



Leapfrog Day Nursery - Peterborough

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221690
Inspection date	22 September 2005
Inspector	Parveen Ashraf / Amanda Jane Tyson
Setting Address	Hargate Way, Hampton, Hargate, Peterborough, PE2 9LG
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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

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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 opened in April 2002. It operates from a large, purpose-built premises situated in Hampton, a new township, to the south of Peterborough city centre. The nursery serves children living in the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 105 children on roll. This includes 26 funded three-year-olds. The setting supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery opens five days per week all year round. Opening

times are from 08:00 to 18:00hrs, although arrangements can be made to provide care from 07:00 to 19:00hrs. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 28 full and part-time staff who work with the children. Half of the staff have Level-3 qualification or equivalent qualification in childcare and 7 members of staff are working towards a NVQ-3 in childcare. The setting receives the support of a pedagogical teacher and a childcare advisor from the Children's Strategic Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Effective health and hygiene procedures minimise the risk of cross-infection and help to keep children healthy. Babies soothers are stored in a 'dummy station' which has individual compartments. This ensures that babies are given their own soothers, minimising the risk of cross contamination. Nappies are disposed of hygienically in a 'Nappymatic' allowing children to play in a clean and odour-free environment, however, children's nappies are changed at set times. This does not meet children's individual needs and is an ineffective use of staff time. Children are able to rest and sleep, according to their individual sleep patterns, helping them to thrive and feel refreshed when they wake. Staff are affectionate with children. They know the children well and provide them with personal toys to comfort them during sleep times. Restless children are encouraged to fall asleep by staff rocking them, or gently stroking their cheek, making them feel safe and secure.

Children are able to participate in a range of activities which contribute to their good health, for example, playing in the soft play room, where they learn to climb, jump, and execute forward and backward rolls, which helps to develop their physical skills. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which they use to provide a range of activities to help children gain confidence and explore their surroundings. Babies participate in activities that help to develop their hand and eye co-ordination skills. Sufficient use is made of the outdoor play area most of the time, but restrictions are imposed during summer months, if weather is considered hot. A variety of games, which encourage gross motor skills, are organised for the children in pre-school room; they run around pretending to be lions, weaving in and out and balancing along a painted line as they imitate being a snake, and hopping like rabbits. Staff skilfully encourage children to participate in indoor music and movement activities and they confidently make up their own sequence of movements to well known rhymes and songs. However, curriculum planning for nursery education does not pay enough attention to developing children's understanding of how the body works, for example, the changes after exercise.

Children are provided with meals and snacks that are suitable to their dietary needs. Meals are freshly prepared daily and contain a good range of all food groups, providing children with a healthy and nutritious diet. Babies are fed according to their individual routine, which promotes their growth and development. Staff hold babies whilst bottle feeding them, they interact affectionately, giving them plenty of

eye-contact, in order to develop the bonding process.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are effectively cared for in a safe and suitable environment. A comprehensive risk assessment is regularly carried out thereby helping to make all areas safe for children. Their safety is promoted through staff awareness of potential risks and the steps they take to minimise these. For example, during meal times, staff secure young children into their highchairs using a harness, keeping them safe. Children are learning to keep themselves safe whilst moving around the nursery with guidance from staff. For example, they hold onto the low-level banister as they climb up and down the stairs.

Children have access to a range of toys and equipment that are safe and meet their developmental needs. Staff ensure that babies do not have access to toys with small parts that are a potential danger, helping to keep babies and young children safe. Resources available help to develop children's creativity and imagination, for example, children re-configure a large soft playhouse that they use to extend their role-play. Most of the toys in the toddler room are stored at child-level, allowing children to help themselves safely and independently.

Appropriate systems are in place to safeguard children's welfare. Children are safe from persons that are not vetted. Unauthorised people are prevented from entering the premises unsupervised, as the main doors are always kept locked. Many staff have completed child protection training and are familiar with the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) guidance procedure, which they adhere to. The child protection policy and guidance is displayed on the parent's notice board, demonstrating to parents that the nursery has procedures in place to protect children and keep them from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged, supported and feel confident in a range of activities that promote all areas of development. Staff develop and extend children's imagination and role play, as they organise themes and provide them with additional resources. For example, resources to make a ship are offered enabling them to extend an activity centred around pirates. Children have the opportunity to take part in activities that are fun and stimulate their visual senses, such as playing in the sensory room, where they can enjoy unusual visual imagery and lighting. Babies development is enhanced by effective implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They are offered a range of activities that include, construction, messy play and imaginative play. For example, babies take part in hand and feet painting, which helps to develop their creativity and motor skills. Staff observe children's play and usually record details in their 'development and progress review booklet'. However, staff do not have a good understanding of where to record observations and often

