

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Bicester

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134308
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Inspector	Cordalee Harrison
Setting Address	1 Barberry Place, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 3HA
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Registered person	Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) 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 inadequate - enforcement action. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Day Nursery (Bicester) is one of 88 nurseries run by Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd. It registered in 2000 and operates from a purpose built two storey building in Bicester. Children who attend come from the local community and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 108 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 19.00 all year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 72 children aged from three months to five years on roll; of these, 24 children are in receipt of nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with English as an additional language and learning difficulties or disabilities.

The group employs 20 staff and 10 of these staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards an early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Inadequate levels of care and attention are given to older children, their personal hygiene needs are not always acknowledged or managed appropriately; this means that not all children's personal hygiene needs are met. For example, staff do not always attend to children's toileting accidents promptly. In addition some very poor hygiene practices in the pre-school room presents a high risk of illness and infection for children, because staff do not observe when children's behaviour poses a risk to their health. For example, when children handle other children's food inappropriately, or when children put unclean and inappropriate items in their mouths, in this respect staff are failing to safeguard children's health. However, all areas of the premises are maintained to a satisfactory standard of hygiene. For example, all floor surfaces are clean and children use clean personal items, such as, linen and dummies. Food preparation areas are maintained to an appropriate standard of hygiene and cleanliness and staff use suitable hygiene practices and equipment, such as, aprons and gloves when dealing with food and changing nappies. These appropriate practices limit the spread of infection and reduce the risk of cross infection, particular for the youngest children in the setting. Staff in some areas of the setting take appropriate care of children's personal hygiene. For example, the nappies of children in the baby and toddler rooms are changed regularly.

Children in all areas of the setting use sufficient and appropriate resources, which promotes their physical development. They enjoy playing outside because the outdoor play space is well equipped. It includes, equipment, such as, climbing apparatus and slides; they are developing large movements and using different muscle groups. In addition, they are developing their coordination and balance as they ride bikes and trikes. Some planned activities are used to help pre-school aged children to develop their awareness of space whilst they are playing outside. Children's fine manipulative skills and eye to hand coordination is promoted as they use malleable materials, such as, play dough and tools including rolling pins and cutters. To increase their enjoyment children sometimes carry out messy play activities, such as, sand and water play, outside in the sunshine. However, some pre-school aged children show no awareness of the need to respect other children's space whilst they are playing indoors.

Children's accident and medication records contain all of the required details and sufficient staff who are qualified in first aid use suitable procedures and first aid equipment to deal with minor accidents involving children. Essential written parental permissions are in place, such as, for the setting to seek emergency medical treatment for children.

Children in all areas of the setting eat nutritious and balanced meals; their food is presented in a manner that reflects their varying stage of development. Staff sit with the youngest children and give them appropriate levels of support to help them to enjoy their meal, bottle fed babies are held whilst feeding and this enables them to relax and enjoy their feed. There is systematic procedure in place for the management of children's allergies, which is familiar to staff, this assures the safety of children's food from the kitchen to the table. Children across the setting are provided with sufficient fluid throughout the day, which includes milk, water and juice at set times. In addition, fresh drinking water is available to all children throughout the day. Drinking water is easily accessible to pre-school aged children throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is at risk as managers do not take sufficient steps to ensure the suitability of temporary staff. Systems to confirm their identity and ensure they are suitably vetted are not sufficiently robust.

Systematic risk assessments and daily checks minimise risks indoors and outside. Most staff are clear about the health and safety procedures that are in place; they know the designated member of staff with overall responsibility for health and safety in the setting. They acknowledge that addressing health and safety issues is an essential part of their duty to contribute to children's safety in the setting. For example, staff monitor the setting's entrance and exit; therefore, only persons who are permitted, are able to enter. All fire exits are marked and kept clear, the garden is checked before children are allowed to use it. To develop children's awareness of fire safety and ensure that they are all able to evacuate the premises quickly and safely, staff practise the fire drill regularly with all of the children.

Children are welcomed into a clean and secure nursery environment. They have sufficient space to carry out a wide range of activities, both floor based and tabletop. All areas of the setting are appropriately equipped to reflect the age of the user group as children progress from the baby rooms through to the pre-school room. Displays of children's work and photographs help to create a child centred environment throughout the nursery. The securely fenced safe outdoor area enables all of the children to play outdoors and there are sometimes opportunities for the older children to move freely between indoor and outdoor activities. Children in all areas of the setting have easy access to a wide range of suitable resources that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. The resources have the potential to meet children's learning needs. However, staff in the pre-school room do not use the resources effectively to capture the attention or engage children in purposeful and meaningful ways. This allows children to become bored and disruptive.

