

# Phoenix Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	259576
<b>Inspection date</b>	15/06/2011
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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).

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**

Phoenix Montessori Nursery opened in 1986. It operates from two rooms in the Hospital Social Club in the grounds of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn, Norfolk. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday during school term times from 8.45am to 4pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 82 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery has a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a high proportion of children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager is qualified to Level 4 and there is a supervisor who is working towards a Level 6 qualification. The setting provides funded early education for two- to four-year-olds. The nursery is supported by the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's diverse needs are exceedingly well met and they make excellent progress in their learning and development. A highly stimulating and welcoming environment fully reflects the children's backgrounds and the wider community. Extremely effective partnerships are in place to ensure that all children are fully included and make the best progress they can. A range of methods are used to fully involve parents in their children's learning. The setting continuously evaluates its practice in order to maintain and improve the high quality provision.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continuing to review and develop the outdoor area in order to maintain the exciting learning environment.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect because rigorous recruitment and vetting systems are in place to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. The staff team is qualified and experienced and a high priority is given to ongoing training and staff development.

Clear safeguarding procedures are in place. All staff have been trained in safeguarding and have a secure knowledge of how to report any concerns they may have about children's welfare, including how to make an independent referral if the need arises. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Risk assessments, including daily checks, are carried out and regularly reviewed to ensure that the environment is safe for children. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and communicate well with each other, for example using walkie-talkies to communicate and manage the ratios as they move between the different rooms and the outside area. Children are protected from the risk of fire because regular evacuation drills are carried out so that staff and children know what to do in the event of a fire or an emergency.

The nursery provides a rich, attractive and stimulating learning environment which is organised very effectively to promote children's independence. Routines are flexible and geared to children's individual needs, for example they choose which rooms to play in and choose whether to play outside for most of the day. A wide range of high quality resources are accessible for children to choose from. As a result, children constantly make decisions in their play and learning and so are becoming confident and independent learners. Displays around the nursery contribute to the welcoming and inclusive environment, with rich and interesting displays of children's home languages and cultures. Photographs of the children at play are attractively displayed throughout the nursery to designate different learning areas with their own words quoted, showing that all children are valued and respected as unique individuals. A display of 'what we did in our holidays' shows children writing and drawing pictures of their experiences and provides an opportunity for the whole family to become involved. The setting finds out as much as it can to support children who have English as additional language and children are able to use their home languages in their play and learning. The nursery offers exceptional support to children with additional needs adapting the environment to provide dedicated space for children who need it and working closely with parents and other agencies to support children's progress. It is involved in innovative projects, for example using information technology to support children with special educational needs and providing resources such as a touch screen computer and programmable toys which provide a rich learning resource for all children.

Relationships with parents are outstanding. The nursery employs a wide range of methods to encourage parents to be fully involved in their children's learning. Detailed information is gained from parents about children's developmental starting points and family backgrounds so that the setting can build on this knowledge to help children to progress. Parents come in and share information verbally about what their children are doing but also regularly add to the learning records and home-school diaries to provide a rich interchange of information. Other methods include the loaning of story sacks and the travelling teddies 'Monty' and 'Suri' who go home with children whose families then write about their adventures, providing another valuable home-school link. The nursery is proactive in establishing highly effective partnerships. Systems are in place to communicate with other providers when children attend other settings to ensure effective continuity and progression. The nursery is currently building on its excellent links with feeder schools to ensure it reaches all of the schools children move on to and it works very closely with the local Sure Start Centre and all the professional

agencies involved in children's lives to ensure they are fully supported. The management team has a passionate commitment to maintain and improve where possible the high quality of the service it offers and continuously evaluates its practice, involving all staff in the process and actively seeking the views of parents and children.

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

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning. Children are able to initiate and direct their play and learn exceptional independence skills. The environment enables them to make independent choices and move freely between the areas and activities. Excellent use is made of the outside area with a wide range of exciting activities offered in the available space. The setting constantly reviews its practice and as a result has identified that the play house in the outdoor area is in need of replacement. Children are busily engaged and motivated by the activities on offer and show high levels of involvement. They can be creative with resources moving items around the nursery to develop and extend their play. Staff support children's learning very effectively using open-ended questions to promote their thinking skills. Key persons know their children very well and make systematic observations of children's play to plan the next steps for their progress. Planning is extremely flexible and is built around children's interests, achievements and learning styles.

