



Leapfrog Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135962
Inspection date	07 June 2006
Inspector	Kay Roberts
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Registered person	Leapfrog Day Nurseries Limited
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

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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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Day Nursery in Ferndene, Bradley Stoke, South Gloucestershire is a purpose built two-storey day nursery. It operates all year round, excluding bank holidays, Monday to Friday, from 07:30 to 18:00 hours. The ground floor, which has six play rooms, is allocated to babies and children aged under two years. Separate nappy changing areas are located nearby. Children aged between two and five years are based on the first floor, which has three main play rooms. Toilet facilities are

adjacent to these areas. There is a secure garden for outside play. This is divided into separate enclosed areas depending on age. There are currently 172 children on roll, which includes 41 funded three-year-olds and 17 funded four-year-olds. The nursery caters for children with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Currently there are 37 members of staff, 22 of whom hold a relevant child care qualification. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactorily promoted. Effective procedures ensure that babies and children play in a clean environment. Parents are aware of the policy for excluding children who are sick and are also alerted when a child at the nursery has a communicable disease. Staff follow hygienic procedures. For example, individual bedding is provided and each time sleep mats are used they are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray. From a young age children learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine so that even two-year-olds know that they must wash their hands before lunch. They are given independence as wash hand basins and paper towels are placed within reach. As children get older they point out when a knife is dirty. The importance of hygiene is reinforced through fun activities, such as bathing dolls and washing their hair. When a dentist visited to talk about dental hygiene, children had an opportunity to brush Daisy Cow's teeth. There are effective procedures for managing both medication and administering first aid.

Children are protected from the sun as they do not go outdoors between 11.00 and 15.00 hours. When outdoors, children wear hats and have sun screen applied. Opportunities to play in the fresh air are limited as each outside area is shared between a number of groups. Those under a year have the door to the room left open rather than experiencing the outdoors first hand. Children remain interested in playing outdoors as they have access to a broad range of resources. Large muscle skills are developed as they kick balls, use the climbing frame and push buggies. As children sit in the empty sand pit they pretend it is a boat and warn others that there are big sharks. Other children enjoy making marks with chalks. Large muscle skills continue to be developed indoors. Babies are provided with space to crawl and, as they learn to stand and walk, suitable equipment is provided. The nursery uses an outside agency to teach children aged between three and five years an awareness of their bodies and to extend physical activity. Babies and children's physical needs are met with regard to sleep so they do not become over tired. Staff follow babies' home routine. When babies become tired they are given emotional security as they are gently rocked to sleep by a member of staff and always placed in the same cot. As babies get older they quickly fall asleep as they are covered with a cotton blanket and an adult gently strokes their backs. Two-year-old children recognise when they are tired and help themselves to a cushion and lie down on the carpet in the quiet area.

When thirsty, young children help themselves to their beakers and children pour themselves a drink of water from the jug. Children enjoy the varied, healthy, home cooked mid-day meals which take into consideration special dietary requirements. Independence is encouraged. Babies hold their own bottles and are encouraged to feed themselves. Three- and four-year-old children give out the drinks and cutlery matching it to the position on their personally designed place mats. Older children are polite and do not start eating until everyone has been served. Babies and children do not go hungry as they are offered a second helping. They know that if they eat all their food they will be "big and strong". Children learn about healthy eating as they make bread rolls and fresh fruit salad with the cook.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a relaxed environment with music playing quietly in the background. Children are allocated to rooms by age so that babies are protected from those who are more mobile. Similarly the outside area is divided into two areas. Overall the nursery is bright and welcoming with bright educational posters, and children's photographs and art work displayed. However for babies this is not placed within their view. The environment is organised so that children are provided with maximum opportunities to develop independence: child sized toilets and wash hand basins, and coat hooks at child height. Resources are placed within reach so that babies confidently help themselves to books and rattles. Older children reach out for the clean, safe, age appropriate resources placed in low level drawers. Sharing resources between rooms reduces the need for storage and offers children more variety. However this is not always effectively managed so children's learning is inhibited, for example only one string was available to a group of children who wished to participate in threading. Children know what is in each box as they are clearly labelled with both picture and words. Rooms are well organised so that children move around freely. Activities are set up in clearly defined areas on tables and carpets so that children play undisturbed by peers. There is space for rest as well as more physical activity. Sufficient child sized furniture and equipment meets the varying needs of children and facilitates all children being able to sit together for lunch and other group activities.

