

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Bromsgrove

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205167
Inspection date	18 May 2007
Inspector	Rachel Wyatt
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Registered person	Nord Anglia Nurseries Ltd
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Nursery opened in 2000. It is part of a large chain of nurseries. The nursery is located in the Aston Fields district of Bromsgrove near local shops and the railway station. It operates from four ground floor play rooms and two first floor play areas in a self-contained building. The setting serves the local and surrounding area. A maximum of 86 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round, except for bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 132 children under five years on roll. This includes 54 children in receipt of early education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Support is available for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and for those who speak English as an additional language.

Twenty two staff work with the children. Of these 15 staff have an early years qualification to National Vocational Qualification level 3, with one member of staff working towards a level 3 qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority and is regularly represented at local partnership meetings and providers' forums.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children and babies are looked after in comfortable, inviting rooms and play areas. A programme of refurbishment and ongoing cleaning contribute to creating a brightly decorated and generally well maintained environment. Staff wipe surfaces and tidy up throughout the day and older children assist with this, sweeping up spilt sand and helping to wipe tables before snacks and meals. There are robust procedures for sterilising babies' feeding items, comforters and toys and for cleaning their soft furnishings and equipment regularly. Similar procedures are followed elsewhere in the nursery so that children's bedding, furniture, equipment and the majority of toys are in generally good condition.

Children understand the importance of good hygiene. They are introduced to hand washing routines at an early age, for example, staff wipe babies' hands before they eat. Younger children become increasingly confident in managing their personal care through sensitive adult support, and using child-friendly toilet areas with good potty training aids. All children wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. They readily explain the reasons for this, because it gets 'rid of germs' which 'make their tummy poorly'. Good visual prompts in toilet areas remind children about this, and the need to flush toilets properly. Elsewhere in their base rooms other pictorial reminders, plus strategically placed boxes of tissues and waste bins, encourage children to become more independent in managing other aspects of their personal care, whilst helping to reduce the spread of germs if they cough or sneeze.

Babies and children are well looked after. Their individual care requirements are understood by staff and are effectively managed. Babies' and toddlers' individual feed and sleep patterns are followed, and regular calm nappy changes ensure their comfort. Staff are kind and reassuring as they consistently chat to babies and children during these routines. Sleeping children are carefully monitored and checked regularly. All children have opportunities for a rest or a sleep. Older children are encouraged to take part in quieter activities and to use these as a time for relaxation.

Children and babies are physically active. Babies are developing physical strength as a good selection of toys and equipment promote their stretching, rolling and forward movement. Plenty of low-level furniture and toys such as activity centres help them to pull themselves up, to stand and then to take their first steps. Staff are receptive to those babies who are ready to try walking. As part of their programme of individual observations and planning for children, adults do introduce toys and equipment which help to improve babies' balance and coordination. Staff readily accompany babies who are eager to practise their walking around their spacious room. Toddlers and older children benefit from regular outside play and from using different apparatus and toys which foster their steering and peddling, coordination, balance and climbing. There are effective procedures to ensure babies and children are protected from the sun.

All aspects of babies' and children's health are fostered. Staff are well informed about their specific medical, health and dietary requirements so that, for example, the careful preparation and effective organisation of meals and snacks takes full account of children's varying dietary needs. Clear agreements relating to the management of any medical emergencies, including administering medication, ensure children's well-being and reflect their parents' wishes. Should children have an accident or become unwell they receive prompt appropriate treatment. Risks of cross infection are minimised as information on infection control and other health matters

are ready to hand and used to guide staff and parents. Managers, and the majority of the staff, have relevant first aid qualifications, as well as training in more specialised aspects of medication administration. Babies and children requiring medication are reassured and well cared for as managers and senior staff calmly and competently manage their different requirements.

