

# Just Learning Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	254137
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Eglinton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Northside Road, St. Andrews Business Park, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0HT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 300531
<b>E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:norwich@justlearning.co.uk">norwich@justlearning.co.uk</a>
<b>Registered person</b>	Just Learning Ltd
<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 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?

Just Learning Nursery Norwich, is part of the Just Learning Limited national chain of day nurseries. It opened in 1999 and operates from purpose built premises set in an urban area on the outskirts of Norwich. There are a variety of playrooms for children of different age groups with all children having access to fully enclosed outside play areas. A maximum of 72 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 but closed for bank holidays.

There are currently 152 children aged from a few months to under 5 years on roll. Of these 50 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as many of their parents travel in to work in the city. The nursery has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 31 staff. Of these 22 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four staff are working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about keeping themselves healthy through good daily routines, and automatically wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Older children are showing a good awareness of understanding why they need to wash their hands. For example, they talk about germs being on their hands and know that not washing their hands could lead to being unwell. The systems for nappy changing are efficient ensuring that surfaces are kept clean by using anti-bacterial spray. However, although the setting has devised cleaning procedures, these are not always being consistently followed. This results in some of the toys and equipment in the older children's rooms, and areas of some of the play rooms not being particularly clean. Consequently, this does not ensure that all of the children are benefiting from playing in a clean and hygienic environment.

A suitable ratio of staff hold a current first aid certificate which enables children to be given appropriate care if there is an accident. Parents give prior written consent to administer medication which ensures children receive the correct dosage. Children who are infectious do not attend thus preventing the spread of infectious ailments. Children receive varied and nutritious meals and the setting has put in place effective procedures to ensure children's individual dietary and medical needs are met. Younger children are able to access and recognise their own individual drinking beakers because staff have put photographs of the children on the beakers, which are placed at low levels. Older children also have access to drinking water throughout the day. This ensures children are learning to recognise when they need to have a drink which enables them to become independent.

Mealtimes are generally a social occasion where children sit and chat freely to staff and to their friends. Older children are able to serve their own portions of food during lunch time, and even the younger children are given the opportunity of choosing when to eat their snacks. However, staff are not always following this procedure appropriately. Consequently, this sometimes results in some toddlers having to wait until the other children have finished their snacks, which defeats the object of free choice. Children are learning about healthy food options through practical ways. For instance, they have grown a variety of salad and vegetables in the garden, and are encouraged to talk about their favourite vegetables during meal times.

Opportunities for children to be active, learn control of their bodies, and develop their physical skills are good. They have great fun practising their balancing skills when they walk across the balancing beam in the garden, and are confident in climbing up the climbing frame and down the chain ladders. They enjoy bouncing along on the space hoppers and skilfully manoeuvre the bikes around the garden area. Children competently use a wide range of small tools and equipment with increasing control including, scissors, and glue sticks, and different size paint brushes.

Staff follow babies individual routines for eating and sleeping which helps to establish continuity of care, and supports babies overall physical development. Babies and children receive lots of warmth and affection which fosters children's emotional development and gives them confidence to explore new experiences. However, younger children do not always have the opportunity to interact with a consistent adult during intimate care routines, and some staff do not always approach children in a sensitive and respectful manner when cleaning their faces.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment where they are able to look at photographs of themselves, which helps them to develop a sense of belonging within the setting. Children benefit from playing in a well organised and secure environment which generally enables them to move around safely and freely. All children including the younger ones confidently help themselves to their toys and resources, because they are stored at low levels. This enables them to become focused during their play, and enables them to take the initiative in their learning and development. Children use a wide range of good quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. This means they are being offered appropriate challenges to extend their learning and development.

Regular fire drills help children become familiar with the procedures so they learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. Staff use gentle reminders to help children learn about safety within the setting. Although the setting has put in place appropriate risk assessments and safety check lists, these are not being consistently followed by staff. Consequently, this results in staff not checking that some areas of the outdoor play space are free from plants that could cause skin irritations, and staff do not ensure they are consistently supervising children when they play on the large play apparatus to prevent accidents. Furthermore, organisation of meal times for the older children does not ensure children are not at risk of injury, due to the positioning of the hot food containers.

