



Just Learning Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301131
Inspection date	08 September 2005
Inspector	Elizabeth Blenkhorn
Setting Address	19 Newton Lane, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 9EX
Telephone number	01325 460440
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Registered person	Just Learning 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?

Just Learning Ltd Nursery opened in September 1996. It operates from six activity rooms in a large purpose built unit in Darlington. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 110 children on roll attending the nursery from six weeks to eight years old. This includes 19 children who receive nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who speak English as

an additional language and procedures are in place to support children with special needs.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

There are nine part time staff and thirteen full time staff work with the children. Most staff have either level 2 or 3 qualifications and two staff members are attending training courses.

The setting receives support from the Local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery environment is warm, adequately clean and suitably maintained. Comprehensive written policies and procedures are in place for health and hygiene, however, in some areas of the nursery these are not always fully adhered to, to ensure that children remain healthy. For example, carpeted areas are unclean, some toys and equipment are broken, old and uninviting. Some children are developing good hygiene practices within every day routines, for example, older children independently access toilets and wash their hands, however, this is not consistently applied throughout the nursery.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a varied menu of freshly cooked foods. Children's individual needs are taken into account to ensure children remain healthy, babies are regularly offered drinks to ensure none remain thirsty, however, older children do not receive sufficient opportunities to help themselves to drinks.

Children enjoy a range of outdoor activities which help and support their physical skills, for example, as they ride on the train, climb on the rope net and ride on wheeled toys. This promotes children's physical development, gives them confidence to try out new skills, set their own limits and know when to ask for help. All children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Staff have begun to use birth to three matters guidance to adapt a range of activities and play experiences to promote and plan younger children's learning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery presents a warm and welcoming environment in which to care for children, for example, children's work is displayed throughout the nursery along with information for parents. Premises are well-organised, both indoors and outdoors, to maximise play space for children. Babies are able to safely access a satisfactory range of developmentally appropriate resources selected by staff, however, this is not

consistent throughout the nursery, for example, toys, resources and equipment, especially for the under three's and out of school children, are not always inviting or of suitable quantity or quality.

Premises are secure with good systems in place for monitoring visitors and for ensuring children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Staff carry out risk assessments to identify potential hazards and minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of safe practices, for example as they pick up toys off the floor so they do not trip over them and hurt themselves or others. Sound emergency evacuation procedures are in place and practiced, ensuring children know what to do in an emergency and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Although there are sound written policies and procedures in place regarding child protection, staff do not always have a secure understanding of child protection procedures in line with the local Authority Child Protection Committee procedures should they be concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children enter the nursery confidently, happily and settle quickly. They are eager to learn and show enjoyment in taking part in a variety of activities, however, older children do not receive sufficient challenge, for example, there are insufficient activities and resources for children attending the out of school facility. Children play happily together and have good relationships with staff, this increases their confidence, self-esteem and well-being. Babies are well nurtured and benefit from familiar routines. Staff encourage positive interaction, using sound, gestures and basic language by playing with them at their level and responding appropriately to their individual needs. Most children achieve well because staff are skilled and use their experience of early years guidance such as birth to three matters and the curriculum guidance to the foundation stage to provide quality care and education. Children become increasingly independent as they choose from a variety of books and activities, however, resources are not always inviting or in good condition.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage and how children learn effectively. Staff plan a range of interesting activities which they adapt to meet individual needs and the interests of the children. Assessment records are used to identify the next steps in children's learning.

All children are happy and settled and greet each other and staff enthusiastically on arrival. They are eager to learn and are able to work independently or as part of a group. Children's behaviour is good. They are developing negotiating skills and self discipline as they share and take turns during their play. Children are beginning to develop their independency, for example, when going to the toilet, washing their hands before meals and setting the table for meals. All children communicate

confidently and initiate conversations with each other and staff. They listen and respond to what others say.