Babies and children are well nourished. Babies are held during feeds which take place in a quiet part of the room. Feed times are relaxed and unhurried. Weaning arrangements are discussed thoroughly with parents to make sure any new foods are safely introduced. Feeds and meals are stored and prepared safely. During meal times babies are given appropriately served portions, staff sitting with them, making sure they have enough to eat and drink. Suitable beakers and cutlery aid younger children's growing independence.

Menus are varied and provide babies and children with a good balance of healthy options and different tastes, which accommodate their dietary needs. Clear risk assessments ensure staff are alerted to any factors which can affect children. Their well-being is also fostered through the cook's commitment to ensuring food is carefully stored, prepared and cooked. Children enjoy helping themselves to mid morning snacks and drinks and staff check that they all have something. At lunch times older children help to set the table and serve their food. They manage cutlery with increasing control and eat well, often having second helpings, during these relaxed sociable occasions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in premises where there is a high level of safety and security. Parents, carers and visitors are personally greeted and callers' identities and their reasons for visiting are consistently established. All areas of the nursery are secure with good use made, for example, of high level door handles and safety gates on the stairs. Parents are made aware from outset of the nursery's security arrangements and how they can contribute to maintaining these. Outdoor areas are fully enclosed and free from hazards.

Babies and children use age-appropriate, generally well maintained toys and equipment. Staff carry out regular checks including, for example, making sure that babies and toddlers are secure and comfortable when using cots, high chairs or nappy change tables. A programme of planned maintenance, effective risk assessments and good use of safety equipment such as socket covers, radiator guards and door closer inhibitors all help to minimise hazards to children. Staff generally supervise children well, whilst enabling them to explore and manage risks. Children are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own safety. For example, in pre-school staff plan activities to heighten children's awareness, so they use apparatus correctly such as the fixed outdoor climbing, balancing and sliding equipment. They sensibly and safely walk up and down stairs, and handle scissors, cutlery and tools properly. Children and staff are also prepared for emergency situations through regular practice evacuations.

Children are protected from harm. The nursery has robust child protection procedures and nursery personnel understand their responsibility to safeguard children. Adults benefit from sound induction procedures and consistent access to 'in house' and external child protection training. The nursery's role in safeguarding children is also made clear to parents from the outset so that they and the nursery can work together to promote children's welfare. If there concerns about a child's well-being, prompt appropriate action is taken to refer these to relevant agencies. The setting's vetting arrangements and robust collection arrangements also contribute to safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies feel comfortable to play and explore in their inviting surroundings. They are interested in the toys, displays and features such as low-level mirrors. They relish having plenty of space to move about in, so they develop confidence in crawling, pulling themselves up and walking. They are contented and relaxed as staff are receptive to their reactions and make sure they remain involved in play. Babies respond to the staff's care and reassurance. They are cuddled during feeding, and adults chat easily to them whilst they play and during routines.

The provision for babies and toddlers' play and development reflects the ethos of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff use their observations and one to one key worker time with babies and children to plan activities which are relevant to individual children, often reflecting their particular skills and interests. Plenty of toys are invitingly laid out to encourage babies' and toddlers' exploration and their manipulative skills, and to promote their awareness of sound and texture. Staff make sure babies and younger children have opportunities to socialise with each other and the adults' positive interactions really encourage children's smiles, gurgles, laughter and emergent speech.

Toddlers are confident, purposeful and busy. They are friendly and often play well together. They experience a good range of activities, which staff usually take an active part in. However, the organisation and management of some large group story times makes it difficult for these younger children to sit quietly and listen, as other children's care routines cause distractions. Children enjoy looking at books but throughout the nursery some books are damaged and not always attractively displayed to encourage children's care and attention.