use the early learning goals instead of the 'Birth to three matters' booklets. This does not help children to progress to their next stage of development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are caring and affectionate toward the children; their gentle and consistent approach sets a good example and children behave well. They play co-operatively together, and willingly share and take turns. Staff consistently praise children for their efforts and achievements which contributes to their high levels of confidence and developing self-esteem. For example, their eagerness to share news and experiences in whole group times. Children are motivated by staff who join in with their role play, tell animated stories, and make activities such as music and movement, and outdoor group games such fun. Children use their developing independence to manage their own personal care and serve themselves morning snacks and lunch. As a result, they are making good progress towards the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development.

Staff knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage is steadily progressing, and curriculum planning is clearly linked to the early learning goals and associated stepping stones. However, while a clear system for monitoring and recording children's progress has been devised, it is not consistently maintained by all staff. Some children's records contain limited entries. Some very good spontaneous written observations are collated by individual staff, however, these are not used as an effective tool to guide planning, or to set next steps for learning. Although children enjoy focussed activities, these do not always provide sufficient challenge. Children confidently recognise simple shapes and although this is consistently consolidated by staff, for example, by talking about the circular body shape of a spider, the learning intentions are generally too broad. Planning does not take enough account of what individual children already know and can do. Staff plan a varied range of activities, and ideas for topics are good, but creative activities are often too adult-directed. For example, children colour, paint and stick adult-prepared pictures for wall displays. Not enough use is made of recycled materials and craft tools to encourage children to create and design independently, and to develop skills such as joining and assembling. Outdoor planning focuses mainly on physical development. There is not enough emphasis on all other areas of development, for example, encouraging children to explore the natural and living world.

Play and learning resources are generally satisfactory, but equipment to support children's development in mathematics is not sufficiently integrated into creative and outdoor play. However, children are well supported to solve mathematical problems in focussed activities, such as working out reduced numbers in rhyme games, comparing size as they sort small teddy figures, and identifying more and less quantities. Children count reliably, and in circle time they are encouraged to recognise numeric dates.

The nursery has a well-equipped book area, in which children frequently browse. Staff's skilled story-telling techniques hold children's attention well. They contribute with their thoughts and ideas, and delight in anticipating what will happen next. Overall, opportunities for children to engage in discussion are good, particularly

during focussed times, and when staff are involved in role play. Children are becoming confident and articulate communicators, however, literacy skills are not being developed enough. Writing resources are provided, but children do not use them regularly, they are not consistently encouraged to write and recognise their names, and although some captions and labelling are displayed around the setting, little reference is made to broaden their awareness of purposeful print.

The children act out real and imaginary experiences in the well-resourced home play area, for example, eating a picnic around a bonfire. However, not all resources are well presented, for example, the vet's equipment which was stored in a box and not explored.

Overall, staff demonstrate a strong commitment towards developing their skills to enable children to make continual progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well behaved. They are occupied and engaged in play, which contributes to their good behaviour. Staff are confident and competent in managing children's behaviour throughout the nursery. Children receive frequent praise, which helps to build their confidence and raise their self-esteem. Children are aware of the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as they are set clear boundaries by staff. For example, a member of staff clearly explains to a young child that if he throws something, it will hurt someone, helping children to develop their social skills. Children's spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is fostered.

Children's individual needs are met well by staff who respect and value their differences such as culture, ability, and lifestyle. Activities are adapted and extended so that all children are able to participate. Children aged under 3 years, are introduced to diversity and the wider community through a range of anti-discriminatory play equipment and resources such as, play people, books, and dressing up clothes.

