



## St Mary's Leapfrog

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY265743
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Lesley Ormrod

<b>Setting Address</b>	St Mary's Church of England Nursery and Infant School, Princes Road, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 2DD
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Mary's Leapfrog Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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

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.
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### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Leapfrog is run by St Mary's Leapfrog Ltd. It opened in 2003 and operates from a self-contained unit with access to two additional rooms within St Mary's Church of England Nursery and Infant School. The setting is situated in the town of Windermere. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 11.30 to 15.20 in term time only. All children share access to two secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 24 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Children come from the school, the local town of Windermere and nearby villages. The setting

currently supports a number of children with special educational needs.

The setting employs three staff. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health needs are known as there is good information collected from parents and recorded on the registration forms with additional information obtained about any particular conditions. They receive appropriate health care when needed as medication and accident procedures are correctly managed, staff hold first aid qualifications and the health policy covers arrangements for sick children. Their understanding of caring for their health needs is developing as they discuss what to do about a bad cough and know when they are tired and need to rest. Children have a good understanding of personal care routines as the staff encourage their self-independence and knowledge of when to carry out their care routines. They have good hand-washing skills and know that they wash their hands before eating or after a painting activity, although their fuller understanding of why this is important to prevent the risk from germs is not always extended.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and drinks as the provider places high importance on encouraging their understanding of healthy living through making appropriate nutritional choices. They enjoy choosing from their favourite snacks items such as raisins, bananas and apples and deciding which drink to have as staff encourage their tasting of a variety of healthy options. Their nutritional needs are given a high focus as the school and setting work closely together to emphasize the importance of healthy eating with initiatives such as consulting and providing parents with good information about healthy contents for lunchboxes, taking part in the National Fruit Scheme and winning a National Food Award. Children develop their social and independence skills as they join together in the small, social groups at lunchtimes. Their food is prepared in accordance with food hygiene procedures as the staff hold food hygiene certificates and maintain the food preparation area to a high standard. Their dietary needs are known as detailed information is collected from parents with additional information from the dietetic service as needed although the setting does not make drinking water easily accessible at all times during sessions.

Children have frequent opportunities to be active as the staff provide a good range of regular activities using the outside facilities or the large school hall. They enjoy a range of games. running around freely, using the sit-and-ride equipment and playing football. Their physical development skills are good and they are confident in the use of larger apparatus and equipment. They competently carry out a fun exercise at the start of a session such as stretching up, wriggling hands and arms. Children develop their understanding of how being active helps them to be healthy as staff encourage them to discover how their bodies feel when being active. They talk about the effects of exercise on their heartbeat and feel how their breathing changes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children freely explore the good range of areas set up in the self-contained unit to facilitate their choices of a variety of play options and independence skills. They relax on the cosy settees to look at a book, go to play in the home corner and easily access the toilet facilities when they need to. Children are keen to show any art work of theirs that is displayed, such as the snowmen although the provision to display their work on the wall areas is yet to be extended. They have the use of extended facilities within the school setting as they participate in games in the hall and use the resources of the well-stocked school library. Children can freely access resources and equipment in the well-equipped areas of their unit as the staff have set out easily accessible, low-height storage units with most drawers and boxes labelled. They readily tidy up their play items before getting the next out, although their understanding of how this helps their safe play is not fully extended by staff.

Children's safe care is considered as the staff have put in place good security arrangements, work to health and safety procedures including risk assessment and are proactive in carrying these out. Their going-home arrangements at the end of sessions are given careful thought as staff from the school and the setting collate a master list for each day with the named persons to collect children identified. Children learn about safe play practices as the staff explain to them why some actions might not be safe such as sitting on the edge of a chair. They have occasional opportunities to practice their road safety skills through role play sessions in the outside play areas although they do not extend their knowledge through participating in outings around their local environment. Children have some understanding of safe emergency evacuation as they participate in the whole school site fire drills each half term. Their safe play in the unit is not fully thought out as the barrier preventing access to the kiln is yet to be securely fixed. Their safe access to the Leapfrog outside play area has been assessed and the provider has identified the hazard of a low-wall drop from the grass to the paved area, although action to manage the risk remains outstanding.

