

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Solihull

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289506
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Inspector	Sharon Waterfall
Setting Address	Blythe Gate, Blythe Valley Park, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 8AF
Telephone number	0121 745 7862
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Registered person	Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Leapfrog Solihull opened in 2001. This nursery is situated in a purpose built building located on the Blythe Valley Business Park in Solihull. The single storey building contains nine base rooms plus a communal play area, that links all rooms together. The youngest babies are cared for within a self contained unit that includes a milk kitchen and partitioned sleep facilities. The nursery also has a kitchen, toilets and nappy changing facilities, plus a large reception area, office and staff facilities. There is a large, enclosed area available for outside play, which most base rooms have direct access to. Positioned close to the motorway network, the nursery serves parents who work at a distance, as well as those from the business park and from the surrounding area.

There are currently 77 children on roll. This includes 13 funded 3 and 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00.

There are 20 childcare staff and 2 catering staff employed. In addition the company provides maintenance staff and contracts cleaners. Over two thirds of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3.

The setting receives additional support from the Early Years Development and Childcare. The organisation also provides senior managerial and training support from the company Head Office.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Meals and snacks for the children are prepared on site, they look and smell delicious which adds to the warm and welcoming atmosphere of the setting. The menu's are changed weekly and are healthy and nutritious offering the children a good variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Meals are made interesting to tempt children to try new flavours, though sometimes they prefer their favourites. For example, hot fruit salad with cinnamon and ice cream is provided as a dessert though many of the children rather preferred just the ice cream and seconds if possible. The children often have more helpings of their main meals also demonstrating their enjoyment. Staff sit with the children during meals times supporting and making the occasion more sociable. Drinks are accessible to the children throughout the day and healthy fruit snacks are given mid morning and afternoon ensuring that the children receive adequate quantities of food for their needs.

Babies are fed according to their individual routines and where possible this is done by their key person for continuity of care. The setting has a system of weaning that aids the children in progressing through three stages towards solid foods. This is completed in conjunction with the children's parents and includes both different flavours and textures of food. Systems are in place to ensure that all staff are aware of any food intolerances or allergies and details are held by the cook and for any specific need she will meet with parents to plan a diet specifically for the child. The displaying of the records of the children with food allergies is not confidential enabling visitors to the setting to be aware of information that is not required to be public.

Children enjoy a very wide range of energetic physical activities both indoors and outdoors that contribute to their health and well-being. They benefit from having opportunities to play in the garden on a regular basis. A large climbing apparatus enables the children to challenge their limits in a safe environment as staff supervise at all times. Wheeled equipment is used and the children are confident in steering and negotiating a path around the garden. Balance is developed through use of stilts and balancing beams, with children learning how to control their bodies as they dance and move in time to music. Smaller physical skills are supported by activities such as threading, use of tools in manipulative materials and painting. These support the skills needed for holding pencils for pre-writing skills.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene routines well with the support of the staff. Nappy changing procedures ensure that the spread of infection is limited as staff use gloves and aprons when changing children. However, the organisation of this time for toddler children is not effective in providing privacy and one to one attention, as young children wait in line for a sensitive care need to be completed. Young children are offered appropriate support and encouragement when potty training and older children are independent, only needing occasional gentle reminders to wash their hands. They are well protected from infection because

staff are very well informed about health care matters for young children. Comprehensive policies are in place and these are all available to parents, for example health and safety policy including information about infectious diseases. Parents are always well informed about any accidents during the day as there are good procedures in place, for example accident recording procedures. Effective medication policies are in place ensuring medication is stored and administered safely. Children are cared for very well if they have an accident or become ill as appropriate staff are first aid trained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery is a warm, welcoming and bright environment for the children and their families. They are greeted in the foyer area by staff and throughout the building, the smells of the meals cooking and the active feel of the environment add to its inviting atmosphere. Photographs displaying children actively involved in play; shares valuable information with parents about their children's activities and provides a good sense of belonging for the children themselves. There is a communal area for the older children that link the rooms that is used well for social mealtimes and creative activities.

The children have easy access to a very wide range of appropriate well maintained equipment at child height, encouraging independent choice in all rooms. Space is adapted to provide quiet areas for rest and playrooms with sufficient space for play. The outdoor area and physical equipment rooms are utilised during the day by all age groups of children providing vital active play.

