

# Leapfrog Day Nursery - Kettering Venture Park

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	220026
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Kelly Eyre
<b>Setting Address</b>	Lamport Close, Kettering Venture Park, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 6XY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 525566
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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 Day Nursery, Kettering is one of 88 nurseries run by Leapfrog Day Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1999 and uses three main base areas in a purpose-built building. It is situated on a business park on the edge of Kettering, Northamptonshire. A maximum of 112 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 52 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 109 children aged from six weeks to under eight years on roll. Of these, 40 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the local and neighbouring communities. It currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 26 members of staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications and five are working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's physical development is well promoted and they are offered a creative range of activities. They are able to develop control of their bodies and improve physical skills such as co-ordination and balance as they climb on the climbing frame, ride bicycles and scooters, balance on tyres and stilts, play parachute games and participate in action rhymes. Good use is made of the outdoor play areas, providing daily informal opportunities for children to play in the fresh air and to determine their own outdoor activities. Children are able to develop finer skills and physical movements through their involvement in activities such as crafts, where they use scissors, manipulate small pieces and hold pencils and paint brushes correctly. Their hand-eye co-ordination is promoted through activities such as threading and construction.

Children's health is consistently promoted because staff have a good understanding of this area. There are good daily hygiene procedures in place to minimise the spread of infection, for example, bathrooms are checked and cleaned frequently throughout the day and children wash their hands before snack and meal times. However, children's understanding of the relevance of these practices is not fully promoted as staff do not always discuss this with them. Children's health in an emergency situation is well promoted because the majority of staff hold appropriate first aid qualifications.

Children's health and development is further promoted as they are offered a range of healthy snacks and meals. These are prepared daily on the premises and menu plans demonstrate that children are offered a balanced range of all food types, including fresh fruit and vegetables. This area is further supported as the setting has achieved the 'Northamptonshire Heartbeat Award'. Snack times are viewed as additional learning opportunities, where children are able to learn valuable social skills as they sit in small groups and talk together. However, their independence and understanding are not consistently promoted because they do not always serve themselves. Allergies and special diets are clearly recorded. There are very good procedures for monitoring these and ensuring that children's dietary requirements are consistently met and they are only offered the correct food and drinks. However, children's confidentiality is affected because personal dietary information is displayed on the wall.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where resources are appealingly arranged and easily accessible, helping them to feel valued and comfortable. Their safety is given a high priority and staff carry out daily checks to identify potential hazards, taking appropriate steps to minimise or remove these. This helps to ensure that children are able to play and move around the setting safely, freely and independently. The consistent daily implementation of policies and procedures ensures that staff are aware of safety practices and are able to promote children's safety, for example, there is a clear procedure regarding emergency evacuation and this is practised each month. This area is further supported as a comprehensive risk assessment has been completed and this is reviewed regularly.

Children are gaining a good understanding of safety issues and how to keep themselves and others safe. They are given clear explanations by staff to reinforce their understanding, for example, a staff member explains why it is important not to run in the play rooms. Children

have access to a wide range of toys and resources that are appropriate for their sizes and developmental stages. These are well-organised and easily accessible so that children are able to make choices about their play. Children's welfare is well promoted because staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. They have ensured that they have up-to-date information regarding current procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and settled, they come in confidently and are eager to explore the play resources and activities. Their care and daily experiences are enhanced by staff who are kind and caring, showing the children how much they genuinely enjoy their company and enthusiastically joining in with children's play and discussions. Children therefore feel valued and react to this positive atmosphere, which helps create a warm, caring environment. They have high self-esteem because they are given appropriate praise and encouragement from staff, for example, children proudly show off the finger paintings they have just completed.

Babies settle well and quickly become secure in their relationships with staff because they are cared for by a consistent staff group who take care to ensure that they are aware of all routines. For example, babies sleep according to their home routine. Staff are very caring and show this appropriately, for example, a toddler approaches a member of staff with arms outstretched and is given a cuddle, plays a tickling game and is then encouraged to look at books with a group of children. Good planning and easy access to resources ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities and are able to choose these themselves. For example, two young children choose to play with a train set whilst a small group of children are engaged in a leaf-rubbing activity. Children's interest is maintained and their learning extended because staff are skilled and experienced, making good use of open questions and suggestions to encourage children to think further. For example, children listening to a story are encouraged to compare sizes, count objects and name shapes. Their individual development is consistently promoted as staff use assessments of children and evaluation of activities to plan future activities and individual work.

