



## Just Learning Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY221307
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<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 good. 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 opened in 2002. It is registered to provide care for 112 children under 5 years; of these, not more than 72 may be under 3 years, and of these, not more than 36 may be under 2 years at any one time. Overnight care is not provided. The nursery operates from 10 rooms in purpose built premises in Twydall, Gillingham. The nursery serves the local area.

The setting opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 until

18:00.

There are currently 72 children from 4 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 22 funded 3-year-olds and 20 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Staff support children with special needs; the group are not currently supporting any children who speak English as an additional language.

18 staff work with directly with the children; 15 have early years qualifications.

One member of staff is currently on a training programme.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a close relationship with the staff. They are very confident, especially the older children and able to express how they are feeling. They are encouraged to be independent, but ask for assistance readily if they are learning a new skill or feel unsure about something. Young babies observe and respond to their immediate environment and communicate with those around them.

Babies sleep routines are observed, they sleep comfortably in a travel cot or their buggies if parents prefer; they are closely supervised while they sleep to ensure they are safe.

All children eat nutritious meals that are prepared on the nursery premises. They can always access drinks easily. Staff cannot sit comfortably, whilst they bottle and spoon-feed babies. Older children sit to the table and learn good table manners. Staff assist children at meal times to cut their food when necessary. Children brush their teeth after eating and understand why this is important.

Staff prevent cross infection by adopting sensible hygiene procedures. Children's bedding is used exclusively by them and laundered regularly. Staff change babies' nappies regularly to keep them comfortable. Toddlers wash their hands before eating, and after using the toilet. They are learning the importance of good hand washing procedures. Children know where tissues are; they wipe their noses regularly, and know how to dispose of dirty tissues. Staff remove their shoes in the baby room providing a more hygienic environment for crawling babies.

The nursery has a pet hamster and fish. Staff supervise children closely when they stroke the hamster to ensure they learn how to treat animals kindly. They sometimes take the hamster home for a while.

The staff have good procedures in place for the administration of medication, to ensure parents are well informed and children are not given anything that is

unsuitable, however, very occasionally staff forget to ask parents to sign accident and medication forms. They do not care for children who are contagious ensuring children are not at risk of cross-infection. Children who become poorly whilst attending the nursery are comforted and made comfortable until their parents are able to collect them. All staff hold a current first aid qualification; they are able to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident or emergency. There is a first aid kit that a member of staff checks and replenishes as necessary.

Children often play outside in the fresh air; they regularly play in the garden. Children use a range of outdoor play equipment that encourages their physical development.

### Nursery Education

Most children move confidently, imaginatively and safely, however sometimes children become over boisterous and some staff are not sufficiently alert to what children outside their immediate group are doing. This lack of vigilance may result in children overstepping the boundaries in place to keep them safe.

Children have opportunities to practice new physical skills; a martial arts instructor visits the nursery to teach the children their discipline. They learn what they can manage to do with their bodies.

Children understand and learn about the importance of staying healthy through various projects, for example learning about people who help them like nurses and doctors. Children appreciate the changes that happen to their bodies when they undertake physical exercise.

Children use a range of hand held tools and are able to construct materials safely and with good control. Most children use scissors competently.

The children use a range of interesting outdoor play equipment that encourages their physical development.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy an environment that is bright, cheerful and clean, they have space to move about safely. They cannot access areas that are hazardous, protecting them. The premises are secure and staff greet the children and their parents at the door. Anyone who is not immediately recognised are asked to wait until their identity is confirmed, to ensure children are safe. The garden is secure and fully enclosed and children cannot escape or wander off.

Children choose what they want to play with from a good range of age appropriate toys. Toys and resources are selected carefully for their suitability and these are checked regularly to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child. The babies use some useful equipment that allows them to sit up safely to play when they are still a little wobbly. The babies learning to walk do not however have much equipment that enables them to safely cruise around the room; there is no domestic

furniture, and objects for them to hold onto are limited. Children use child sized furniture; this enables them to manage tasks more easily. Staff cannot sit comfortably whilst feeding babies because there is no suitable furniture.

The nursery management undertake a thorough risk assessment and staff ensure the environment is safely maintained. The potential hazards and risks are identified and safety equipment is in place to prevent accidents. Children's safety in the event of a fire is considered. Staff carry out fire drills with the children regularly; they are familiar with the routine.

Children learn about safety because the staff remind them how to keep safe, for example not to run in crowded rooms or walk around with scissors in their hands. Children ask for assistance readily if they are learning a new skill or feel unsure about something.

The staff understand their role in the protection of children and parents read the Child Protection policy when they first place a child in the care of the nursery. The staff understand the signs and symptoms of abuse; they feel confident that they would recognise if a child were being abused. The procedures to follow if any staff has concerns about a child in their care are clear.