Staff work closely with the parents of children aged under 3 years, to support their care and development. These parents are kept fully informed about their child's progress through regular written and verbal communications, for example, the daily record sheets which detail the number of bottle feeds. Open days, parents evenings and newsletters keep them informed about nursery activities, which encourages their interest and enables them to provide consistent support at home.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are very well informed about current topics and weekly activity plans, and the 'activities at home' information sheet is particularly useful in encouraging parents to contribute towards children's learning, for example details of planned stories, ideas for outings and activities, such as visiting the pet shop. However, whilst individual yearly reports inform parents of children's achievements, they do not identify next steps for learning, therefore parents are unable to provide specific support, for example, in aspects of mathematics. There is insufficient

available information which explains both the purpose of funding, and how children are helped to make progress towards the early learning goals so parents understanding is insecure.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery is warm, welcoming and well maintained, but wall displays throughout the premises lack inspiration. In the pre-school room there are blank display boards, and others are predominantly adult orientated, there are too few samples of children's own work. Many of the rooms are well organised and divided into various play areas, such as home corner, messy play, and book area. However, the organisation of toddler rooms is less effective, for example children are unable to access the play areas because inter-connecting doors are often kept shut, and resources are poorly laid out and do not inspire the interest of young children. As a result, children do not freely help themselves or return toys in their correct place.

There is a consistent commitment to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education and care, which is increasingly effective. Staff are generally well deployed throughout the nursery. However, sometimes the organisation is less well thought out, for example, un-planned staff changes to cover absences resulted in babies being cared for by less familiar adults, which hinders the bonding process, and pre-school children's learning is disrupted by the coming and going of different adults. All necessary regulatory documentation is in place and used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager is new in post, her expectations of staff are high, but realistic, and the action plan for improvement and change reflects reasonable time scales. She is working hard to build a committed, skilled, and motivated staff team, and support from the organisation is effective. Room based staff have a developing understanding of their roles and responsibilities and staff are well supported to develop their knowledge and skills through training, regular team meetings and individual guidance. An appraisal system is due to be implemented imminently.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The outcome of the nursery's last inspection of nursery education was unacceptable. The inspection of nursery education identified four key issues for improvement which relate to developing the overall leadership and management, staff knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage of learning, systems for monitoring, recording, and keeping parents informed of children's progress and development towards the early learning goals.

The nursery has made significant improvements which enable children to make progress towards the early learning goals. A new staff team has been deployed in the

pre-school room, and a rolling training programme is in place. A satisfactory range of activities is now planned and children's progress in relation to their personal, social and emotional development is good. Leadership is strong and procedures to monitor, evaluate and support teaching have been implemented to good and developing effect. However, weaknesses are still apparent in relation to the methods used to monitor children's progress, and their understanding of curriculum planning. There is still insufficient information available for parents. Overall leadership is strong and effective, and a committed and developing team is being established.

At the previous inspection for care this provider was given three recommendations for Organisation, one for Enjoying and Achieving and one for Staying Safe. The manager now monitors the rooms daily and oversees the day-to-day management of staff to ensure that children's needs are met. A new member of staff has now been employed to help to provide support during lunch times, particularly within the pre-school rooms. Space and resources in the pre-school room have now been organised to allow children to move freely and new resources have been purchased to offering children more variety.

Many of the staff have completed training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and implement it to meet children's developmental needs. Staff are aware of the child protection policy and have accessed training in this area enabling them to help to protect children.

Complaints since the last inspection

On 9th March 2005, concerns were raised relating to Standard 2 Organisation, Standard 3 Care Learning and Play, Standard 6 Safety and Standard 11 Behaviour Management. An unannounced visit was conducted on the 17th March 2005 and a decision was made to monitor improvements following the visit, by conducting a full inspection of the provision as soon as possible.

On 13th June 2005, another concern was raised regarding inadequate staffing and lack of experienced staff. Further concerns were raised regarding the health and safety of children, lack of good quality practice and poor feedback given to parents. An unannounced visit was carried out. The complaint was raised in regard to Standard 1 Suitability, Standard 2 Organisation, Standard 3 Care, Learning and Play, Standard 5 Equipment and Standard 12 Partnership with Parents. There was evidence to suggest breaches in standards 2 and 5, and as a result actions were raised that the provider must complete within the given timeframe.

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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):

- devise and implement a system for monitoring and recording children's progress that is consistently maintained by staff to help children to progress to their next stage of development
- review organisation of toddler rooms to enable children to free-flow and access a variety of different activities simultaneously
- review procedure for changing nappies to meet children's individual needs.

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):

- ensure that children's progress and assessment records are consistently maintained by staff and used as an effective tool to keep parents fully informed, to set the next steps for learning and to guide planning
- improve the effectiveness of activity planning by developing the outdoor play environment, paying particular attention to areas for natural exploration
- improve the presentation of resources to inspire children's interest to explore learning, for example mathematical equipment in role play.

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