scissors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children freely explore and combine media and materials, designing pictures for themselves. They enthusiastically sing rhymes and have regular use of musical instruments to explore sound and rhythm. Children have good opportunities to use their imagination in role play in the home corner and to act out experiences such as 'going to the beach', and in art and design. Children effectively communicate their ideas, using all their senses when they play with the play doh ,oats and water and corn flour.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- monitor staff's practice and improve their confidence in introducing number problems, the sound and letters of the alphabet and letter formation to the more able child in every day situations.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.