Children are always in the direct care of the staff and therefore will never experience the unsupervised company of unsuitable adults.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies are cared for sensitively, staff discuss with parents their usual routines and are happy to change their practice to ensure children are comfortable and feel 'at home'. They explore their environment and are able to make discoveries for themselves, for example, a child became fascinated by a baby swing and spent a lot of time pushing it back and forth, watching the movement. They enjoy the staff chatting with them; they respond positively and are beginning to say some words and simple phrases.

Staff have embraced the framework to support children in their earliest years, Birth to three matters. The children's progress is recorded and this information is shared with parents. They provide children with an abundance of activities that allow children free choice, but there is perhaps an over-emphasis on this. Less planned activities are provided because of the fear of stunting children's natural curiosity. However, the assessment records are not used to arrange planned activities that might encourage a desired outcome without removing all choice. The younger children share equipment with children in the pre-school rooms. The staff rely on quite young children to remember what is available in other rooms, this is difficult for them without any visual prompts and consequently they do not access imaginative role play resources often enough.

All children play outside in the fresh air regularly, they experience a variety of physical outdoor play equipment that becomes progressively challenging as they

move through the nursery. Some children have completely free choice about when and how often they play outside, other room supervisors restrict when children play outside resulting in children experiencing a different service.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Several staff members working with funded children need to improve their knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They are not very familiar with the stepping-stones and miss many opportunities to exploit learning opportunities. They do not use the stepping-stones effectively to establish what children already know and can do. The children's development records have big gaps, especially the three year olds, and their next steps are not identified. Almost all children have very little recorded about their mathematical knowledge. The staff do however, write Individual Educational Plans for children with special needs. Staff do not understand fully how to use children's assessment records to plan appropriate activities that take account of children's individual needs, and evaluate what children have learnt. The planned activities are interesting and cover all six areas of learning.

Most children are interested, excited and motivated to learn new skills. They are confident to try new activities, suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group. They concentrate and sit quietly when they listen to a story or when a member of staff talks to them. They enjoy learning about different cultures, beliefs and special festivals. They relate well to adults and one another and often talk about their home life. Children work co-operatively in a group, take turns and share fairly. Children behave well; they understand the difference between right and wrong.

Children like to chat with each other, staff and visitors, they are confident to express their thoughts, likes and dislikes. Children understand simple instructions and remember what they are asked to do. Staff extend children's vocabulary and encourage them to talk about what they are doing; children ask and answer questions confidently. The children enjoy books and stories, especially when the reader involves the children and asks them questions about the story. Information books are not as prolific as fiction. Most children recognise letters and know the sound they make; they recognise their own names and some can write their names. Children learn about different forms of communication. They learn some French and sign language.

Most children count competently and recognise different two-dimensional shapes, however which shapes they know are not recorded in their development records. Children rarely make any simple calculations and staff miss many opportunities to include this into the activities. Children make size and quantity comparisons and use some language for measurement for example large, small, tall and short, lots. Staff rarely refer to three-dimensional shapes although some children are more than able to understand this.

Children investigate and experiment whilst they play; they particularly enjoy playing with water. They are very interested in technology and confidently try different things to discover what they can achieve on the computer. The children undertake projects about the natural world, for example, they know and can talk all about bees, what

they do and produce. They learn about different countries and cultures when they share holiday experiences and celebrate different festivals. There is a display that highlights all the different places children have visited.

Children enjoy musical activities and join in singing with real enthusiasm. A music and movement teacher visits the nursery and children use different instruments and explore tone, rhythm and pitch. Children love to listen to familiar stories and become involved joining in with repeated text. They explore some ideas through role-play and small world play. They have many opportunities to use and experiment with different drawing materials and are encouraged to interpret their ideas in a creative and uninhibited way. The opportunities to construct regularly in an art and craft context are more limited.

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

The provision is good.

The children feel a sense of community at the nursery; they talk about things that are important to them for example, their families and pets. The nursery has a pet hamster that children can take home and look after for a while. Children take various teddy bears that belong to the nursery on holiday with them and send postcards to their friends from the bear. Parents often join in this experience by writing a diary of the child and bear's holiday escapades. A display is in the entrance hall of where the bear has been on holiday with the children.

The staff use photographs to good effect and the children enjoy recognising themselves in pictures around the nursery. A book illustrator visited the nursery and made a book with pictures of the children in it, they are very proud of this.

The walls of the nursery are decorated throughout with children's artwork; staff display the children's pictures with care and attention.