Children communicate very confidently with staff sharing their ideas and experiences. Adults listen sensitively giving children time to respond. Children also chat to each other, often working independently in small groups. Children enjoy stories throughout the nursery where comfortable spaces are available to enjoy books. Children investigate attractive book displays and develop a love of books through being able to take the story sacks home to share with their families. The environment is rich with print and children are beginning to recognise their names and those of their friends as they hang up their bags or select their names at snack time. Mark-making materials are freely available throughout the setting and children learn that writing can be used for different purposes as they make lists or write party invitations during role play. Children become confident in problem solving and counting through many opportunities to develop mathematical awareness. They count the number of play dough balls they make and some children confidently count their own and their friends'. Staff use many opportunities in the routine to help children to count and perform simple calculations, for example as they sing action songs. Montessori equipment provides exercises which help children to learn about shape and sequencing. Children learn about comparing quantities through pouring water to the line in small jugs. Staff then ask 'is there less or more?' They measure themselves against the bean they have grown and consider whether it is taller or shorter. A programmable robot is used to enable them to learn about direction.

Children are very creative and able to express themselves using a range of media. Their expressions both verbal, in writing and in drawing are prized and attractively displayed. They engage in role play, allocating roles and working well in small

groups. The role play area is set up as a camp site in response to children's current interests, which are ascertained through observation and through communication with parents. There are many opportunities for active investigation and exploration playing with sand and water, handling ice cubes or shaving foam to learn about patterns and change. A small natural area provides a habitat for bugs and mini-beasts. Inside they handle giant land snails and talk about how they feel on their hands and how to care for them. They learn about the community through participation in well-known charity events and about the wider world through learning about different festivals and celebrations. The nursery makes use of families' own knowledge of diverse cultures to help the children learn to respect each others' similarities and differences. There are excellent opportunities for children to become familiar with information technology through the touch screen computer which is freely available to all children and programmable toys such as the direction robot.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly well fostered. Children are developing exceptional independence skills. They make decisions in their play and learning using the resources creatively. They help to prepare the fruit for their snack, serve themselves using the tongs and put their plates and cups away when they have finished. They select activities and put them away again. Children put their work away in their drawers, help to tidy up and roll up their carpet mat and put it away without any adult intervention. Adults provide excellent role models and have high expectations which children respond to. Positive language is used at all times. Adults support children in working together and as a result children show high levels of cooperation, for example playing games together without adult support and asking politely for someone to play with them. Children can be active at all times and have free access to the outdoor area for most of the day. Here they can balance on stepping stones, negotiate pathways using a ride-on toy. Tyres and planks provide further balancing and climbing opportunities and dance and exercise sessions provide other opportunities for physical play. Children use the large muscles in their arms waving coloured streamers in the air.

Children develop an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy as adults give frequent explanations and reminders about healthy practices. A large display in the bathroom shows what the children have said themselves about why they need to wash their hands. They know that it is important because 'there are a million germs' and because 'I have been outside and done big work'. Children understand the effect exercise has on their bodies. They come into nursery saying 'I am hot and sweaty because I have been running'. Staff then talk to them about how running makes your heart beat faster. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children are encouraged to have plenty to drink. Children are offered a healthy snack of fresh fruit. Parents are reminded about the importance of providing healthy options in packed lunches and visitors such as the dental nurse are invited into the setting to talk to the children and parents about dental hygiene and hidden sugars in our diet. Children learn to stay safe through regular explanations. They are taught how to carry a chair without hurting themselves and how to use scissors safely. Links with the community are used to further enhance children's understanding, for example a visit is arranged with the community police officer to talk to the children about safety issues, including 'stranger danger' after discussion

with parents identified this as a need. Children feel extremely safe and secure in the setting because of the warm and trusting relationships they have built up with the adults who care for them. Children are fully involved in the setting as their views are valued and respected. Adults show a genuine interest in the items they bring in with them and help them to put them away where they are safe. Children know who their 'special teacher' is and proudly show what they have done in their special books and remember what they did when 'Monty' the teddy visited their house. They are developing skills for the future as they make excellent progress in all areas of learning. They develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem as they learn to use their own initiative, make choices and be creative.



## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	1
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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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