

# Leapfrog Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY274463
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Gill Moore
<b>Setting Address</b>	13 Yarborough Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO5 3DZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 643776
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<b>Registered person</b>	Leapfrog Day Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Day Nursery is privately owned and has been established since 1996. This particular nursery building opened in 2003 as a Neighbourhood Nursery. It operates from a large Victorian house in Southsea, Portsmouth and children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 54 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday 50 weeks of the year, from 08:00 - 18:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 83 children on roll. Of these, 22 receive funding for nursery education. The owner is a qualified teacher and endorsed trainer for High Scope. The owners of the nursery employ a qualified manager to be responsible for the day to day running of the group and a nursery administrator, both form part of the management team. In addition, 14 staff work directly with the children, all of whom are qualified. The nursery adopts the High Scope approach to teaching and all staff are trained in High Scope as well as early years.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have wonderful opportunities to develop their physical skills playing outside in the garden and inside the nursery. Younger children increase in confidence crawling through tunnels and learning to use small climbing frames. They push and pull wheeled toys and delight in opportunities to sit in trucks whilst they pull each other around the garden. Children confidently ride a range of bicycles and cars, learning to use the pedals independently. They show very good spatial awareness as they ride around the path recognising the need to keep a fair distance from their peers. Children use swings and pick up woodchips as they negotiate the digger and have a lovely time running around with their peers. An extensive range of smaller equipment is available, which helps to promote children's physical skills. For example, they use stilts and balancing apparatus, a wide range of different sized balls and hoops, skittles, coytes and skipping ropes, which helps increase their co-ordination. Inside, children delight in opportunities to participate in music and dancing sessions learning to move their bodies in different ways. They recognise when their bodies are hot and sweaty and feel their hearts racing around. Children help themselves to drinking water and discuss why it is important to exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Children gain a very good understanding of health and hygiene practices and talk about why it is important to wash their hands before sitting down to snacks and meals. They discuss the importance of cleaning their teeth and use a large mouth and toothbrush to practise this routine during their independent play. Children's understanding of healthy eating is promoted as they talk about different types of food and how each helps their bodies to grow. Discussions at snack times and the introduction of healthy options, including a wide range of fruit, enables children to compare different tastes. They discuss how some fruits can be eaten with the skin on whilst others need their outer skin removing. Children talk about where food comes from and how it is grown and show real delight when they notice the plums on the tree in the garden are almost ready. They help themselves to drinking water and milk at snack times and show excellent self care skills packing away when they have finished and rinsing their cups and plates. Parents supply children's meals and these are heated and served appropriately. Information about what children have eaten is discussed and recorded on daily record sheets for younger children.

Children's health is well maintained because practitioners have relevant first aid training and deal with accidents and the administration of medication appropriately. Accidents are discussed with parents, although some entries have not been signed by parents to acknowledge they have been informed about the accident. Younger children's physical needs are met. For example, children sleep in cots and rockers and effective systems are in place to monitor and record this. Suitable equipment is available for children to sit whilst feeding. They are encouraged to develop their self care skills by beginning to feed themselves, although are exceptionally well supported by practitioners. Children's health is promoted whilst changing nappies because practitioners wear disposable gloves and use anti-bacterial spray to clean mats after each use. The nursery provide all nappies and wipes and detailed information is obtained from parents regarding any allergies or specific requirements. There are no toilet facilities available in the toddler unit, because this area was initially used by babies. However, practitioners and parents work exceptionally well together to begin the transition into the new unit, helping to effectively support children whilst being toilet trained. There are currently plans in place to develop a toileting area within the toddler unit.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain an exceptionally good understanding of how to keep themselves safe through discussions with practitioners across the day. For example, they talk about the potential dangers of standing too close to doors and learn how to handle tools, such as scissors and cutters, safely in their play. Younger children develop confidence learning to walk unaided in a safe environment and negotiating steps on the slide. Older children begin to take risks using more challenging apparatus safely in the garden, walking across rope bridges and jumping between different sized logs. Children begin to learn about road safety discussing how best to cross roads and this is promoted further through the use of traffic lights and road signs in their outside play. They talk confidently about the procedure to follow should there be a fire and regular drills are practised and evaluated with all children and practitioners, to ensure this is effective in an emergency situation.

Children benefit enormously from the exceptional, well organised and vibrant nursery environment, both inside and out. The nursery is extremely welcoming and stimulating with photographs, posters and children's work displayed throughout. Children move freely and safely around the purpose built facilities, which helps develop their independence and self assurance. They have access to an extensive range of furniture, equipment and play provision and secure systems are in place to ensure this is clean, well maintained and suitable for children to use. Children's safety is ensured because practitioners are extremely vigilant and minimise risks and hazards within the nursery. This is achieved through formal risk assessments and daily checks, which are recorded and monitored, ensuring every area and piece of equipment is safe. All plug sockets are covered, stair gates are used where appropriate and all doors are fitted with finger guards, contributing to promoting children's safety.