Children are taught social graces and good manners helping them fit in and work co-operatively with others. Their behaviour is generally very good, staff are kind and give them praise and encouragement to repeat desirable behaviour. Occasionally children become over boisterous and stop treating the equipment with sufficient care. Some less experienced staff do not notice quickly enough what is going on in the room further than the children they are immediately dealing with.

Children with special needs are welcome and staff adapt activities if necessary.

Since the last inspection the range of materials that reflect positive images of diversity have increased. Staff have a good understanding of equality issues and a positive attitude to diversity. They understand the importance of anti-discriminatory practice.

Partnership with parents is good. They are provided with good quality information about the setting and the service the nursery provides. The nursery policies and procedures are always available for parents to read and there are several notice

boards with information for parents.

Staff greet parents personally at the door and they nearly always have a little chat about what the children have been doing and enjoyed. Parents approach staff easily, to talk about their children.

Staff keep parents well informed about their child's achievements and progress and tells them about what they have done that day.

Parents share information verbally about their children's progress at home but staff do not usually record this. The staff do however; work closely with parents in a consistent way if a child is causing their parents concern. For example, staff monitor carefully children with poor appetites and keep their parents informed. There is no formal regular system where parents can contribute to their child's development records. Parents are welcome to visit the nursery at any time. Parents are able to access their children's records at any time.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff display the registration certificate on the notice board for parents.

There are employment procedures in place that ensure all staff are vetted as suitable before they have unsupervised access to children.

The names of the children looked after on the premises, their hours of attendance and the names of the staff looking after them is recorded daily.

Children's names, home address and date of birth are kept confidentially along with the names, home address and telephone numbers of their parents.

Staff record any accidents that occur on the premises and parents sign to acknowledge the entry ensuring they are kept informed.

Staff record any medicinal product administered to any child on the premises, including the date and circumstances of its administration, by whom it was administered, including medicinal products which the child is permitted to administer to themselves, together with a record of a parent's consent.

The nursery has comprehensive policies and procedures that relate to all the National Standards.

The following procedures are included:-

What to do in the event of a fire or accident.

The procedure to follow in the event of a parent failing to collect a child or if a child



gets lost

A complaints procedure.

The arrangements in place for the protection of children, including arrangements to safeguard the children from abuse or neglect and procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse and neglect.

Staff record any visitors to the nursery.

The manager sends a policy out to all staff every few weeks, they read this and sign to say that they understand what they have read. This ensures staff remember the policies and procedures and gives them the opportunity to suggest any changes that may be required.

Most children under the age of three have a contact book that records factual events for example nappy changes and what they have eaten. Their development and progress is recorded separately and parents can access these records at any time.

The assessment records for the older children are patchy and some areas have very little recorded. The staff are unsure how best to use assessment records to plan activities that take account of what children already know. The management have not evaluated whether staff are using assessment records to best effect. Staff are waiting for a new system to be introduced to record children's progress, which has resulted to them working between two systems. They have been waiting for some time for these new documents.

Staff caring for children, who are under three years old, allow them lots of free choice but there is an over-emphasis on this element of their development and a reluctance to plan activities in case children's spontaneity is hampered. Staff have misunderstood that they can plan an activity with a desired outcome if several children will benefit, without removing their ability to choose how they tackle the tasks. Children will benefit from a better balance of self-chosen and adult-led activities.

Children in different rooms share some resources, but there are not effective systems in place to manage this. Young children have difficulty exercising choice of everything that is available, when the equipment is stored in another room and they do not have any examples to hand.

There are effective procedures in place to allow the deputy to take over when the manager is on holiday, the deputy is familiar with all the documentation and the organisation of the nursery.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

The management ensure that staff : child ratios meet requirements and they have purchased more resources that illustrate diversity positively.

The staff review different policies every two weeks to ensure that changes are made when necessary.

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

Since April 2004 there has been two anonymous complaints relating to National Standard 2: Organisation; On both occasions the provider agreed to carry out an internal investigation. We are satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concern. The provider remains qualified for registration.

## **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 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):

- consider how all children in the nursery can exercise more choice over when they play outside.
- consider how shared resources are managed and the difficulty children might experience exercising choice of everything that is available, when the equipment is stored in another room
- consider how staff can bottle and spoon feed babies in comfort
- ensure that self chosen activities and adult influenced activities, that take account of children's assessment and support their next development steps, are well balanced
- ensure that staff are alert where older children's behaviour is concerned and adopt a consistent approach about teaching children to respect and take care of the resources

### **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):

- consider how parents can contribute more regularly to their children's development records
- provide more opportunities in Mathematics for children to make calculations and to investigate and experiment with shape, space and measure
- improve staff knowledge of the Foundation stage and how to exploit opportunities whilst they play with them; how to check what children are learning and how to make use of this information to develop children's knowledge

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