

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Rotherham, Oakwood

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	303256
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Tracey Jane Outram
Setting Address	Rotherham District General Hospital, Moorgate Road, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 2UD
Telephone number	01709 836669
E-mail	oakwood@pcnurseries.com
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 has been registered since October 1997. It is part of a national chain of nurseries, which are managed by a private company. The single storey premises are located within the grounds of Rotherham District Hospital. The nursery serves the town of Rotherham and the surrounding areas.

The children are cared for in base units, which are organised and equipped to reflect children's different ages and stages of development. The children all share access to the enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who have learning difficulties and disabilities along with a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 74 children under five years. Currently there are 100 children on roll, of these, 24 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery operates Monday to Friday from 07.00 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year with the exception of public holidays. There are 16 members of staff who work with the children, 15 of whom are qualified and one who is working towards a childcare qualification. In addition, there are three support staff plus a cook and administrator. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The good health of children is considered appropriately because healthy eating is prioritised within the nursery. Wholesome meals are served to the children using a range of good quality fresh fruit and vegetables. Menus are clearly displayed to give parents information about the types of food provided. This includes a range of interesting options, which encourage the children to try a broad selection of different food types. Good systems are in place to ensure that children's individual dietary needs are safely and successfully addressed. In most instances, members of staff successfully encourage children's personal hygiene skills. However, the arrangements made for the older children to access snacks and drinks do not safeguard children from cross-infection. In addition, the arrangements made for children under the age of two years to fully participate in snack time are not sufficiently reviewed to meet the varying needs of all children.

Most areas of the nursery are clean and comfortable; with the exception of the changing area for the children age two to three years, which is not always maintained in an orderly manner. Appropriate procedures are in place to prevent sickness spreading throughout the nursery. For instance, the children benefit from access to freshly laundered bedding and face cloths. Likewise, there are suitable arrangements in place to ensure that parents are informed of the sickness policy and exclusion periods for childhood infections. All relevant documentation relating to the children's personal health needs is in place and clear systems are in evidence to ensure that staff are fully aware of those children.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively to help members of staff monitor the children's progression, and provide activities to support their development. For instance, babies are gaining control of their bodies through the provision of appropriate activities and equipment, which encourage them to crawl, pull themselves up and stand. Equally, older children confidently, run, jump and change direction from through their participation in chasing games. They also benefit from the use of outdoor equipment, which they are able to skilfully balance and peddle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Appropriate procedures are in place to keep children free from harm; adult to child ratios are maintained effectively and staff are suitably deployed to ensure that the children are continually monitored. There is a designated health and safety officer, who takes responsibility for completing risk assessments and ensuring that staff have a good awareness of the policies and procedures relating to children's welfare. In addition, staff ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and they take positive steps to work closely with parents to ensure that there is no unauthorised access to the nursery. Members of staff effectively teach children right from wrong and enforce appropriate rules for keeping themselves safe. For example, by encouraging the children to pick up discarded toys and use equipment safely.

The indoor space is suitably organised to create a child-friendly environment, for instance, most activities are set-up to look inviting and examples of children's art work are attractively displayed. However, the outside play space is less developed. Although children have the use of a covered area for use inclement weather, the positioning of climbing apparatus on muddy

grass means that children are at risk slipping. Similarly, the outside play equipment is not frequently cleaned, therefore, the children are provided with the use of balls and hoppers which are dirty and muddy. Indoors, the children have access to some appropriate resources, most of which are appropriately maintained. However, games, puzzles and resources to enhance the older children's mathematical abilities are poorly organised and not freely accessible.

There is a clearly written and displayed child protection statement, which is underpinned by that of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In addition, there is a named person responsible for ensuring that child protection concerns are dealt with promptly. Members of staff working with the children have a satisfactory understanding of the indicators of child abuse and neglect, however, the systems for recording existing injuries are not sufficiently robust.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children enter the setting confidently and they are relaxed with the staff who care for them. The atmosphere is calm and children are happy and confident. They enjoy interacting with other children and participating in a range of practical activities which teach new skills. In addition, frequent use of creative play materials, such as sand, paint, water and mark making equipment successfully supports children's free expression.

Children under the age of two years are cared for by sensitive staff who plan a range of purposeful activities. This includes heuristic play and the use of treasure baskets to extend sensory and creative development. However, children over the age of two years do not fully benefit from staff modelling the use of language and asking open ended questions, in order to extend their vocabulary and communication skills.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is appropriately used by staff to plan activities and assess children's development. Staff frequently take photographs of the children absorbed in activities, they also make thoughtful observations, which form part of their development profiles.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Members of staff have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, therefore, they plan a range of activities that are designed to help children make progress towards the early learning goals. Activity plans effectively take into account that children develop and learn at different rates, but information gained from focused activities is not used to guide future planning or help children move to the next stage in their learning.

Members of staff take some positive steps to provide an interesting indoor environment, which encourages children to be independent. However, they do not always make best use of the available resources or the free space to provide children with a range of challenging activities that encourage problem solving skills and creative thinking. For instance, children do not have free access to listening equipment, games and puzzles on a daily basis because insufficient use is made of the 'orange room'.

The children can confidently communicate and interact with others, for instance, they effectively negotiate the shared use of the computer without the needs for adult intervention. They enjoy singing songs and many children have the confidence to join in group discussions and answer questions in a large group. For instance, through repetitive and animated discussions at circle

time they confidently display their growing knowledge of weather patterns, seasons, days of the week and months of the year. However, there are fewer opportunities to use language through pretend play and imitation because role-play equipment is uninspiring and in short supply. This impinges on the children's opportunities to express their creativity and experience a variety of imaginative play situations.