Children are cared for very well in a clean, secure and well maintained environment. They are very comfortable within the effective boundaries set by staff for safety, for example waiting in line for staff to escort them through the premises. Risk assessments are completed for the building and all activities on a daily basis, for example the staff member with responsibility for health and safety uses prompt cards daily to check areas within the premises. Staff visually check their own rooms and the outdoor area and any issues are resolved by a specific estates worker. Staff are very vigilant about the children's safety and well being, the staff/child ratios meet the required minimum. Very good security ensures that all visitors are monitored, recorded and accurate registers are kept. Children develop a good awareness of safety issues as they practise fire evacuation. Fire safety equipment and electrical equipment are checked regularly.

Children are very well protected from abuse or neglect. Staff have attended training and appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Senior staff take a lead role for child protection and staff are fully aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children benefit from a knowledgeable and very caring staff group who have embraced the ethos of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff plan overall activities that are stimulating and interesting for the children and ensure that they use their observations to assess and support individual children's progress within development aspects. Their understanding ensures that these relate to the children's milestones and individual progression rather than elements of expected criteria. For example, staff record that some of the babies demonstrate a preference for certain pureed vegetables and they then aim to introduce combinations of flavours to expand the children's experiences. The staff gain very unique

information about the children and initially use their skills to read the children's non-verbal communication.

The children explore a range of differing textures and staff have the confidence to enable them to thoroughly get involved in the experiences. Children aged two years engage in jelly play, they firstly have it in a trough and use their hands to squeeze, lift and drop, and wobble the jelly. The jelly is then transferred to a table top where the children are really able to explore its properties. They slide, spread, wipe, hit and smear the jelly with their hands, arms and in some cases faces and hair. This activity supports many areas of the children's development as they play imaginatively with materials using all their senses, are playfully engaged, involved and enjoy being with others in their peer group. The washing and changing that happens after the very sticky activity supports their positive relationships with staff and demonstrates their importance to them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Staff plan an interesting range of activities that cover all aspects of the Foundation Stage. Planning differentiates for the range of ages and abilities within the group, though the focused activities are more adult-led than child-led sometimes limiting challenges for children. On-going assessment is completed and staff discuss and use the information to plan further learning experiences for the children. Spontaneous events are incorporated into learning, such as an extremely heavy down pour of rain which the children go to the windows to watch. They discuss how it sounds and that a car alarm set off by the rain can also be heard, this prompts discussion about the weather. The organisation of the sessions enable children to have free time and staff have plans to provide a better free flow structure demonstrating how they are evaluating their provision. Children's behaviour is good and staff in general use positive strategies such as discussion to resolve issues. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Many of the children are confident speakers and currently staff are encouraging all children to be involved in group discussions. Strategies include using events that are familiar to the children such as going to the dentist and firstly reading a story about it to prompt ideas and memories. The children take turns in describing their own experiences of this situation and it proves to be very successful both in encouraging all to participate and in learning new vocabulary. The children enjoy listening to stories and chose favourite ones over and over again. They join in with repetitive words and can sequence the pizza toppings in a well known story from memory. They often look at books independently and ask staff to read to them. Value is given to what children say and this is shown in displays of children's favourite food where staff have written what the children said which also adds to the print rich environment. The children are beginning to understand that print has meaning and enjoy mark making and emergent writing, many children can write their names and others are forming recognisable letters. They write for meaning in role play and in creative activities such as letters to Father Christmas.

Opportunities for counting are provided during many activities in the sessions such as at registration time, through number rhymes and in some stories. Many of the children can count beyond 10 and use their fingers to emphasis the number they are talking about. The children can recognise most basic shapes such as circles, squares and triangles with older children knowing rectangles and can distinguish bigger and smaller. However opportunities for children to problem solve and calculate are limited or opportunities are missed during activities for children to do so. They explore the world around them through hands on experiences such as planting flowers and walking around the local environment observing the changes to the

seasons. A mini-beast topic caught the imaginations of the children who used magnifying glasses to study them and make salt dough representations from their observations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected by caring staff who effectively use their observations, assessments, planning and information from parents to value and support children's personal development. The key worker system works well to support children's development and sense of well-being. Throughout the nursery staff show excellent knowledge of the children in their care and aim to make the children's attendance in nursery a positive experience. Displays show that children's representations of the world around them are valued developing their creativity and competence. They show delight in seeing photographs of themselves and their peers adding to their sense of belonging, security and identity.