All babies and children benefit from the support and interaction of consistent adults such as their key worker or allocated daily worker. Whilst they care for and play with babies and children, adults observe their responses, reactions and skills. The outcomes of these observations form the basis for future plans and activities, so that planning is really individual to each child.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are lively and confident. They relate very well towards each other, playing cooperatively, discussing their ideas and acting out scenarios. They often concentrate well and enjoy the involvement of adults in their activities and play, for example, during role play, painting, drawing and fun board games such as 'bug' bingo. However, the presentation and management of free play activities in the smaller base room results at times in children being distracted and not fully occupied. Staff are receptive to the fact that children are insufficiently engaged and encourage them to take part in other activities, but they do not always address the lack of stimulating resources in the room's role play and book area.

Children's independence is fostered well. They see to their personal care with increasing confidence, including getting ready for outside play. They decide when they want to have their morning snack and enjoy serving themselves their lunch time food. Children like to help, for example, tidying up toys, sweeping up sand, wiping tables and laying them for lunch time. Staff make sure that children have time to complete these tasks in an unhurried manner.

Children are confident and articulate speakers. They chat easily to each other and to adults, who are receptive to any children who are less confident. Children talk about their experiences during circle time and listen attentively to stories. They sometimes act out characters, such as

the three little pigs. and enjoy looking at books, usually handling these correctly. Books are effectively used for children's reference, for instance when drawing pictures of their pets. Children also develop an appreciation of print through the effective use of labels and pictures around the pre-school areas. Children confidently recognise their names, for example, during self registration, and other key letter sounds and words. They really enjoy mark making and have many worthwhile opportunities to practise their emergent writing and word building during role play, at the writing table and during letter sound games or activities. Staff make sure children can easily access pencils, pens, paper and note pads in order practise their writing.

Children count and recognise numbers in different contexts as staff provide them with practical activities to support their numeracy and problem solving. Children count how many of them are present, work out how many items of cutlery are needed at each table at lunch time, and are beginning to understand the concept of one more and one less. Interesting mathematics resources support their learning such as two and three dimensional shapes, calculators, tape measures and board games. Staff adapt their approaches and resources to support less and more able children's problem solving, for example, during number matching games. Good use is made of number lines displayed inside and outside, and of rhymes, puzzles, board games to aid all children's number recognition and sequencing.

Children really enjoy finding out about features of their own or others' lives. Different festivals are incorporated into sessions so, for example, children make a colourful dragon for Chinese New Year. Children are introduced to aspects of the environment and technology in ways they can understand. They learn about features of the natural world, plant bulbs, experiment with what floats and sinks in water, and find out how wet and dry sand react differently. They build dens and make models from varying materials and construction toys. Children effectively use simple computer programmes to support their understanding of colour, number or shape. They often help each other whilst using the computer and manage the mouse and key board well. Examples of their work are printed and displayed. Children readily recall events from their own lives and, whilst listening to a fun story about a pirate and a baby, they confidently discuss how to look after babies properly.

Children are physically active. They enjoy the challenge of the fixed outdoor apparatus, balancing astride the sides, crawling across the bridge, sliding in different positions and confidently use the fireman's pole. They peddle and steer wheeled toys with an awareness of space and control. Fun physical education sessions help children to move in different ways.

Children are creative. They paint expressively, representing their ideas in colourful pictures, for example, of maypole dancing, their pets or the veterinary nurse's dog which had visited the setting. They make collages and three dimensional models such as fish tanks, and enjoy handling different materials like dough. Children are imaginative, often engaging in very rewarding role play in the well equipped area in the main play room. The current scenario of a vets' practice is popular. Inspired by a visit from a local veterinary nurse and the staff's very good input, children have chatted to 'clients' in the waiting room, performed operations on various animal toys and recorded their patients' progress. However, the organisation of the pre-school's other role play area is not so stimulating and tends to get untidy. Children like singing, often selecting rhymes and songs, and they enjoy music sessions, including visiting the sound area to try out different instruments.

Sound long and medium term planning underpins rewarding topics and activities. These provide children with worthwhile experiences reflecting all aspects of the Foundation Stage. Staff make sure plans are implemented and adapted to cater for children's differing abilities and interests.