Children are well protected at nursery because practitioners have an in-depth knowledge of child protection issues. They fully recognise their role and responsibilities with regards to protecting children in their care. Training is included in this area, as part of the induction programme and all practitioners are booked to attend further training as part of a rolling programme. Accurate records are maintained of children, staff and visitors to and from the setting, including their times of arrival and departure. Visitors are requested to show identification and are monitored at all times. All staff, students and regular volunteers working with children undertake relevant checks. Highly secure systems are in place to ensure children are collected from nursery by suitable adults, that are known to practitioners. Procedures to record any injuries children arrive with are implemented. All practitioners know the records to keep and how to implement nursery and local child protection procedures, helping to keep children safe and protected.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children relish their time at nursery. They progress well in all aspects of their development because they are extremely well supported by practitioners who have a secure understanding of how young children learn. Excellent interaction between practitioners and children ensures they develop exceptionally high levels of self assurance and a strong sense of belonging to the group. Children thrive in the wonderfully stimulating and exciting learning environment and benefit from a consistent and effective daily routine. Toddlers and older babies become competent learners, switching on and off the musical key board and bouncing up and down with delight when the music begins to play. They build models from bricks and begin to learn

about colour and shape as practitioners talk to them about the bricks they are using, helping them place one on top of the other.

Children snuggle up with practitioners to share stories and respond to questions pointing to the pictures. They become skilful communicators copying language introduced by practitioners and begin to use isolated vocabulary before stringing words together. Practitioners are highly effective in their response to children's gestures and language and lie on the floor with them joining in their play. They know children extremely well and understand what they are communicating to them. Children press their noses up against the mirrors showing excitement as they dress up in clothes and hats. Younger children enjoy playing peek a boo with practitioners and participate enthusiastically in singing sessions copying the actions and dancing around the room. They enjoy playing with dolls and imitating adults using the telephone. They have planned opportunities to use a wider range of role-play equipment, enabling them to extend their imagined experiences, although this is not available to them across each session.

Children's early learning is enhanced because practitioners have a secure knowledge of child development. They plan an exciting and stimulating range of activities and experiences pitched at the appropriate level. Systems to assess young children's individual progress are secure and practitioners observe how they develop using the Birth to three matters framework and the High Scope key experiences. Children have planned opportunities to explore a range of media, for example, they plant carrot seeds in compost, explore paint, sand and water and experience different textures as they mix corn flour with water. All tools and materials are presented at low level, which helps to increase children's independence and encourage them to make choices. However, practitioners do not promote opportunities for children to independently explore a range of textures, media and natural materials freely across the session.

Children over the age of two years benefit enormously from playing alongside their older peers, and this is managed extremely effectively, according to the individual needs and abilities of children. They integrate with older children for much of the session, as well as spending designated time with their key workers in planned activities. These are pitched at their own level and planned around children's interests and abilities. Practitioners encourage children to problem solve when building the car track together and talk about the different shapes and sizes as they listen to one another's ideas and try different solutions.

### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children thrive and make good individual progress in their learning because practitioners have an excellent knowledge and understanding of their individual needs and abilities. They engage in a wide range of exciting and well planned activities and the wonderfully rich and stimulating learning environment provides very good opportunities for them to extend their learning in each area. Children benefit because practitioners use an exciting range of teaching methods and very effective questioning techniques to support children's learning and their individual development. Practitioners have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and recognise the links to the High Scope approach to teaching, ensuring this philosophy is fully promoted throughout the nursery. They make exceptionally good use of time including planned activities, children's independent play and incidental opportunities to encourage children to think through their own ideas and solve their own problems. For example, when painting one child was disappointed that there was no pink paint left in the bottle. With effective support and skilful questioning, the child decided to explore with colours until she made her own colour pink.

Children's early reading and writing skills are well developed and they practise writing in a variety of situations. For example, they form patterns, shapes and recognisable letters in sand, chalk on the paving slabs in the garden and make their own party invitations. They use rich vocabulary to talk about their experiences, and the implementation of 'plan, do, review' encourages children to talk about where they plan to play and what they intend to do with their peers. They have wonderful opportunities to express their imagination freely making their own choices about where they play. Children laugh and giggle with their peers dressing up in costumes and acting out the story of Goldilocks and the three bears. They show an awareness of size and use good mathematical language arranging the different sized bowls to use in their story. Children notice shapes in the environment and begin to talk about the different features, for example, knowing that a square has all four sides the same size.