Children are relaxed as staff provide a safe, secure environment. They are only released to authorised adults and protected from people who are not vetted. Children are further protected as staff have a sound knowledge of the local child protection procedures. There is an ongoing detailed risk assessment. Risk assessments for each area are clearly displayed within the room so staff are fully informed. The risk of an accident is minimised as staffing ratios are maintained. Children's compliance with safety rules also helps to keep them safe. They know the number of children who can safely play in each area of the room. As children move between rooms they do so in a line and this is made more fun as they pretend to be crocodiles or frogs. In the event of a fire children are protected as there is appropriate checked equipment in place and details of the monthly fire drill are fully recorded. First hand experience of meeting a fire officer and sitting in the fire engine has alerted children to the danger of fire.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

On starting at the nursery children are already familiar with the environment as they visit in advance of the start date with a parent. Babies under a year are helped to settle as staff follow their home routine and the allocated key worker spends time getting to know the baby. However this is not consistent throughout the provision and often the key worker is allocated after the child has been at nursery for some time. Key workers are responsible for monitoring children's progress and liaising with parents, but do not move through the day with their key children. As a consequence, babies are less likely to develop a strong sense of self from which they build confidence to explore their wider environment.

Babies and young children make sound progress. Staff plan and monitor children's progress, which is recorded in well presented portfolios, using Birth to three matters. However learning is not always fully extended as some staff are inexperienced. More experienced staff make learning fun as they play 'Peek a Boo' through the tunnel and encourage babies to crawl through. On other occasions children are not always given the opportunity to learn first hand and staff do not check that suitable materials are available for planned activities. For example, for the underwater theme staff did not show children the goldfish in another room and expected them to create underwater pictures using sponges in the shape of a Christmas tree and lorry. Young babies develop fine muscle skills as they explore the range of toys by mouthing and shaking. When one child succeeds in blowing a horn, she is so proud of her achievement, which is acknowledged by staff, and she keeps repeating the exercise. When she goes off to explore other toys, she takes the horn with her. Other babies press the buttons on the interactive toys and watch to see what will happen. Babies develop a sense of self as they look at their reflection in the mirror, but more opportunities would be available to them if photographs were placed within view. Babies and young children are naturally social and watch what adults and older children are doing. Some babies interact with each other and occasionally they can be seen to offer each other a toy. As children get older they develop friendships and after a sleep are keen to wake up their friends. They give each other a hug and move around the room together holding hands. Young children notice if another child has joined the group whilst they have been asleep. From a young age children learn to use their imagination as they play in the toy kitchen and pretend to feed the baby. Language is encouraged as experienced staff acknowledge babies' sounds. From a young age children enjoy listening to stories and name the animals in the picture. They confidently put forward suggestions as to which nursery rhyme they should sing in a small group and even before children can participate in singing they follow the actions for 'Miss Polly had a Dolly' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'. From a young age language is used to express their views and staff encourage children to talk about life at home. Young children develop independence as they learn to feed themselves and co-operate when staff put on their clothes. As they set up the table for painting they point out the picture of Clifton suspension bridge in a newspaper and say that they have been across the bridge.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although some staff have knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, others do not. Children are regularly observed and progress is monitored directly against the stepping stones. This information is not used to effectively plan for children's next stage of development. However there is a system for ensuring that each aspect in each area of learning is covered during the year. The pre-school room in particular appears to be very busy as children are engaged in a broad range of activities. Before beginning a construction children say what they are going to make. They know how to operate simple computer programmes and are able to match the people behind the range of windows. As one child works the mouse other children help by pointing out the matching window. Fine muscle skills are developed as they operate the draw bridge for the train track, thread small beads and paint. Some children show good concentration as they paint neat dots over the paper. Other children enjoy exploring what happens if they mix black with blue and gold. Children are proud of their achievements and offer their finished paintings to people in the room. Using felt tip pens, children draw clearly recognisable pictures of their family and aeroplanes. As they draw the aeroplane they talk about going on holiday to Scotland and, developing a sense of time, know that this will be after three sleeps. Afterwards some children cut out their pictures. Other children write their name on the pictures and are able to sound each letter. Curious about written words they ask what is written on the different signs around the room. Children enjoy listening to stories and, as they do so, relax snuggled up next to a member of staff on a cushion. They particularly enjoy looking at the book of photographs of themselves engaged in a range of activities. Language is used as children play along others engaged in the same theme. One pretends to be the shop keeper and other children purchase the musical instruments. They name the different instruments and know how each sounds. Children express their views about where they want to sit for lunch. After returning toys to the adjacent room, one child proudly announces "I have done it!" The many opportunities provided allow children to be independent. For example, on returning from outside they hang up their sun hats and set out the cutlery for lunch. Occasionally, however, opportunities to extend their learning are inhibited. The sand tray has only enough sand to fill a mug. Staff show children how to use scissors and then proceed to cut out the picture themselves. Participation in nursery rhymes such as "1, 2, 3, 4, 5 once I caught a fish alive" helps children with counting and more able children use their fingers to represent numbers. Four-year-old children count to 20, name two dimensional shapes and use mathematical language to describe size.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Staff provide a good example to children as they welcome every child into the provision. They are particularly good at integrating children with special educational needs so that they make good progress and are able to participate fully in nursery life. Staff are sensitive to the needs of babies and children. However failure to embrace the key worker system results in development being hindered as babies and children's individual needs are not fully met. Children develop confidence knowing they have their own named coat hook and box. They are proud of their photographs and art work which