They have a warm rapport with children and their input certainly enriches children's play and aids their involvement. They ensure that children have a relaxed but generally well organised, interesting environment so that they know what is expected of them and are able to express themselves freely.

Robust, regular assessment procedures mean that children are consistently observed, their achievements recognised, and areas requiring support or further progress are identified. Plans cater for children's individual learning needs, recommending clear steps in order to help their progress in relation to the six areas of learning. Focus activity plans are used very well as a tool to further develop children's skills and understanding in specific areas and to highlight those children who may need help or challenge. Good use is also made of evaluations to show how children responded, which activities went well and where children need further support.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Throughout the nursery there is very strong focus on children as individuals. This is reflected in the detailed information discussed and obtained from parents about children's care, play and learning, and from the way staff plan activities based on children's interests and developmental needs. Managers and staff clearly know babies and children very well, and the organisation of the key worker system and the daily grouping of babies and children with a designated member of staff contribute to this. As a result children are reassured and well cared for.

Robust assessment and individual planning for all babies and children means that any concerns about a child's development or progress are promptly identified. The nursery's special needs coordinator and all other personnel working there are particularly confident in managing assessment and individual planning for children. Should there be any concerns about a child's development prompt appropriate action is taken, in partnership with parents and other relevant agencies, to identify relevant strategies. Staff are confident to adapt activities and their interactions so that children with developmental delay, learning difficulties or special care requirements can be fully included and helped to reach their full potential.

From an early age babies and children develop very good relationships and have positive attitudes and self-esteem. Their interests, experiences and achievements are valued and celebrated. Through age-appropriate explanations and activities they are introduced to different beliefs and cultures. Plans and topics consistently include a range of festivals and celebrations. Throughout the nursery displays, toys and books depict positive images of diversity.

Children behave very well. They play cooperatively and are often kind and caring, helping a friend to settle or to complete an activity. Staff are receptive to situations where children may need some help in order to maintain good or safe behaviour. They plan activities to promote the desired behaviour such as sitting still or talking quietly. Should children be disruptive or unkind, staff calmly intervene, giving suitable explanations and encouraging apologies. Effective use is made of reward systems to acknowledge all children's good behaviour and also to support those who find it difficult to relate well to others or to concentrate. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents and carers are very warmly welcomed in the setting. They and their children are always personally greeted by managers and staff. Effective, flexible settling in arrangements help parents and children to feel comfortable about starting nursery. Easy to read welcome packs

ensure parents and carers have friendly detailed information about the setting, and in particular about the part of the nursery their child will attend.

Parents are very well informed about their baby's or child's activities and progress through daily informal feedback and quarterly progress reports. Parents' contributions provide additional delightful detail to recently introduced 'All about me' portfolios which record each child's experiences and progress whilst they are at nursery. Regular parents' evenings, and special events such as a 'dads' day', give parents and carers opportunities to talk about their child with their key worker and to find out more about early years issues. Displays, notice boards and frequent letters and newsletters help parents and carers to be up to date regarding the organisation and management of their children's care and play. Their views are obtained, for example, in response to their children's progress reports and through surveys, resulting in recent developments to the older children's outside play area. Should parents have any concerns about the nursery they are confident to raise these with managers and staff. The organisation's complaints procedures are clearly explained and robustly followed through to ensure any issues are properly addressed and relevant records retained.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. They are very well informed about the Foundation Stage through interesting displays of children's work, photographs of activities and excellent explanations of the six areas of learning. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's learning. Their views about their children's development and skills are valued and help staff to plan appropriate activities. Parents regularly receive, and comment on, written reports on their children's progress. Activity and topic plans are displayed and clearly explained in regular 'Activities at home' newsletters, creating worthwhile opportunities for parents to follow aspects up at home or to help with sessions. Parents' contributions to the current topic on pets have helped to inspire children's role play, paintings and craft work. Parents have supplied toy animals, craft materials, leaflets and organised a visit from a veterinary nurse.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are safeguarded and parents are reassured as the nursery has robust procedures to ensure staff are suitable and have appropriate experience and qualifications. Children are cared for by a capable, caring and motivated team of managers and staff. They work well together and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities as a result of thorough induction and ongoing training programmes. The setting's 'in house' training and regular staff and team meetings help to keep personnel up to date and aware of the nursery's ethos and practice.