Most staff demonstrate sound knowledge of child protection issues, although not all staff are familiar with the setting's child protection policy. However, they are all clear about their individual role to safeguard the children by bringing any cause for concern about children's welfare to the attention of a senior member of staff, whether the concern is raised by an event in or outside of the setting. The staff member with designated responsibility for dealing with child protection in the absence of a permanent manager demonstrates sound knowledge of child protection issues. She is clear about lines of communication for dealing with issues of concern about children's welfare, dealing with the local authority and parents in accordance with the setting's policy. The setting is experienced at working with the local social services to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Insufficient levels of attention and support are given to older children and some of children show no awareness of the need to respect other children's space. This often results in children becoming upset, angry and tearful because their play is disrupted. Older children's emotional development and independence is not sufficiently promoted, for example, they are not learning to share. In addition, not all of the older children are developing their appropriate levels of self-care. For example, some children do not successfully tend to their own personal needs and are not sufficiently confident to ask staff for help.

The younger children in the nursery benefit from a suitable range of activities that are based on the Birth to three matters framework. These children experience activities and use resources that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. They promote all areas of their development and younger children are purposefully engaged. For example, they use a range of interactive play centres and other suitable resources which are easily accessible to them. This encourages them to explore their surroundings and test their senses. They develop their language and communication skills because staff talk and listen to them. In addition, they explore books and enjoy singing action and nursery rhymes. Children who are able, join in enthusiastically. The emotional development of the youngest children is supported appropriately because staff work closely with their parents to settle them and most of the younger children are contented.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Through planning some staff demonstrate that they have some knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. They plan some activities which have the potential to progress children's learning towards the early learning goals. However, very poor management and organisation of the pre-school rooms means that children are not able to focus on learning. For example, the daily routine is very loosely structured. This creates an atmosphere that is chaotic and disorganised, as there are insufficient boundaries or structured and challenging activities to help children to settle and focus their attention.

Staff are failing to put their knowledge of the curriculum and the stepping stones into everyday practice to promote children's learning. For example, there are workstations labelled 'shape', 'letter' and 'colour of the week', but they are not equipped with resources or activities for children to explore. Mathematical and mark making resources are available, but because they are unattractive and unsupported by staff, no children use them. There are very few opportunities for children to consolidate their understanding of numbers and none to explore calculation and measurement. There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop their understanding of numbers through practical work and mathematical language. Clear labelling in the pre-school help children to understand that print carries meaning and staff remind them to write their names to label their artwork. However, opportunities for children to progress all aspects of their communication, language and literacy are very limited and inconsistent. Staff do not give sufficient attention to developing children's listening and speaking skills. There is an inconsistent approach to developing writing, and linking of letters. For example, because the noise level in the setting is extremely high, there are very few opportunities for conversation; children are not able to listen carefully or to express themselves. Children explain that their favourite books are 'Fly Eagle Fly' and 'Story Maker.' However, children do not make independent use of the books, and children do not visit the bookcase, even though it is equipped with a wide selection of good quality books and there is a comfortable place for them to sit.

Displays in the room indicate that children have opportunities to explore their creative development. For example, they decorate stars and make junk model space rockets in support of their topic 'Space'. They also make papier-mâché spheres to represent the planets. Musical instruments are easily accessible to the children, which children do access. However, children make very little use of the home corner/role play area, because it is disorganised and unattractive. The poor organisation of the area discourages children's independent use of the resources to occupy themselves and practise life skills; this limits their social and communication skills.

Staff are not skilful at managing the children, a significant number of children show that they do not understand what is acceptable behaviour. They have a limited understanding of right and wrong, and they do not consider the effect or the consequences of their words and actions. For example, some children throw items of toys around the room, they kick, pinch and hurt others and call their peers derogatory names, such as 'stupid'. They shout at staff and are unresponsive to staff's request to stop the inappropriate behaviour and apologise for the hurt they have caused. The behaviour of these children dominates the pre-school environment, and disrupts all areas of play and work. This makes it very difficult for other children to express themselves and show their levels of achievement, confidence or self-esteem. For example, staff abandon the large group activity designed to promote children's listening skills, because a number of children cannot settle; they consistently disputed the activity. Some children who want to participate in the activity are disappointed and upset that the activity cannot be completed. Overall, children do not make sufficient progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Staff fail to manage the behaviour of the pre-school aged children, because they do not ensure that the resources are used effectively, creatively or imaginatively to stimulate the children. Staff do not give children enough support or provide appropriate levels of stimulation and challenge to keep them purposefully engaged, children become bored and very disruptive. The poorly organised pre-school environment does not provide firm, clear, consistent boundaries to enable children to settle and develop their concentration and make progress towards independent learning. In addition, staff lack the confidence and initiative to intervene positively and redirect children when their behaviour is inappropriate. They do not provide sufficient guidance to help to children to learn wrong from right. Children's inappropriate behaviour interferes with, and hinders children's progress in all areas of their care and learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

Suitable strategies are used effectively to managed the behaviour of the youngest children in the setting. These children are learning to behave well because staff give them the appropriate levels of attention and stimulation, which keeps them purposefully engaged.