Children delight in opportunities to investigate and are curious showing real fascination when they discover two snails outside on their car. They talk excitedly about the eggs they cared for, which turned into caterpillars and later transformed into butterflies and look at the photographs recalling how this occurred. Planned activities, such as making ice cubes and watching them melt, cookery and exploring different objects and materials in water, helps develop children's mathematical understanding and encourages them to make predictions about what will happen. They have independent access to an extensive range of wonderful equipment to support their learning, for example weighing scales, resources to sort, match and compare and a range of number games and puzzles. Children concentrate extremely well on self chosen tasks and focus on completing these by themselves. They use Russian dolls to explore different sizes, enjoy trying to work out what is in each sound box, and have a wonderful time exploring the environment using torches, magnifying cubes and magnets.

Opportunities for children to be creative and fully express their imagination, using a wide range of media and materials, are available across the session. They fill the water tray and have fun with their peers transferring water to and from different objects. Children build using recycled materials, explore paint using a range of different techniques and materials and experience a range of media such as gloop, jelly and clay. They competently use different tools learning to handle scissors, cutters and staplers confidently and safely. Children benefit from well planned group activities. They have a wonderful time engaging in singing and dancing sessions, exploring music using a range of instruments and objects to learn about sound and rhythm and participating in group stories. The use of space and accessibility of resources really enhances the opportunities children receive. They benefit from a wonderfully stimulating outside learning environment and have planned opportunities to use this area each session, although this period is very limited. This is partly due to restrictions on the planning requirements attached to the nursery, although opportunities to fully explore and extend their learning outdoors are not fully promoted within the restrictions granted.

Children's learning is significantly enhanced because practitioners plan for their individual needs. They recognise and celebrate what children can do and help them to build on this, pursuing their individual interests and moving on to the next stage in their learning at their own pace. Assessment is rigorous and children's individual achievements are extremely well recorded, which enables practitioners to use this information to help guide their planning for the following week. Children really flourish in this wonderful stimulating early years environment and benefit immensely from the hands on approach to learning, which is embedded in the High Scope philosophy. They really enjoy being involved in experiences, which they later reflect on in the 'review' part of the session. This helps children to build on their existing and new knowledge and make sense of their environment. Practitioners are extremely effective in the

way in which they support and guide children through their active learning and as a result, every child is able to achieve their individual potential.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop an extremely secure sense of belonging and display exceptionally high levels of confidence and self assurance. On arrival to nursery, they place their name card on a coat hook, hang their coats up and place their belongings in the shelving space below. They enjoy taking on roles within the nursery, for example, helping to prepare snack and gain a very good sense of responsibility as they all help to pack away their resources and play equipment when it is time to do so. Younger children begin to learn their capabilities and confidently seek reassurance and support from familiar practitioners when they feel they need to. Children's self esteem is extremely high because practitioners value and celebrate every child's individual achievements. They flourish during the time they spend in nursery because practitioners know their individual needs and capabilities and the implementation of key worker systems helps to enhance the extremely strong relationships formed within the nursery.

All children thrive because every child is valued and treated as an individual and the nursery promotes a fully inclusive environment where all children and their families are welcomed. They show an excellent attitude towards their peers and are sensitive towards one another's needs. For example, older children recognise when their younger peers need help and assist them in putting aprons on. Children's behaviour is excellent. They negotiate turn taking and understand why it is important to share because practitioners are extremely effective in managing their behaviour. Practitioners help children to think about how they feel and encourage them to work through solutions and solve their own problems. Younger children begin to learn behaviour boundaries as practitioners tell them to 'play nicely' when they snatch toys from one another, and help them to find another resource to play with.

Children have ample opportunities to learn about themselves and their families, their local environment and the wider world. Practitioners make exceptionally good use of discussion and incidental opportunities to talk to children about places they visit, people they live with and special events that occur. Children use a very good range of resources reflecting a diversity of culture, gender, ethnicity and disability. Practitioners make good use of stories to talk to children about various customs and cultures. Children discuss places they have visited on holiday, talking about how they got there and using the globe and map to see how far away these countries are in relation to where they live. They eat noodles and use chop sticks in the role-play area when learning about Chinese New Year and enjoy making chocolate eggs and hot cross buns at Easter time. Children go on nature walks, collect shells and examine objects at the beach and enjoy watching the hovercraft as it leaves Portsmouth and heads over to the Isle of Wight. They begin to recognise that people have different beliefs and discussions help promote this, for example, as children talk about going to the church or visiting the mosque. Children celebrate their own and other's birthdays and recognise and value what they do throughout the day through the use of 'review time.' Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All children benefit from a superb partnership with parents and excellent links are in place between nursery and home. Parents are extremely well informed about their child's day and practitioners discuss with them what their child has been involved in. Parents of younger children receive written information about their child's day through daily record sheets, which helps to enhance communication. Procedures to settle children into nursery and to ensure a smooth

and successful transition between each unit within the nursery are outstanding. The transition period involves a four week process and includes parents visits and meetings, visits to the new environment with children's existing key worker and visits from their new key worker in their familiar surroundings. Extensive information is transferred between practitioners and parents, both informally and formally, and children tend to move on in their established friendship groups. This really helps to enhance their sense of security and parents receive lots of helpful information about how they can help support this transition at home. Children move on to the next unit when they are ready, rather than a fixed age, and how this process is managed is discussed and agreed with parents. In addition, the nursery provides wonderful support to families as their child leaves the nursery and moves on to school.