Staff have sound understanding of understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. However, some staff are not always vigilant in following the settings procedures for recording injuries sustained whilst in the care of parents. This does not always support children's well-being.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and overall learning. They confidently enter the nursery and straight away involve themselves in play. They are generally happy and settled and are developing warm and caring relationships with the staff, and with each other. For instance, they cuddle staff and talk about coming back to visit them on their last day before they leave to go to school. Appropriate settling-in routines which includes bringing in special comforters from home, eases the transition from home to nursery. This enables children to make satisfactory progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

Staff enable the babies and toddlers to benefit from lots of sensory play. For instance, they have placed different types of textured wallpaper in one area of the room for very young children to explore, and have grown different smelling herbs in the garden. Young children enjoy exploring glue and paint and are given sufficient opportunities of using a range of mark-making materials. Staff have provided cosy corners with soft furnishings, which give children the opportunity of snuggling-in with a variety of objects and with different people. However, babies and toddlers development records are not always being completed appropriately which does not enable staff to plan and provide activities to help progress children's individual development.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. They are encouraged by staff who are caring and have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Some of the staff make full use of each and every learning opportunity, which arises during spontaneous events. For example, children show lots of interest in talking about their experiences of hospitals during circle time. This leads to children creating their own ambulances which they design, and make out of recycled materials. The member of staff skilfully uses open ended questions to motivate and extend children's learning and thinking. However, not all staff are using similar teaching strategies which sometimes results in children becoming distracted, because activities are not capturing children's interests.

Written plans are linked to the six areas of learning and make clear what children are expected to learn. However, planning of activities does not always correspond to the original learning objective. This makes it difficult to evaluate if the learning intentions has been successful, and does not help staff recognise where they have been successful in promoting learning, and where aspects require improvements. Although each child in the setting has their own development record, some staff are not always ensuring this is being regularly updated to enable them to plan the next steps in children's learning.

Children speak confidently to peers and adults during their play and their spoken language is developing well. They are confident about talking about their experiences during circle time, and listen to each other while taking turns in the conversation. Children are learning new vocabulary such as 'anaesthetic' and 'recovery' due to one child bringing along their oxygen mask following their recent stay in hospital. Children confidently write their ideas for designing an ambulance and then write the word 'ambulance' while sounding the letters. Children enjoy listening to stories in small groups and have access to a range of books including reference books, which they use during covering topics and themes.

Children confidently use numbers in every day situations and enjoy counting rhymes and use rhymes to count sets of numbers. Children have good opportunities of learning about calculating through practical activities. For instance, they lay the table and work out how many knives, forks, cups and chairs they need. Children are recognising patterns when they talk about the seasons and months of the year, and use measure when they talk about their 'big' and 'small' pictures. Children enjoy using the computer and are learning good mouse control when playing games on the computer. However, further opportunities are needed to ensure children are able to become fully competent in using other programmable equipment.

Children discuss past and present events when they talk about when they were babies and discuss some of them expecting their new brothers and sisters. Further opportunities are needed to help children learn about the local environment. Children have many opportunities to use their senses and explore a varied range of materials both natural, and manufactured. They are developing their imagination well when they pretend to fix the table in the garden with the toy scissors, and pretend they have caught a fish in the sand tray with the fishing net.

Children have good opportunities of communicating their experiences and ideas through their drawings, paintings, and models. They design ambulances out of junk materials using lolly sticks as the window wipers, and use tissue paper and paint, to decorate the sirens and steering wheel. Children have built up a wide repertoire of songs and have good access to a variety of musical instruments.

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

The provision is good.

Staff encourage all the children to participate in all of the activities provided, to ensure children have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Planned activities help children to understand and appreciate other cultures, which help children to develop a positive attitudes towards diversity. There are appropriate systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities. This means that staff are able to adapt activities, to ensure children can experience a range of stimulating activities appropriate to their level of ability. Children with English as an additional language are supported by staff learning key phrases, and working closely with parents who provide further assistance.

Staff manage children's behaviour through distraction and simple explanation that are appropriate to the age and understanding of the child. Children's behaviour is generally good and they play well together. Older children demonstrate good understanding of social rules. For example, one child reminds another child that they need to take turns and should not shout at the dinner table. Children are showing consideration towards each other and help each other. For instance, one child helps another child by holding a piece of tissue paper while the other child careful cuts along the paper.