The children show interest in cultural and religious differences through the planning of activities relating to differing festivals during the year including Chinese New Year and funded children celebrated Australia day. The setting is aware of inclusion for all children and works with parents and appropriate agencies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children's behaviour is managed by a staff team that show appropriate awareness of children's individual levels of development throughout the nursery and manage behaviour accordingly. The named member of staff has completed training in this area and the written policy reflects implemented practice and staff are all aware of its content through induction and regular team meetings. Staff provide good role modelling for the children in their own behaviour and language and their expectations for the children are consistent. Positive praise is used to raise children's self-esteem and rewards such as stickers are given for achievement. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Discussions with parents evidence the settings respect for them as their child's primary carers as they involve them in developing children's profiles that include up to date photographs, examples of creative work and progress reports. Settling in procedures are flexible to the individual families and parents feel very able to communicate with staff throughout the nursery to discuss aspects of care regarding their children. Communication is excellent with the setting being very sensitive to families lifestyles and supporting them at transitional times. Written information is shared daily regarding the young children's care needs and parents are invited to speak to their child's key person each term.

Funded children's parents are aware of the topics and themes in their educational planning through regular newsletters and daily displayed activities. A book sharing scheme enables parents to be involved in their child's learning and parents state that staff have specifically offered suggestions to support children's learning at home. Each term parents are invited to discuss their child's progress with their key person and look at their development record.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children develop very well and have fun within their learning through the excellent care and the quality and range of activities offered. Recruitment is robust and staff are deployed effectively within the setting at all times. The environment is extremely child focused with labelled individual work and photographs of children displayed throughout. The space is adapted

regularly to meet the needs of the children with future plans in place to change it formally to provide larger play rooms and all year round outdoor play. Written policies and procedures are effective in ensuring children's health, safety and welfare are promoted.

The manager motivates staff to continually monitor and review practice in the setting, effectively promoting care and learning. Most staff hold appropriate qualifications and each of them completes several courses a year, ensuring they keep up to date with developments in early years. Through regular staff meetings they share their knowledge and skills with colleagues and discuss new ideas. The welfare of the children is the priority in the nursery and all staff work as a team to meet all the needs of the children. Adult/child ratios are very good enabling children to receive a lot of individual attention, including those settling in and children needing extra support.

Leadership and management are good. Effective procedures and policies support the staff in working very successfully in partnership with parents and carers. Through evaluative practices the staff have developed children's experiences and continue to implement an assessment and observation system that supports individual children. Staff create a wide learning environment that provides children with interesting and explorative activities. Evaluation and monitoring of the educational provision is overviewed by the room supervisor, although key worker staff initially ensure that each child is individually supported. Information is shared in team meetings relevant for each child and activities are planned accordingly. Staff attend courses and workshops on aspects of the Foundation Stage and areas of learning and implement new ideas and improvements regularly. Advice is sought from outside agencies and implemented to further enhance children's learning.

Overall the provision meets the need of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection five recommendations were raised to improve the standards of care for children. These were to improve outside storage facilities and provide more challenging outdoor play; improve staff deployment at lunchtimes and implement staff training plans; expand the availability of resources that promote positive images and ensure sleep mats are in good condition; include all areas of the nursery in the cleaning schedules and improve the storage of dummies and to improve play and learning experiences linking observations and assessments for children under three years old.

The setting has successfully implemented all of the recommendations to ensure that children are well cared for and their health, welfare and learning are positive. Staff are deployed at lunch times to ensure that minimum ratio's are in place and staff supervise children directly as they sit with them through lunch. All staff attend regular and on-going training to support the good practice within the setting. A shed has been implemented in the garden area ensuring that outdoor play equipment is safely stored away and new equipment has been purchased, including a large fixed climbing frame that challenges all ages and stages of children's development. Children have independent access to a wide range of appropriate toys and resources that support their overall development including a good range that promote positive images of diversity within the wider community. New sleep mats have been purchased to ensure appropriate levels of hygiene and restful sleep for children. Overall hygiene has been improved as all areas of the nursery have specific cleaning rotas and the babies dummies are stored in sterilised pots when not in use. The staff have attended and are implementing the ethos of the 'Birth to three matters' framework very well. This has improved the range of play experiences for the youngest

children and has developed links between observations and planning to ensure that individual children's next steps are planned for.

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.

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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 systems for children's welfare by ensuring that nappy changing procedures provide privacy for young children and meet their individual care needs; and by holding records of children's dietary needs in a more confidential manor.

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):

- widen the provision of activities that challenge children's learning; with particular reference to calculating in mathematical development and their ability to problem solve throughout the curriculum.

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