

Leaping Lizards Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY365093
Inspection date	20 May 2008
Inspector	Kanwal Sonia Lobo
Setting Address	Whittington Park Community Centre, 86 Yerbury Road, London, N19 4RS
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Registered person	Leaping Lizards Day Nursery 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?

Leaping Lizards Day Nursery was registered in 2007. The provision was previously registered under the name of Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery in 2002.

The nursery is situated in Upper Holloway in the London Borough of Islington. The nursery operates from the Whittington Park Community Centre. The areas used by the nursery include two group rooms on the ground and first floor, two children's toilets situated on the ground floor, an office and two outside play areas. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00 and children can attend for a variety of sessions.

The provision is registered to care for a maximum of 34 children under five years. There are currently 36 children on roll and of these seven children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs nine staff and a manager the majority of whom hold NVQ level 3 qualifications in childcare.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Older children are developing an awareness of good hygiene practices and healthy living through some of the well established routines in place, such as cleaning teeth after lunch and hand washing. However, there are fewer chances for children to understand how to use the toilet correctly as they are unable to reach the flush and have to rely on adults to do this. Although staff aim to check the toilets through the session, at times these are found to be dirty because they are not always flushed soon after being used. Babies and toddlers benefit from some of the good hygiene practised by staff, such as using disposable aprons and gloves during nappy changing and disposing of soiled nappies safely in bins with lids.

Surfaces are meticulously cleaned between activities and just before meals which helps to prevent the spread of infection. However children have access to some toys, equipment and furnishings in the home corner of the 'jungle room' that are not clean and therefore systems are not yet wholly effective.

Menus for the week are displayed and reflect a variety of foods from around the world. Children eat healthy snacks on a daily basis, such as fresh and dried seasonal fruits. Some staff responsible for food preparation and handling are yet to receive appropriate training in food safety and hygiene.

Children receive suitable first aid treatment in the event of an accident as some staff members hold valid first aid certificates. All relevant policies and procedures are in place for the administration of medication and recording of accidents.

Children have regular opportunities to receive fresh air and exercise as they play in the outdoor area. They enjoy steering their cars about and learn to negotiate the space around them. Most children are developing large and fine motor skills as they, for example, throw and catch balls and hoops. Children are often taken to the park for more energetic exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safeguarded through monitoring access to the setting as staff endeavour to maintain a record of visitors. In the main, the registration system for staff and children is also kept up-to-date and shows their hours of attendance. However, staff are working towards ensuring that this is consistently achieved because on occasions the departure times for some staff and children are not recorded.

Daily safety checks are carried out on areas of the nursery accessed by children and staff and as a result, are free from obvious safety hazards. Although, safety concerns are identified they are not always recorded on the risk assessment documents and consequently do not show how potential hazards have been minimised or eliminated, and any action taken. Therefore, systems to effectively monitor progress of safety issues are yet to be developed.

Fire drills are carried out periodically and the procedure for emergency evacuation is prominently displayed. Children and staff are alerted to practise drills through the centre raising the alarm which immediately gains everyone's attention. The record of fire drills shows that the times

and dates are varied and reflect patterns of staff and children's attendance. This means that everyone gets equal chances to learn how to evacuate quickly and safely.

The manager is the named person for child protection but is yet to attend up-to-date training.

The child protection policy details what to do if a child arrives with an injury and the steps to follow in the event staff suspect a child is at risk. The policy also sets out some guidelines for staff about the circumstances that could lead to a referral of child abuse. Consequently, they show a sound understanding of this area. However, it does not include a clear procedure of what to do in the event an allegation is made against a member of staff. This is a regulation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are content and most of them are well settled. Displays of children's photographs and access to their own coat pegs contributes to them feeling a sense of belonging. The Birth to three matters framework is being used to plan and guide staff in providing a suitable range of activities and experiences for children. Staff have recently begun working to a new system for planning and assessments. They endeavour to maintain written jottings of what they observe and show willingness to formalise the information into written observations. However, most of these are not yet evaluative and therefore do not provide a clear picture of the progress children make. The setting is working towards improving the planning, observations and evaluation so that the next steps in children's learning are easily identifiable in order to promote and sustain individualised learning.

Children are engaged in a variety of tasks that are age appropriate. Activities and resources are organised for them in advance and these are well presented, drawing children towards taking part and learning new skills. They are familiar with the routines and know their surroundings well. For example, children who wish to paint know they need to wear an apron and are supported to put one on before taking part. Younger children thoroughly enjoy the experience of exploring the properties of malleable resources, such as play dough, rice and sand play. For example, the babies and young toddlers have fun whilst they play with coloured grains of rice, developing and practising their hand-eye coordination as they pour and scoop the rice into different containers.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a developing knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning. The planning allows for children to explore a particular theme, such as 'the pet project' which can be identified through some of the activities on offer and planned trips. Staff observe children regularly within their environment but are working towards ensuring that written observations are maintained consistently under all areas of learning for each child. The use and effectiveness of the assessments and planning are evolving and are yet to ensure, for example, the learning priorities are clearly and consistently identified for each child.