The partnership with parents of funded children is good. Parents are made to feel welcome and their contributions valued, which has a positive effect on children's learning and helps children settle easily. Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive and parents speak warmly of staff's positive and welcoming approach. Parents provide appropriate and relevant information about their child's medical and dietary needs to the staff. This helps to ensure children receive individual care and attention.

Parents are given good information about the nursery through the prospectus and newsletters, and they are given ongoing information about their child's development and progress. For instance, daily care dairies are used for the younger children, and parents are invited to attend two formal meetings a year in addition to daily feedback, to discuss their child's progress. Information about topics are given to parents via a newsletter and a daily wipe board with information on the daily activities, keeps parents well informed. The nursery is working towards developing further opportunities to involve parents in their child's learning at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting has appropriate contingency plans in place to cover for absences to ensure they are meeting the correct ratios of staff to children. The setting has robust recruitment procedures in place, which ensures that staff are suitable and qualified to care for children, which promotes children's welfare. Children are appropriately grouped and are able to benefit from a balanced range of activities that allow them time for quiet, and active play.

Management actively encourage staff to undertake relevant core training which supports staff in their role, and ensures they have the latest and most relevant information available. Although the organisation has devised sound working procedures and policies which cover all areas of the provision, some staff are not consistently following and understanding some of the procedures. Consequently, this does not guarantee the safe and effective management of the setting.

The premises layout is appropriately organised and children are able to play outside frequently during the day which supports their development. Information kept about the children is relevant, and a good two-way flow of information between parents ensures continuity of care. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. Staff are supported by management through regular meetings where they are able to come together collectively as a group, or meet in their rooms to discuss their ideas for planning. The setting receives support from within the organisation, to support staff in the delivery of the educational curriculum. Regular meetings with outside agencies offer staff further support and guidance. The manager is pro-active in continually looking at ways of improving the overall service. For example, she has devised a development plan with key issues for action, which shows how and when identified weaknesses are going to be achieved. However, the setting needs to continue to develop the systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum, to ensure weaknesses in planning, teaching and assessments are quickly addressed.

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

At the last integrated inspection the provider was required to improve meal times for older children, to encourage further independence and socialisation skills. They were also asked to continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, to enable staff to offer further support to children during planned activities.

Older children now take responsibility for laying the dinner table and serve themselves their own portions of food during lunch time. They are also able to choose when to eat their snacks due the setting offering a flexible snack time period. This encourages children to become independent and encourages their social skills. The setting now ensures all new members of staff during their induction period, are briefed on their roles when working with the older children, which includes explanation of planning. The setting offers further support for staff to assist them in planning the educational curriculum, by having a peripatetic staff member visit the setting on a weekly basis. However, staff need to continue to develop this area further to ensure they make full use of every learning opportunity arising from focused and spontaneous events.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The concerns related to National Standard 6: Safety. Concerns were raised over systems for managing the risk assessment to ensure that staff understood the health and safety requirements made by managers. The other concern related to the emergency evacuation procedure to ensure it was effective in evacuating children in circumstances, where staff were deployed elsewhere within the nursery. As a result the provider reviewed their emergency action plan and updated them accordingly. Further support was given to staff to help increase their understanding of health and safety requirements, and additional monitoring systems were put in place by the manager. Ofsted were satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

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.

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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):

- improve the procedures for monitoring the cleaning of the facility including all equipment and play resources
- make sure nappy changing routines enables children to benefit from contact with a consistent key person and ensure younger children are treated respectfully during face washing procedures
- ensure staff are complying with the settings risk assessment with regard to improving the supervision of children when they have access to the large outdoor play apparatus, and organisation of meal times for the older children
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the settings procedures in particular health and safety and child protection

#### 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):

- ensure planning of activities is clearly linked to the learning objectives as stated in the curriculum plan
- improve the monitoring of the recording of children's assessments and ensure these are being used to inform future planning of activities, and indicate the next step in children's learning
- develop further opportunities for children to learn about their local environment and continue to develop the range of programmable toys
- introduce a rigorous system that effectively supports staff and monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching.

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)