The partnerships with parents of children who receive nursery education are outstanding. Practitioners pay high priority to establishing and maintaining the links between nursery and home, which helps to ensure parents are actively involved in their child's learning. All parents receive detailed information about the curriculum and how this links in to the key experiences and much information is exchanged in a variety of ways. For example, a range of nursery booklets, information displayed in classrooms and on the notice board, and regular newsletters each term. Parents share information about what their child can do when they begin nursery and are fully involved in the planning and assessment process for their individual child across the nursery. They meet every term with their child's key worker to share assessment records, make contributions to planning and to discuss and agree targets for the next stage in their learning. Parents are provided with suggestions of activities to try at home helping to extend their child's learning. The nursery provides an extensive range of opportunities for parents to support their child's learning. For example, they run parent group meetings every term, which result in a range of courses and workshops being delivered in response to parent requests. Packages, such as the Caring Start programme and sing along sessions each term, help parents to play an active role in their child's early learning. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the nursery in numerous ways, such as attending regular groups, sharing skills and expertise with children and spending time playing alongside their child during sessions. These, and many more, wonderful opportunities really demonstrate the excellent links between home and nursery and ultimately have a positive impact on children's development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is significantly enhanced because management and practitioners share the same vision and work exceptionally well as a team to ensure this is fulfilled. Clear roles and responsibilities are defined and excellent systems are in place to ensure effective communication, for example, fortnightly team meetings and weekly management meetings. Children benefit immensely because all practitioners are qualified and have a clear understanding of early years practice. Robust and rigorous recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensure children are protected and cared for by staff who are suitable to do so. The induction programme is extremely comprehensive with weekly review meetings, where targets are set, and a mentor is assigned to each new member of staff. High attention is paid to monitoring staff performance and development on an ongoing basis and this is achieved through a number of ways. For example, all staff receive a formal review every three months. This provides opportunities for them to evaluate and celebrate their strengths and identify individual targets to be worked towards. Consequently, practitioner's training needs are recognised and they receive very good opportunities to update their skills and knowledge through regular in-house



and external training programmes. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

All practitioners have a clear understanding of the policies and procedures within the nursery and implement these to a high standard, ensuring successful outcomes for children are promoted. Effective systems are in place to ensure documentation is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect actual practice, and this is discussed at weekly management meetings. The many strengths within the nursery are recognised and management place high importance on continually evaluating the nursery as a whole to identify where improvements can be made. Targets are set and action plans developed, both on a short and long term plan, ensuring that the impact any changes have on children's care and learning are constantly evaluated and monitored. Leadership and management of nursery education are good. Children's learning is enhanced because teaching is rooted in a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the High Scope model. All practitioners play an active role in planning and assessing their individual group of children. Secure systems are in place to evaluate the experiences children receive, the learning environment and the quality of interaction and the impact this has on the individual progress they make. Highly effective procedures to oversee how the educational programme is delivered, ensure children reach their individual potential.

Practitioners benefit enormously because they are managed and influenced by a dynamic nursery owner, who is a qualified early years teacher and an endorsed High Scope trainer. Her knowledge, experience and expertise enables her to share enthusiasm and passion for the role practitioner's play in children's early years. This is shared with practitioners in the nursery, the local area and in early years settings abroad through the training programmes she implements. Consequently, all practitioners show real dedication and commitment to their role within the nursery, recognising what an important part they play. As a result, every child who attends Leapfrog Day Nursery receives a wonderful learning experience where their individual potential is recognised, valued and truly achieved.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to modify access to and within the nursery for children with disabilities. A ramp has now been fitted to the entrance of the nursery and a lift installed, which helps to ensure the nursery promotes a fully inclusive environment.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to include in the prospectus and newsletters given to parents information about the Foundation Stage. Detailed information is now included, both in the prospectus and newsletters, outlining the different areas of learning within the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how this is delivered through children's play. Parents are fully supported in understanding how children learn and recognising the links between the curriculum, resources children use and the progress they make.

### **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 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):

- increase opportunities for younger children to access media, natural materials and tactile experiences through independent play

#### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to extend their learning in the outside environment

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)