The thoughtful, detailed planning of activities for all age groups ensures that children are consistently offered a balanced range of opportunities which are relevant to their individual developmental stages. This is supported by the confident use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform planning for children under three. Children are able to determine their own play and are confidently supported by staff who demonstrate a growing understanding of the holistic context of play, learning and development. For example, two young children playing with the train set are allowed time to explore this and are then joined by a member of staff who encourages the extension of their imagination by engaging them in discussions about where the trains may be going and who might be on the them.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas and their overall development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Children's progress is well-balanced because staff use practical, comprehensive methods for monitoring and assessing them. Information gained from assessments is used to inform future planning. Individual development is promoted because each child has their own

development plan, which is reviewed on a monthly basis, with all information from this fed into the weekly planning of activities.

Children are offered a wide range of stimulating activities and play resources that promote their confidence in playing and exploring. These include opportunities for role play, reading, messy play and a creative variety of crafts and construction. Their knowledge is then further extended as they participate in a range of themed topics which are changed on a monthly basis. This enables them to look more closely at subjects such as 'Transport', 'People Who Help Us' and 'Summer Holidays'.

The positive learning environment ensures that children have good opportunities to develop the attitudes and dispositions that enable them to achieve in their learning and development. They are motivated to learn through stimulating and interesting activities and themes. For example, when looking at a topic of 'Summer Holidays' they discuss their holidays and produce pictures of the modes of transport used for these, make textured pictures with sand, produce collages of ice creams, design their own postcards and construct sunglasses. Children are beginning to learn right from wrong through regular discussions and activities such as ones related to Valentines Day, which was used to talk about concepts such as sharing, being kind, helping and showing care and concern. Children competently use language to express themselves. They are confident to initiate conversations and understand the importance of listening to others, for example, at register time children listen carefully for their names and take turns in discussing the various topics. They are beginning to communicate through writing, for example, older children are able to write their names on their work.

Children are beginning to use numbers in a meaningful context and are beginning to see connections and relationships in these. For example, a group of children count the number of ducks in the water tray, recognising that the number reduces as the ducks are removed. Children confidently use mathematical concepts and problem-solving skills in their daily play, for example, they count the number of children at each dinner table and work out how many plates are needed. They have numerous interesting opportunities to observe, explore and question in a wide range of activities that form the foundation of their later learning in subjects such as history, geography, science and technology. For example, they keep African Land Snails, feeding and observing these daily and learning about the conditions needed for the snails to survive. Children are competent in the use of information and communication technology equipment. For example, two children work at the computer, using the mouse, changing programmes and switching off the computer correctly when they have finished.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. This is further supported as staff have put together a comprehensive file of physical activity plans which ensure that all areas are covered. However, children's understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and the relevance of this is not fully promoted because staff do not fully utilise opportunities to discuss this topic with children. Children have numerous opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form. For example, they have constructed their own 'emergency vehicles' using junk-modelling materials. They are offered a range of creative opportunities to engage in role play and extend their imagination. For example, two children play in the 'Hairdressers' role play area, pretending to cut and wash a staff member's hair and then using the cash register to take the payment for this.

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

The provision is good.

Children have a positive self-image and feel welcome and valued because they are respected as individuals. Their confidence and self-esteem are promoted because staff praise their efforts and achievements. For example, a child works hard at forming letters and is praised by a staff member. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised, recorded and consistently met. There is a clear policy supporting this and staff ensure that this is consistently implemented. Children have individual plans which are reviewed on a regular basis, ensuring the balanced promotion of their development. The good levels of support ensure that children are able to participate meaningfully in all activities and daily routines.

Children are offered a wide range of play opportunities and activities which promote their understanding of their local community and the diversities of wider society. They have daily access to a variety of play resources which give positive images and information about other cultures and ways of life. These include books, dolls, posters and play figures. Their understanding of their closer community is enhanced through activities such as visitors to the setting, including a police officer, the fire service, a gritting lorry and members of the local football team. Children's behaviour is good throughout the sessions and they confidently choose their activities and organise turn-taking and sharing. They are kind and considerate to each other, for example, a child fetches a ball for another child, enabling them to join in with the game. They are gaining a good understanding about taking responsibility for their own actions because staff give them clear explanations, helping them to understand the implications of their behaviour and make decisions about this. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given practical information about the setting's policies and procedures, ensuring that they are aware of daily practice and expectations. The good use of newsletters and notice boards ensures that they are kept up-to-date about activity plans, topics and themes. This area is further supported by regular sessions where parents are invited to stay and play with their children, enabling them to understand their child's time at the setting and be involved in their learning. They are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through daily discussions with staff, parents' evenings, written reports and access to their child's assessment files. Parents views are actively sought through the use of questionnaires. Feedback is taken positively and staff take appropriate action.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their daily care and experience of the setting are enhanced because of the attention they receive from caring, well-supervised staff. Their ongoing welfare and safety are promoted because there are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. This is further supported by a clear staff induction process, regular supervision and daily monitoring of all areas of the setting to ensure that policies and procedures are understood and consistently implemented. All paperwork and records are in place, ensuring that children's needs are clearly documented and staff are able to promote their ongoing safety and development.

Children's activities and play opportunities are enhanced by the careful organisation of space. There are separate base rooms for each age group, ensuring that the varying needs of the age groups can be met consistently. Designated areas for different types of activities within each base room mean that children are able to concentrate on their chosen activity and can move freely and safely between these. The thoughtful forward-planning and organisation of time mean that children are offered appropriate opportunities throughout the day. For example, they are able to play independently and with their peers, and can choose their activities or take part in structured activities.

Leadership and management is good. Children's overall development and welfare are promoted by the clear understanding that the manager and deputy have of their roles and responsibilities. The setting's practice and procedures are continuously monitored and reviewed to ensure that these continue to meet the regulations and provide appropriate care for each child. Senior staff act as good role models to both staff and children, demonstrating their enthusiasm and genuine enjoyment of their daily work with children. Staff are well-supervised and receive support for all training needs. This creates a positive atmosphere within the setting, in which children can play, learn and develop.

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

At their last inspection, the setting was asked to ensure that areas are large enough for a range of activities, provide an appropriate range of resources and activities for children under two and to ensure that sleep areas are sufficiently equipped. All areas have now been reviewed and there are new room dividers in place. Children are now able to move freely from one room to another. Activity planning for children under two has been reviewed and all individual needs are included within this. Rooms have been adapted and new sleep equipment has been provided. Children's daily comfort, care, safety and development are therefore further improved.

The setting was also asked to ensure that correct ratios are maintained, children under two are cared for by a consistent adult and in groups of less than twelve. Staff rotas have now been reviewed in order to cover all times of attendance. Group sizes have been reduced and a key worker system has been introduced so that children under two are cared for by a consistent person, thus improving their daily care, comfort and safety. Additionally, the setting was asked to ensure that hygiene standards are maintained in the kitchen and that there are effective procedures in place for checking that adults are appropriate to work with children. Hygiene standards have been reviewed and are now maintained in order to meet all requirements. Appropriate procedures are in place to check all adults working with children. These measures further ensure the health and safety of children.

At their last inspection of funded early education, the setting was asked to develop children's mathematical understanding with regard to problem-solving. This is now included in all daily activities and routines, thus improving children's understanding of this area. They were asked to develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage to ensure that appropriate activities are provided and children are sufficiently challenged. Staff have attended training and activity planning has been adapted to include variation for different ages and abilities and to include the needs of individual children, further promoting their overall development. The setting was also asked to develop the use of evaluation. All activities are now evaluated and children are assessed regularly, with this information informing future planning. All staff are involved in the evaluation of the setting and are developing 'Good Practice' guidelines for each age group, again promoting children's overall development and enhancing their experience of the setting.

## 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

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 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):

- further develop the procedures at snack time to promote children's independence and increase their understanding of hygiene practices
- ensure that children's confidentiality is protected. This refers to the displaying of dietary requirements.

### 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 opportunities for children to gain an awareness of the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active and the relevance of this.

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)