Children have some chances to be independent and develop their self-help skills but these opportunities are not always encouraged through all aspects of the daily routines or the planned environment. For example, meal times do not foster many chances for children to pour their own drinks or to serve themselves food and this results in some missed learning opportunities.

Children have many regular chances for mark making, such as when painting, drawing and colouring. They are developing an interest in books as they enjoy the daily opportunities for 'story time' and have a 'book of the week' which helps them to recall the story. Most of the children show a keen interest in the art and craft activities. They experience different textures whilst painting and sticking using a variety of tools and resources, such as glue painting on bubble wrap. Some children are equally keen to take part in singing and join in with the actions to songs such as, 'big red bus' and 'the wheels on the bus'. Children have opportunities to find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology, such as when using the phone or pressing the tabs on the keyboards. Some children are very keen to use the computer and are able to use the mouse with increasing control. Computer sessions are timed so that children do not spend long periods of time at the computer. They clearly enjoy using the educational programmes, such as 'Finding Nemo' which provides, for example, chances for them to recognise, sort and match colour and shapes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are made to feel welcome through providing a warm and caring environment. They freely share their thoughts and feelings with staff and their contribution is valued. Children learn about the wider world through the celebration of a variety of festivities. They have access to a range of resources depicting positive images of diversity which form an integral part of their environment. Children have chances throughout their time spent at the nursery to recall and revisit their experiences and develop a strong identity through, for example, listening to stories which they can relate to and looking at the display of photographs of themselves and their peers on outings to various places, such as 'City Farm'. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Strategies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities include liaising closely with parents and other professionals, such as the Early Years Inclusion Team at Islington and the area special needs coordinator. Staff are aware of the importance of having in place individual educational plans which are reviewed and help towards monitoring progress and the identification of next steps.

Children are well behaved. They respond positively to staff who show them patience and care. Older children are aware of their boundaries and have some chances to learn to manage their own behaviour. They are rewarded for their good behaviour through, for example, receiving stickers and wear these with great pride. Staff in the 'Jungle room' offer clear explanations which helps children to understand why they have been rewarded. For example, during carpet time, they are informed of what is considered to be good behaviour, such as 'good listening', or for joining in with the actions to a song.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They are warmly welcomed into the setting and staff are available at the beginning and end of each session to discuss any issues relating to the care of their child. This is particularly helpful for parents settling-in their child as they feel comfortable to stay for as long as they need. Parents are encouraged to read information about the provision and the groups policies and procedures at the start of the placement. The parent notice board displays an array of information about various topics of interest, such as the Birth to three matters framework, menus and planned activities.

Parents of children who receive nursery education have access to limited information about the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Staff are working towards finding ways to encourage

more parental involvement. For example, a secure on-line web group (password protected) has been set up to provide all interested parents with chances to seek advice and find out more information about trips or other events. However, staff are yet to develop systems to regularly share children's learning priorities to enable effective consultation and keep parents informed of their child's progress. The starting points for children under each area of learning are currently not obtained for new children. Consequently, these can not be used to inform the planning and assessments which helps towards building on what children already know.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

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

Generally, space and resources are organised well which enables children to move freely and safely.

However, babies and children under two years do not always have sole access to their base room. This is because some older children access this room due to staff dealing with organisational tasks, such as preparing for meal times or taking their lunch breaks. Consequently, during these times younger babies do not always benefit from effective interaction with staff. This also means that at times during the day group size exceeds 12 which is not recommended in line with the National Standards.

All of the relevant documentation is in place but a couple of procedures need to include the required information. Systems to record comprehensive information about the children are being developed with individual files available to parents which are stored confidentially.

Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Children benefit from a well organised staff team who work hard to plan and present a programme of activities. Staff training needs are identified through appraisal and one-to-one meetings with the manager in order for individuals to, for example, keep up-to-date with changes and new childcare frameworks. The manager is proactive in her approach and shows a strong commitment towards on-going improvement in all aspects of the provision. She is able to identify some of the key strengths of the provision as well as areas for improvement. The manager has sought help from Islington Early Years in order to improve the planning and assessments for children. Systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education are developing.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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):

- continue to raise children's awareness of good hygiene practice by ensuring, for example, that they are able to use the toilet correctly.
- establish a more effective system for cleaning toys, furnishings and other equipment to ensure that children access equipment and play provision that is always clean.
- review the child protection policy so that it includes a clear procedure to be followed in the event an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff.
- develop the systems in place for risk assessment in order to effectively monitor progress of safety issues.
- provide children with greater chances to be independent and develop their self-help skills through, for example, the daily routines and planning of their environment.
- review the organisation of space and equipment so that babies and children under two years have their own base room and are always cared for in groups of no more than 12 in order for their needs to be met effectively.

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):

- identify children's starting points and use these to inform future planning and assessments.
- improve on the quality of planning, observations and evaluation of progress children under three years make in order to extend the scope of individualised learning.
- continue to improve and strengthen the partnership with parents and carers by providing them with useful written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and sharing their child's learning priorities to enable effective consultation.

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