Children's early reading skills are developing. They select books to share with each other, read independently and listen to stories, however, there is a limited selection and the book area is not always inviting to children. Children are beginning to distinguish the sounds of letters and enjoy Jolly Phonic activities. They are beginning to show an interest in numbers and some children can count reliably to ten, however, there are insufficient opportunities and resources for children to develop mathematical language, to solve problems, calculate and measure. Children are beginning to show an interest in living things and their surroundings through a variety of topics and caring for nursery pets. They are gaining awareness of their own and others cultures. They have opportunities to increase their knowledge of simple technology and to explore " how things work" through regular use of the computer. Children use their imagination well in role play and small world play and explore a range of craft and design activities.

Children move with confidence and control. They use a wide range of large and small equipment and climb, run and jump with confidence. They use small tools for a purpose and join-in first hand experiences, for example, planting herbs and flowers, sand and water play and painting and drawing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the nursery and good relationships are formed between the children and staff fostering their sense of security and belonging. Staff take positive steps to promote children's welfare and development. They offer a range of activities and resources which reflect diversity, for example, celebrate cultural and religious festivals, raising children's awareness of diversity and helping them develop positive attitudes towards others.

Sound procedures are in place for caring for children with special needs and English as an additional language. Children are well behaved and respond appropriately to staff, for example, when lining up to go outside they wait quietly in an orderly line. They are beginning to learn to share, take turns and respect each other. Effective use of encouragement and praise ensures children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and careers is good. Positive relationships are established with parents to ensure children receive good quality care, for example, staff exchange information at the beginning and end of sessions and warmly welcome parents into the nursery at any time. Detailed formats are in place for obtaining information from parents regarding the care of their children, using this information as a starting point for their children's learning, care and teaching.

All parents receive good written and verbal information which keeps them well informed about all aspects of their children's care, progress and achievements, for example, detailed information about the foundation stage, regular newsletters

informing parents of current topics and how they can be involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All staff have relevant child care qualifications and attend regular training to develop and up date their practice. Sound recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure all staff are suitably vetted. Staff work well as a team to provide a warm and welcoming environment for children, parents and visitors. Premises are well organised, indoors and outdoors, to maximise play opportunities for children.

Leadership and management is good. The management and staff are keen to develop the nursery education and actively seek ways to improve their practice. Sound systems are in place to evaluate and monitor the quality of the education offered. There are committed, qualified staff working with the children, helping them towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the curriculum to enable them to help children achieve well. Management continually evaluate their practice, policies and procedures to ensure they support and extend children's learning.

All legally required documentation for the safe management of the nursery and which contribute to children's well-being, health and safety are in place and are regularly reviewed and up dated. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection recommended that the nursery should: provide opportunities to promote children's independence at meal times; ensure children have access to resources which reflect diversity; ensure toys and resources are easily accessible to children 18 months to 2 years; review documentation to include written parental consent for escorting children to and from school and the procedure to be followed.

Children's independence is promoted at meal times through children setting the table, accessing and pouring own drinks and introduction of a rota system for children to give out meals. Further resources have been obtained to raise children's awareness of diversity, for example, dressing-up clothes, CD roms and celebrating festivals. Toys and resources, for children eighteen months to two years, have been organised at child height so that children are able to access independently. Documentation has been reviewed to include clear written procedures to be followed to escort children to and from school and parental consent is obtained and included in contracts. This results in promoting children's development, safety and well-being.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that there was opportunities for children to develop independence at meal times; and that children are given opportunities to further understand why things happen and how things work.

Children's independence is promoted at meal times through children setting the table, accessing and pouring own drinks and introduction of a rota system for children to give out meals. Children now receive further opportunities to understand why things happen and how things work through planned and every day activities, for example, use of magnets, cassette players and interactive toys. This results in improvements in children's personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report

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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):

- ensure fresh drinking water is easily accessible to all children
- extend the range of toys, resources and equipment throughout the nursery, especially for children eighteen months to three years and out of school care; and ensure that they are maintained in a clean and suitable condition
- raise staffs awareness of the nursery policy and procedure for child protection.
- ensure staff implement all hygiene policies and raise young children's understanding of simple hygiene practices, for example, washing hands before meal times

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 and develop the area used for reading and the range of books available to children

- improve opportunities for children to extend and develop their mathematical skills through their daily routine, for example, when setting the table and at circle time.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk