

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Bromborough

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	503196
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting Address	41 Bridle Road, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside, CH62 6EE
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Registered person	Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Bromborough opened in 2001. Ownership changed in 2007 and it is now one of a the Leapfrog Day Nurseries that are owned by Busy Bees. The nursery operates from purpose built premises located on a private site in Bromborough, Wirral. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 19.00 throughout the year. Children share access to fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 155 children aged up to five years on roll. Of these, 54 receive funding for early years education. The nursery supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend from a wide catchment area. The nursery employs 29 staff, of whom, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards an appropriate qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy freshly prepared, nutritious food each day. Menus are planned in advance to provide a balanced diet and they are clearly displayed for parents. Older children talk about their preferences, where food comes from and why it is good for you. Food tasting sessions further develop children's awareness. Babies have their individual needs met by blending food to the correct consistency for their taste and stage of development. Children's individual dietary needs are recorded and met at all times. A choice of healthy options are available for snack times and children are encouraged to say please and thank you when they are given a selection of sandwiches. Younger children are offered drinks on a regular basis but they are not encouraged to help themselves to a drink as part of a healthy lifestyle. Fresh drinking water is available for older children to help themselves when they are thirsty.

Children are protected from becoming ill because appropriate procedures are in place. Clear information is available for parents in the event of illness. Staff regularly ensure that their hands are clean by wiping them with solution from the numerous anti-bacterial dispensers around the setting. This reduces the risk of cross contamination and infections. The environment is clean and staff ensure that floors are cleaned after meals and bedding is washed regularly. Satisfactory hygiene routines are followed with children, such as washing hands before eating or cleaning their face with a clean wet flannel after lunch. However, appropriate hand washing procedures are not introduced with babies and younger toddlers which compromises their good health. Inadequate support and poor organisation during mealtimes means that young children do not learn appropriate hygiene procedures. This has a negative impact on younger children's health and well-being. Older children are beginning to accept responsibility for their personal care as they put on their own coats or use the adjacent toilets. They confidently find a tissue to wipe their nose and dispose of it in the right bin.

Babies' individual routines and parental preferences are followed in daily routines to promote continuity of care. Babies sleep comfortably in cots and children rest or sleep on mats in a safe area after lunch. Babies and toddlers enjoy play opportunities to explore their physical environment as they gain confidence and learn to move with more control. They experiment with movement in the sensory area with support from staff. The outdoor play area provides opportunities that promote children's health as they enjoy fresh air and physical exercise throughout the year. Wet weather clothes are available for inclement weather. Children have fun learning to use their bodies in different ways as they climb up the steps or slide down on the large apparatus on a soft surfaced area. They learn to position themselves in space as they pedal a bike around or negotiate different obstacles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure environment where safety is given a high priority. Close circuit television systems monitor children's safety throughout the premises. Limited access to secure areas within the buildings ensure that parents are welcomed and visitors are challenged. Staff to child ratios are suitably met and children are well supervised. Robust risk assessment procedures are followed to clearly identify potential hazards and dangers and, consequently, minimise risks for children. Consideration has been given to the fire safety procedures which are regularly practised to promote children's safety in the case of an emergency. Older children

are beginning to learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. They discuss safety issues during topic work or during role play games.

The environment is bright, colourful and welcoming for children and their families. Displays of children's art work, photographs of staff and informative posters promote a strong sense of belonging for children and welcome their parents and carers. Areas are well organised and rooms are spacious. The self-contained pre-school area on the first floor provides a cosy environment where children move freely and safely between play areas. This enables older children to develop confidence and independence.

A good selection of toys and resources are available to provide suitable opportunities for children across the age ranges to play indoors and outdoors. Resources are stored at a low level in labelled wooden units around play areas for older children. This provides opportunities for children to make their own decisions and choices. Equipment is checked for safety on a regular basis.

Children's welfare is protected through comprehensive child protection policies and procedures. These include information and contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Key staff attend training on a regular basis to update their knowledge and understanding.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children make progress in their learning in an environment where they are offered an adequate range of play and learning opportunities. Satisfactory systems for planning, observing and assessing children's learning are in place although these systems have not been fully implemented in all areas. Staff lack confidence or do not fully understand the purpose of the procedures and the impact on children's learning. Observations are recorded regularly but not often enough to highlight all the significant steps in progress for individual children, especially for young babies. This restricts opportunities to identify the next steps in learning for each child. Consequently, planning is based on adult-led activities and not on the needs of the individual children.

Staff have attended training and demonstrate a basic understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Subsequently, they have introduced some aspects of the framework to provide appropriate play and learning opportunities for young children and babies. For example, interesting treasure baskets are available for babies and young children to explore and investigate everyday materials. A sensory room with tactile resources, coloured lights and music helps children to develop their sensory information. However, young children are offered limited opportunities to access the wider aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and many activities are repetitive and uninviting. Most activities, such as investigating gloop or making a card, are adult led.

Children spend time sitting in a large group, listening to a story or waiting for the next instruction from staff. They display signs of boredom as they wait for activities to be prepared or tidied away during daily routines. Child initiated and independent activities are not actively encouraged in large groups and, consequently, chances to consolidate children's learning and experiences are lost. Children are offered exciting and stimulating opportunities in smaller groups where they develop confidence and independence with appropriate support from staff. For example, they thoroughly enjoy investigating the properties of glue and glitter and have fun creating vibrant pictures with discreet support from staff. They make steady progress because staff

recognise their individual needs and provide appropriate activities. However, planning is not differentiated to provide appropriate challenges for more able children in most areas. Staff undervalue babies and young children's ability to learn and have low expectations of children's potential. Consequently, children's progress is restricted and appropriate support is haphazard for young children and babies.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children eagerly join their friends and greet staff in pre-school. They confidently find their name card and proudly put it on the register board. Children enjoy choosing where they want to play. They move around freely between the different rooms and activities during free play sessions. This enables children to learn how to make their own decisions as they develop confidence and independent learning in a supportive setting. Whole group times provides an opportunity for children to happily gather together and sing lively action songs and rhymes. Younger children learn to relate to one another as they settle in to the new group. For example, they have fun naming a friend and rolling a ball to them in the large circle. This helps children to form warm relationships with the staff, who are friendly and enthusiastic. Children benefit from the staff's positive attitude and enthusiasm and, consequently, become actively engaged in play experiences and motivated to learn.

Staff have a sound understanding and awareness of the early learning goals and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children make steady progress within the Foundation Stage because staff organise and implement all areas of the curriculum to enhance children's learning. Imaginative medium and short term planning is in place and children are involved in organising future planning through group discussion. This provides some opportunities to explore and include children's interests and preferences. Planning is based on appropriate topics, such as Christmas, Under the sea or Transport. It includes interesting relevant activities to develop children's play and learning and recently revised planning systems link activities to different areas of learning. Record keeping is satisfactory. It is based on observations of what the children do and evaluations of focus activities. Staff complete an appropriate profile to record progress over time for each child. However, the next steps in learning for individual children are not clearly identified and not considered to inform future planning. Consequently, planning is activity led and does not promote clear objectives for individual children. Appropriate challenges for more able children or support programmes for younger children are not clearly identified in planning or practice. This has a negative impact on children's learning.

Children initiate and develop their own imaginative games in role play opportunities. They confidently activate their own computer programmes and learn to use tools and machines, such as magnifying glasses or calculators. Children learn more about the wider world and their natural environment as they plant tomatoes in the garden or cress seeds. They enjoy watching them grow and finally eating them together. They learn to care for living things when they watch snails grow and create a book about the experience. Children have fun experimenting with different tactile resources in the outdoor environment. For example, they create patterns with coloured ribbons or make tunes on a set of pans hanging on the fence. Inviting mark making and creative opportunities are freely available for children to make colourful collages or write a wish list.

Language and communication skills are developed and most children are confident communicators. Children confidently approach adults, ask questions and involve them in their imaginative play. They are encouraged by supportive adults, who show interest in what they have to say and ask appropriate questions to extend their experiences and learning. Children

learn to link sounds to letters and many are able to find their names and attempt to write them on their pictures. Informal learning opportunities are promoted during daily activities, such as pointing to their elbows or chins as they wait for lunch to arrive. Displays, posters and an accessible box of books promote language and literacy skills and children enjoy sharing stories. Mathematical understanding is developed through everyday activities and practical experiences. For example, children enjoy counting their friends in the circle and eagerly count how many days are left until Christmas Day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well-behaved and considerate towards adults and each other. Staff offer children regular praise and encouragement to promote a positive attitude. Sharing, turn taking and cooperative play is encouraged throughout the nursery. Minor disagreements are dealt with in a way that is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. For example, younger children are gently redirected when they squabble over the same toy. Older children are encouraged to consider other people's feelings and recognise different emotions. They learn to consider the consequences of their actions when they find it difficult to accept a change in activity. Appropriate strategies are used effectively to help children understand and respect house rules. They learn to follow clear boundaries, such as using a timer to create turns for children to work on the computer.

Equality of opportunity is actively supported and staff help children to consider and value diversity. Children are invited to play with a range of toys and resources that promote positive images and acknowledge cultural differences. The inclusive ethos ensures that children with learning difficulties and disabilities are appropriately supported. A lift to the first floor further promotes an inclusive environment. Staff attend relevant courses to increase their knowledge and understanding. They work in partnership with parents and support agencies to regularly review children's progress and implement an individual education plan to support children's individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents comment that they are happy with the quality of care provided for their children. They state that they know who to talk to if they have any concerns and find staff very friendly and approachable. The setting's policies and procedures are available on request and notices or newsletters keep parents informed about significant events. Good settling in policies and procedures are in place. For example, parents provide photographs of important people in their child's life and write about their child's preferences. Information is shared informally at hand over times and a daily information sheet is maintained for younger children with basic information on diet, nappy changes and sleep. This promotes effective continuity of care. Notices inform parents about current topics and activities in their child's area. Open evenings are held to provide a longer opportunity for staff to share information and discuss any concerns with parents and carers about their child's progress. Notices invite parents to continue topic ideas and offer practical ideas to extend their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The recent transfer in ownership of the nursery has introduced a stronger commitment towards overall improvement. Consequently,

current practice and procedures are being evaluated. Management systems are under review and required changes are gradually being implemented. The setting's main areas for improvement are identified by management through quarterly checklists and self-assessment forms. This information is collated and improvement programmes are implemented. For example, adaptations to the system to separate room areas are underway to improve the environment for children and families.

Appropriate recruitment and employment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are suitably vetted and that children are protected. An effective induction programme is followed to support new staff. The ongoing suitability of staff within the setting is monitored informally by management but there is no clear system to re-confirm the suitability of existing staff on a regular basis. This compromises children's well-being. Senior staff meetings are held monthly and information is shared with the whole staff team during base room meetings. Staff annual appraisal systems create opportunities to identify individual training needs.

The educational programme is monitored informally when management observe and discuss issues with staff at meetings. Room planning is sometimes monitored by management and focus activities are evaluated by staff to assess their effectiveness. However, the procedures to monitor the overall quality early years education provision and evaluate its impact on children's progress are not fully established. This has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and children's learning throughout the setting. The dominance and inflexibility of routines and staff adherence to daily programmes within the setting has a negative impact on children's play and learning. For example, children are gathered into a large group for long periods to enable staff to reorganise furniture, supervise hand washing or clear away resources. Consequently, children become bored and restless and do not learn to make their own decisions or develop a sense of ownership within the nursery.

Child to adult ratios are maintained and a key worker system provides consistency and continuity for children and families. Most staff are qualified and continue to attend appropriate training to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills. Appropriate documentation is in place and this is stored securely. Policies and procedures are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to support the care of children and comply with regulations. Important information, such as the complaints log and procedure, is available for parents.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the providers agreed to develop resources to promote diversity and to provide suitable comfortable furniture for children and staff. Appropriate resources have increased and furniture has been organised to meet children's needs. The providers also agreed to ensure that staff are organised to provide sufficient direct support for children and to ensure confidential information is not accessible unless parental consent has been obtained. All aspects have been addressed to improve the overall quality of care. All these recommendations have been met with positive effect on children's safety, welfare and learning.

At the last nursery education inspection, the providers agreed to review planning systems to allow more flexibility and emphasis on learning outcomes. They also agreed to improve assessment profiles to identify development areas for individual children. Planning and assessment systems have been reviewed to improve the quality of teaching and learning but require further development to meet the needs of individual children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted have received concerns relating to National Standard 6, Safety. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. A childcare inspector from Ofsted Early Years then visited the provision on 16 May 2006. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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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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):

- improve health and hygiene routines for younger children
- differentiate activities to provide challenges for more able children and appropriate activities for younger children (also applies to nursery education)
- extend the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform younger children's observations and plan their next steps in play and learning
- improve systems to confirm the suitability of existing staff on a regular basis
- review daily routines to maximise play and learning opportunities for children (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- increase the use of observations to identify next steps in learning for individual children and use this effectively to inform future planning (also applies to care)
- improve systems to effectively monitor the quality of teaching and learning (also applies to care).

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