Sufficient resources are available in the setting to meet children's care and learning needs. These include practical resources to raise children's awareness of cultural diversity and disabilities. Staff across the setting carry out observations of children's achievements and in some areas the records are used appropriately to support children's care and learning. There are appropriate policies in place to enable staff to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the poor organisation of activities for pre-school aged children provides no assurance that the learning needs of children who speak English as an additional language and children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties are met to a satisfactory standard.

Partnership with parents is inadequate. Parents state that they are provided with information about their children's care, most make reference to satisfactory information about what children have eaten, rest, and nappy changes. However, most parents are not provided with information to help them to understand what children do or extend children's learning when they are away from the setting. For example, parents express disappointment that children no longer bring books home. Some parents have raised concerns about the management of children's behaviour in the pre-school and are also concerned about how the pre-school is preparing children for

mainstream education. Parents also state that the noisy pre-school environment is a reason why some children do not want to attend nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are welcomed in a secure nursery environment. Staff provide the younger children in the nursery a satisfactory range of age and stage appropriate resources, which are readily accessible for them to use in their daily activities. However, this is not consistent in all areas of the nursery. For example, children in the pre-school room are not provided with appropriate levels of stimulation or challenge and this is severely hindering the progress they are making in their learning and development.

The welfare of children in the setting is not sufficiently safeguarded because managers in the setting do not always use the policies and procedures that are in place to assure children's safety. For example, they do not check the identity of agency staff to confirm that all staff who work directly with the children are suitable to do so. In addition, the induction procedure is not always followed through with temporary staff to ensure that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities in the setting. The registered person has failed to notify the registering authority of the persons with responsibility for the day-to-day management of the nursery. The registered person ensures that there is sufficient and appropriately qualified staff working directly with the children. Staff provide appropriate levels of support for younger children, but older children are not sufficiently supported. With the exception of several different nursery managers, a stable core team of staff is achieved amongst the staff who work directly with children which provides consistency for children.

All documentation required to safeguard children's health and welfare is in place, they are maintained in an orderly way, and confidential documents are stored securely in the nursery office. For example, room registers include the names of the children and the staff who are working in specific areas. These documents are accurate and up to date and the names of visitors to the setting are clearly recorded also.

However, the setting does not communicate well with parents. Parents are not provided with sufficient information to keep them informed of the changes that are taking place in the organisation. Parents feel unsettled about how the changes are affecting their children. The setting does not provide parents with a copy of the inspection report. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is inadequate. The inconsistent management team does not provide staff in the nursery with appropriate levels of support and guidance to enable them to meet the needs of all the children consistently. This is particularly evident in the pre-school room where, due to very poor organisation and management, staff fail to manage children's behaviour or provide a secure structure with sufficiently challenging and stimulating activities to progress children's learning towards the early learning goals. In addition, the leadership and management team does not ensure that parents are involved in their children's learning. This limits the opportunities for parents to help their children to consolidate what they know by building on what they learn in pre-school. There is no system in place to evaluate the quality of the nursery education. The lack of monitoring and evaluation has resulted in deterioration in the quality of the nursery education for pre-school aged children since the last inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection, actions were raised for the provider to ensure that all staff are aware of procedures to follow in the event of inappropriate practice observed/used within the setting and to develop staff's understanding of appropriate behaviour management strategies.

Since the last Children Act inspection, the setting has sufficiently developed staff's awareness of the procedures to follow in the event of inappropriate practice observe in regards to safeguarding children's welfare in the setting. Staff in all areas of the setting are clear that they would notify the manager or senior member of staff of any inappropriate practice or action they observed being used towards children. They all state their expectation for the manager to follow the setting's child protection procedure to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. The setting has taken some steps to developing strategies to use to help staff to manage children's behaviour. Some staff have had training in behaviour management from an outside agency. For example, staff in the toddler room speak positively of the knowledge and skills they have gained. In this area of the setting, they are successfully managing children's behaviour with strategies that are appropriate and suitable to the children's age and understanding. However, to date not all staff have undergone the training. For example, staff in the pre-school room have not yet started the training. They lack confidence in managing children's behaviour and a significant minority of children in this age group continue to display inappropriate and highly challenging behaviour, which continues to interfere with, and consistently disrupts and hinders activities and learning for all of the children in the pre-school room. The action raised following the last inspection is not met.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to provide consistent challenges to promote all areas of children's learning.

Since the last nursery education inspection, the provider has failed to provide consistent challenges to promote children's learning. Children in receipt of nursery education are currently not provided with sufficient levels of challenge. They are not purposefully engaged. They become bored and disruptive and this creates a pre-school environment where children find it extremely difficult to settle and focus on learning; this severely hinders their progress towards the early learning goals.

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 complaint 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 inadequate - enforcement action. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

Ofsted is taking **enforcement action** to safeguard the welfare of children.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- provide meaningful and consistent challenges to promote all areas of children's learning in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum
- provide a rigorous system to manage, monitor and evaluate the quality of the nursery education.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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