A very comprehensive operational plan supports the organisation and management of the nursery. It is evident that managers and staff are fully aware of their responsibility to promote the smooth day to day running of the nursery. They ensure children are looked after in welcoming rooms and that activities are generally well resourced and inviting. The key worker system and procedures for grouping children with a designated member of staff each day has considerable benefits for children as staff get to know all of them well. As result babies and children are settled and comfortable because sessions, routines and activities are well organised, enjoyable and relaxed. Parents are also well informed of the setting's policies, procedures and expectations, as embodied in the operational plan and reflected in agreements made with them and in the information they receive.

There is a clear programme for monitoring and reviewing the setting's effectiveness, for example via staff induction and appraisal systems and a robust self-evaluation programme which involves all nursery personnel. There is also a commitment to improvement. Children have benefited from changes to the outdoor play area, from better access to low-level storage so they can help themselves to toys, and from developments to assessment and planning which ensure activities focus on each child's needs.

Children's care is supported by effective record keeping. All relevant information is obtained at the outset. There are consistent arrangements for ensuring this information is updated, and that parents are notified of any changes to the setting's policies and procedures.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. Children are settled and confident because they are supported by an enthusiastic staff team who plan rewarding topics and activities which incorporate important festivals and worthwhile practical experiences. Staff make sure that sessions run smoothly and children know what is expected of them. Rooms and resources are generally used well to ensure children remain focussed and involved. In the pre-school's main play area children benefit from well presented activities for free play, topic work and also focus activities. However, at times the layout, resourcing and management of the book area, role play and free choice activities in the smaller room means children are not fully engaged.

An effective key worker system, generally sound staff deployment and consistent assessment and evaluation procedures mean that staff have a clear vision of how well three and four-year-olds are progressing and what to do next to aid their further development. Effective monitoring helps staff to identify and address any gaps in the nursery education programme or in children's knowledge or understanding. Very good use is made of focus activities planned in order to support specific areas for improvement.

Within the pre-school there is also a determination to promote the ongoing development of high quality nursery education for the children. Recent initiatives have had a significant impact on children's learning and progress. For example, a move to mixed age groups has fostered friendships and much cooperative play. Children's independence skills have been enhanced by the opportunity to serve food themselves at lunch time. Developing the outdoor area has encouraged their participation in a wider range of activities and experiences. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to three recommendations to improve the safety of nappy change areas, the condition of carpets and décor in the nursery and the effectiveness of the kitchen fly screen. These have been effectively addressed to promote children's health and safety, as nappy change areas are clean and safe, carpets and décor have been upgraded and are maintained in an appropriate condition, and the kitchen fly screen has been replaced.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to key issues regarding assessing children's progress in relation to the stepping stones, and using resources more effectively to support their creative play. Staff now confidently assess children's progress in relation to the stepping stones. Their regular observations inform each child's learning plan and result in the provision of suitable activities to meet children's individual learning needs.

Children's creativity is supported by generally stimulating resources. Good use is made of books and pictures which children refer to, for example, in order to provide detail for their drawings

and paintings. Themed role play areas are often very well resourced, although other role play areas can lack interesting toys or equipment. Children's appreciation of music and sound is encouraged by regular access to musical instruments and other fun music activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- improve the condition and presentation of books for children and review arrangements for younger children's whole group story times so that they can concentrate and listen better.

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 the organisation and management of activities in the pre-school's small room so that children based in there are consistently occupied and challenged.

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