



Leapfrog Day Nursery - Bicester

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134308
Inspection date	07 September 2005
Inspector	Ann Hilary Guy
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Day Nursery (Bicester) is one of 101 nurseries run by Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd. It registered in 2000 and operates from a purpose built two storey building in Bicester.

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 162 children aged from 3 months to 5 years on roll. Children come from the local area and beyond and attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children who either speak English as an additional language or have special needs.

The group employs 29 staff and 13 of these, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications; 9 staff members are working towards an early years qualification or furthering their qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of health and hygiene through the daily routines, which include washing their hands after going to the toilet and before meals. Nappy and potty training procedures are sound and prevent any cross infection. Very clear policies and procedures support the children's health and well-being, with suitable action taken if a child is unwell. Young children sleep according to their needs, monitored regularly by staff.

All children benefit from the nutritious, varied meals cooked on the premises, which meet all dietary and allergy needs. Special meals are prepared for children unable to eat the meal for the day. They have a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables as part of their daily menu and water is offered regularly or readily available for all children. They have limited opportunities to be independent, with many missed learning opportunities, especially within the pre-school room. Children do not assist with setting the table for meals or serving the food and they do not pour drinks for themselves. The lack of soft furnishings in the baby room means young babies are not always fed in a comfortable and relaxed manner to promote their well-being, and do not have furnishings that assist their mobility and give normal life experiences.

All children, except the youngest babies, make good use of the garden throughout the day, although there is not always sufficient equipment readily available to offer stimulation to them all. Babies sometimes go for walks in the local area and will occasionally go into the garden. They experience a suitable range of physical activities within their room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The warm, secure and welcoming environment ensures children are well looked after. Good safety precautions are in place throughout the nursery to ensure the children are as safe as possible at all times. The premises are well organised so children have adequate space to play safely both inside and outside the building. Where numbers of children in attendance in any one age group exceed the room maximum, strategies are in place to ensure the eldest children move to the next room on a visit. Staff who usually work with these children move with them in order to

maintain ratios. Mobile screens are used with the younger children to create different areas and space according to the activities in progress.

Children have access to equipment suitable for their age and stage of development, with the older children being able to choose from equipment stored on low shelves. There is sufficient equipment available for all age groups, however, children in the toddler room do not always have sufficient set out for the number of children present. Suitable safety procedures are in place to maintain the cleanliness of the toys and prevent cross-infection.

Staff protect children well. The manager is the child protection co-ordinator and ensures all staff have a sound understanding of the policy and procedures. She also carries out regular risk assessments to ensure the premises are safe for the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident, settled and secure. They show interest in the activities available to them and freely choose activities. Children under three years benefit from the good use made of the Birth to three matters framework when planning activities.

All children generally show interest in what they are doing as they develop their skills of concentration. They develop independence, although there are some missed opportunities, especially for the older children. The younger children enjoy experimenting with a variety of natural substances including pasta, oats and lentils, and they develop their skills of manipulation.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children progress at their own pace through the Foundation Stage. The assessment records are used to plot their progress against the stepping-stones. However, these records are not used to plan the next steps of learning. Their planning is not fully linked to the aspects of learning or stepping-stones and does not fully show the learning intentions or the aim of the activities.

Children enjoy periods of free-play, enabling them to explore the curriculum areas. However, adult interaction is variable, especially when outside. Children are happy and settled, and show a strong sense of belonging. They are confident in both large and small group situations, communicating well with both peers and staff. They are beginning to mark make using a variety of equipment. Children are given few opportunities to develop their mathematical skills and have limited opportunities to use technology in every day situations. Their topic-based programme introduces them to a wide variety of themes, including mini-beasts and the opportunity to find out about the local area. They have frequent opportunities to play outside and this area is sometimes used as an extension to the classroom. They develop their imagination very effectively using small world activities and have regular opportunities to listen to stories, sing songs and partake in other musical activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work with the parents to meet their individual needs. They develop an understanding and appreciation for other cultures and religions, through their topic work and activities. Children are encouraged to have a positive attitude towards each other, and staff aim to be fully inclusive. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Parental permissions are in place for most areas, except where specific confidential information is displayed.

Children behave generally well and learn the nursery rules, supported by the consistent practice of the majority of the staff team. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the positive relationship staff develop with parents and carers and the sound communication links ensure reasonably consistent and supportive care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are supported by a staff team who give due regard to their welfare. The manager, supported by the base room managers, oversees all aspects of the nursery. Children are in groups according to their age, with staff, generally at the required ratio, giving stability of care; however, over lunch time ratios in rooms are sometimes below the required level. The nurseries comprehensive induction procedure ensures staff give suitable support to children at all times. Their policies and procedures ensure children keep healthy and safe and have a suitable variety of learning experiences.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. A suitable number of staff members are either qualified or in the process of doing so. Some of the staff lack confidence using the Foundation Stage, but strategies are in place to develop a key worker system and support the staff.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection the nursery have made significant improvements, addressing most of the issues raised and improving their practice. A suitable standard of cleanliness is maintained and all children wash their hands, maintaining a satisfactory level of hygiene. Water and drinks are either provided regularly or freely available and a satisfactory key worker system is in place for the youngest children. The behaviour and child protection policies and procedures have been updated. Systems are in place to increase the free space for play available to toddlers, however insufficient domestic style furnishings are provided in the baby unit and this remains a recommendation.

The last nursery education inspection was in March 2005, therefore limited improvements have been made. An action plan is in place to address all the areas highlighted. However, a planning and assessment system is in place, although further development in all areas is required. Mathematics remains a weakness as does the use of technology. Resources have been greatly improved to develop children's creativity and imagination.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection in December 2003 there has been one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, regarding staff ratios in one of the rooms.

At the request of Ofsted, the provider carried out an internal investigation. The regional office received the findings, together with a copy of the staff rota and children's attendance record, demonstrating they were adhering to the standard under investigation. The provider remains qualified to be registered.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- provide additional domestic style furnishings in the baby unit
- ensure ratios are maintained at all times, especially during meals
- obtain written parental permission to display confidential information with a photograph

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):

- further develop the planning system to include all aspects of learning and outdoor activities; link the planning to the stepping stones and use the assessment records to inform the next steps of learning

- develop opportunities for children to be independent learners.

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