The older children are able to correctly name shapes and they freely use familiar mathematical language during their play, for instance, bigger and heavier. They count precisely up to 10, and accurately recognise numbers up to nine in their symbolic form. Equally, some children are able to link some sounds and letters. However, activities are not sufficiently planned to encourage the more able children to write for a purpose. For instance, opportunities for children to begin to identify their name and assign meaning to marks are insufficient because name cards are not used as part of the daily routine and mark making equipment is not provided as part of everyday activities.

The children skilfully use construction equipment to design interesting models, which are subsequently displayed and valued by staff. Equally, they are able to use crimping scissors, hole punches and magnifying glasses with purpose. However, the children are left frustrated in other instances because torches, telescopes and stopwatches contained in the 'science tray' do not work.

The children's physical skills are developing appropriately. They have a good attitude towards exercise and they enthusiastically participate in adult led activities when they are timetabled. These include running, jumping and racing games. However, physical activity is not systematically planned, therefore, some outdoor activities are not purposeful and inclusive to all children. Overall, the children demonstrate very good self-help abilities. They skilfully put on aprons, wash their own painting equipment and take responsibility for their own personal care. They also demonstrate good concentration skills and an interest in exploring with a range of materials, such as water, ice, paint, sand, pebbles and shredded paper.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children benefit from daily opportunities to enjoy non-gender biased play provision and they are taken on occasional outings to the local library, hospital and woodlands. However, there are few artefacts and dressing-up clothes which help the children to explore the wider world, their own cultures and develop an awareness of those outside of their immediate experience. Additionally, learning support for children who are learning English as an additional language is not fully explored. While some effort is made to show respect for children's home language, visual aids are not in daily use and specific talking and listening activities are not routinely provided.

The children are very well behaved because behaviour management techniques are consistent and appropriate to children's age and level of understanding. There is a designated behaviour management officer, who takes responsibility for staff consistency and the development and implementation of individual behaviour plans for those children who require some additional support. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents' wishes for their children are positively addressed, and there are good systems in place for staff to notify parents about the children's daily activities and progress. This is done verbally for older children while babies take home a written daily log. Parents are provided with a range

of good quality information about the setting. They have access to menus, policies, procedures and previous inspection reports. This helps to foster good relationships and ensures that parents are informed of any changes affecting the operation of the setting. Partnership with parents in respect of nursery education is good. They have free access to curriculum planning and the nursery prospectus, which helps to demonstrate how the activities provided link with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. In addition, newsletters ensure that parents receive some information and ideas about how to support their children's learning at home. The children each have a key worker who takes responsibility for maintaining assessment records and talking to parents at the planned open evenings. On the whole, children's assessment records are very good; they provide a colourful and photographic illustration of the children's progress and their time in the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where some positive relationships are in evidence. Effective recruitment procedures are in place and managers take positive steps to ensure staff suitability by obtaining reference checks and the implementation of a rigorous induction programme. The setting has a sound commitment to sourcing training for staff in order to support the development of everyday working practices. Parents have access to information about the setting, policies and procedures are well organised, and children's records and personal information is stored securely and regularly reviewed.

Adult to child ratios are maintained appropriately and the nursery has emergency plans in place to cover unexpected staff absences. However, the organisation of the children's base rooms is not always successfully managed. For instance, in order to maintain ratios there are occasions when children move rooms and staff work in areas of the nursery, which they are unfamiliar. This does not support the smooth operation of the setting and it is unsettling for some children who are left without access to a familiar adult. Equally, the merging together of groups of children late in the afternoon lacks coordination. For instance, resources are not sufficiently stimulating for the older children and some group activities are duplicated.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager has a commitment to the development of the nursery provision and has prioritised areas for improvement beginning with the outdoor play area. However, methods of critically reflecting the nursery education and meeting with staff who are responsible for planning and assessment do not ensure that children's individual needs are successfully addressed. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to complete risk assessments and enhance the health and safety procedures. Subsequently, good progress has been made in this area. There is now a designated health and safety officer to facilitate the provision of a safe and secure environment. Recommendations connected to planning, assessment and the provision of resources for children under three years of age were also made. Since then, members of staff have taken positive steps to plan a range of activities and early years experiences that are recorded, photographed and shared with parents. However, equipment to reflect diversity within society and toys to support children's imagination through role-play remain limited.

With regard to Nursery Education, the setting was asked to increase physical challenges and opportunities for children to learn about every day technology. Consequently, the children now have daily access to the computer and a selection of outdoor equipment.

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

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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):

- promote equal opportunities by ensuring that snacks are provided to meet the individual needs of children under the age of two years
- enhance the good health of children by reducing the risk of cross infection at snack times, and ensure that changing areas remain well organised
- ensure that toys and resources are maintained in clean working order (also applies to nursery education)
- develop the outside play area, to provide an inclusive environment for all children to enjoy physical activities (also applies to nursery education)
- plan activities to support children who have English as an additional language (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure that the organisation of staff, space and resources meet the children's needs effectively.

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):

- provide opportunities for children to express their creativity and experience a variety of imaginative play situations
- encourage mark making and writing for different purposes
- use children's assessment records to plan the next steps in children's learning.

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