are displayed. Praise and encouragement is provided for each achievement. Children in the pre-school room are motivated knowing that if they obtain ten stamps for positive behaviour they can have a reward card. They know what is right and wrong. As a result children are polite, well behaved, able to work together to achieve a common goal and considerate to others. They are alert to other children within the setting as they watch out of the windows. From a young age children learn to appreciate difference as they play with readily accessible resources reflecting positive images of diversity, and staff explain why a person is holding a white stick. Pre-school children study the colour of each other's eyes. They learn about the cultures of others as they participate in activities which acknowledge festivals, such as St Patrick's Day and Holi. Children are aware of the local community as they go to the local supermarket and are visited by people in the community, for example a librarian. An appreciation of nature is fostered as they go on bug hunts in the garden and through topic work about animals. The home corner is made into a vets and in the garden children act out the story 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. The relaxed relationship between parents and staff provides emotional security and reassurance to children. Parents comment positively about the provision and the warm welcome provided by staff. Parents are well informed about practices within the setting and are updated about their child both verbally and in writing on a daily basis. Formal progress reports are shared twice a year and parents are encouraged to voice their views. Although there is information within the setting explaining how parents can continue children's education at home, not all parents are aware.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided. Children are protected as there are rigorous recruitment procedures, induction and a system for checking the ongoing suitability of staff. However the high staff turnover means that staff are not fully trained in all aspects of care. For example only a limited number of staff have received training on Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage, which results in young children being given conflicting messages. Babies and young children do not receive continuity of care and this is exacerbated as the key worker system is ineffective. Staffing ratios are maintained and staff appropriately deployed. Premises are in good order and overall the physical environment is well organised; children have space for physical activity and quiet areas to rest. Opportunities for independence are created as resources and coat pegs are placed within children's reach. However babies are unable to see pictures and posters which are placed at adult height. Thorough documentation is regularly reviewed and complies with the requirements of the National Standards. Paper work is well organised, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager is appropriately qualified and experienced in child care. Many of the shortcomings identified during the inspection had already been identified and a training programme is in place to improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Other

weaknesses in the provision for nursery education have not been identified, for example organisation of resources.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to meet three recommendations. Children's health, safety and welfare are further promoted as the comprehensive operational plan is accessible to both staff and parents. It includes a statement about the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer. Resources for the outside play area have been extended so that children are interested in playing outdoors and their learning extended.

Education

At the last inspection the provider agreed to meet two points for consideration. Children's knowledge and understanding of programmable toys has been extended as children have free access to torches, programmable Roma bugs and computer. As a consequence of changes to planning and assessments, children have access to a broad educational programme and their progress is closely monitored against all aspects for each area of learning. The new profile is well presented and includes samples of children's work as a way of verifying children's achievements. However the education programme is not effective as planning is not based on children's current level of achievement.

Complaints since the last inspection

On 23 May 2005, a concern was raised under National Standard 2 - Organisation, that adult:child ratios are not always met; and under National Standard 6, that staff did not monitor security of the main door and the outside area was unsafe. We made an unannounced visit to the premises. We discussed the allegations and made observations of the day to day running of the nursery, including checking adult:child ratios and the security and safety of the building and outside area. Actions were set to ensure that minimum staffing ratios are maintained at all times and to undertake a risk assessment of the premises to ensure that they are secure. We received an additional concern on 16 June 2005 under National Standard 2 - Organisation, that staff ratios were not being met in the evening. We revisited the provider on 5 July 2005 and checked that the actions set at the first visit were being met. From the information gathered there was no evidence that National Standards were not being met, and the provider remains qualified for registration.

On 24 November 2005 a concern was raised under the following National Standards:

National Standard 1 - Suitable Person, that babies were not being fed in an appropriate manner;

National Standard 2 - Organisation, that adult:child ratios were not being met;

National Standard 3 - Care, Learning and Play, that children were not given assistance during lunch times;

National Standard 7 - Health, that children's noses were not being wiped;

National Standard 11 - Behaviour, that behaviour management techniques were not appropriate.

We made an unannounced visit to the provider. The concerns were discussed. Observations were made and relevant paper work was checked. From the visit there was no evidence that National Standards were not being met. No further action was taken and the provider remains qualified for registration.

On 13 December 2005 a concern was raised under National Standard 6 - Safety, that security into the building was inadequate. We visited the nursery and made observations. A Notice of Failure to comply with regulations was issued, to ensure there is an effective system for managing access to the nursery. The action taken in relation to this notice continues to be monitored and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop the opportunities for babies and children to play outdoors
- improve the physical environment for babies so that they can see posters and displays easily
- ensure children's learning opportunities are maximised through practical experience and appropriately managing resources
- provide consistency of care by improving staff retention and for those under 3 years by further developing the key worker system so that babies are given

emotional security

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- improve planning so that it takes into consideration the interests of children and is based on the next stage of development for each child

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