Children are protected as the staff have a good knowledge of child protection procedures, have accessed extensive training and apply the procedures in practice. The arrangements to protect children, as specified in the child protection policy are not all in place as there are omissions such as the name of the coordinator and the referral contact numbers. Children are taught about personal safety as they learn not to go to answer the door bell but to stay in the play area until the staff have identified who has arrived. They have occasional opportunities to discuss how to protect themselves and learn about stranger-danger through impromptu discussions.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's free play is enhanced and extended by staff who are highly skilled in facilitating their ideas and encouraging their enjoyment of their chosen activities. They participate in sessions that revolve predominantly around their decisions about what their play will be and their requests to staff to provide them with resources from

the store cupboard as needed if not already easily available from the open-access storage. Children are confident in their play choices as they decide to role play in the home corner or get out the box with the large wooden train track. They develop their chat about what they might bake, decide who will wash up and rock the dolls to sleep in the toy pram. Children play well in the activity and are busy and purposeful as they respond to the staff's skilful extension of their ideas and decisions. They use their design skills as they set out the train track pieces and negotiate with each other as to where the turntables will go and how to set up the tunnels and bridges. As a child decides what to choose to do, such as asking for the large play house and its furniture other children come quickly to join in the play. They share information with each other as they compare the toy furniture with what they each have in their own homes.

Children are settled and generally confident during the sessions with good self esteem. They have good relationships with staff and interact confidently as they show what they are doing, share their ideas and chat together. Their independence skills are encouraged as most children can complete tasks such as taking off their coats independently. They use some number language as they interact together such as telling each other how many balls fall out of the bag in the treasure game. Their spontaneous use of number when heard by the staff is extended as they effectively encourage children's problem solving skills, such as how many balls are left after children have commented on a number collected up. When a child asks to do an activity such as painting a snowman, the staff skilfully facilitate the activity with other children coming quickly to take part. They make decisions about their designs as the staff encourage them to choose what items the snowmen might wear and what paint colours to select.

Children's time at the setting is based on a loose structure that includes initial registration, free play, lunch and snack times, and a group story, but there is no prepared outline for sessions that identifies the balance of their experiences and activities. They do not access specifically planned activities and play opportunities to develop their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities as the provider has viewed the sessions as a time for children to relax and decide what they want to do for their play choices after most have attended a school education session in the morning. Children's progress is not recorded as systems are yet to be set up for observing, monitoring and planning from information about their achievements to meet their developmental needs. Their access to a wide range of planned and free play activities inside and outside, and through visits and outings, is not planned for as such, but opportunities for a specific experience such as baking or tasting different fruits are taken up. Children aged 2-years-old will have their developmental needs met when they start to attend as the provider intends to use the Birth to three matters framework as a basis for planning.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to share with each other and play equally as the staff consistently encourage their awareness of each other's needs and valuing of each

other. They develop their friendships and build close relationships as the provider places a strong emphasis on successfully creating a home-from-home atmosphere for the setting. Boys and girls show no bias in their play as they enjoy home corner play together. Older and younger children play well together, respecting each other's ideas and helping each other to achieve these. They amicably decide on their rules and join each other readily to share in a choice of activity. Children have opportunities to extend their awareness of other cultures and traditions as they participate in some of the school themes such as Chinese New Year celebrations and Christmas activities. They learn about the meaning of Christmas as they listen to a story about the Nativity and talk about Baby Jesus as they discuss the crib display.

Children with special educational needs are given good support by the staff who are fully aware of their individual needs and liaise closely with the school staff and their parents. They are encouraged to learn how to play and share resources as the staff support their acceptance of others in activities such as taking turns in a game of Wotaknot. The arrangements for the support of children with special needs are good in practice, but the special educational needs policy does not specify the levels of support available as detailed in the most recent guidance issued by the Department for Education and Science. Children are well behaved and understand what are desired behaviours as the staff use consistent management strategies. They are helped to understand why a behaviour is not wanted and what would be a good behaviour instead. They know that they need to line up and walk sensibly through the school when moving to the Leapfrog unit.

Children settle confidently into the setting as good thought is given to their induction with sensitive liaison with their parents. They benefit from the effective interchange of information between school and setting, although there is insufficient information passed to parents about their children's day at handovers. The arrangements for children's care do not include all requirements for the management of complaints as the complaints record remains to be set up and the procedures lack some necessary details. The provision for children's care is drawn to the attention of parents by the reference in the prospectus to the policies and procedures file that is available on the information table. The quality of the care for children is praised by parents as they value the flexibility in meeting their family needs, and consider that their children gain in confidence and thoroughly enjoy their sessions.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who have been appointed through robust staff recruitment and appointment procedures with thorough checks for suitability to work in a childcare situation. They are supported by staff who are very experienced, well qualified and work effectively as a team. Children benefit from the staff's take up of regular training opportunities to enhance their childcare skills such as completing a ten-week course in child protection matters. The arrangements for children's care are detailed in the operational plan that includes all the required policies and procedures. Children receive a good level of attention as the staff-to-child ratios are favourable although the staff and child registration arrangements do not always accurately

reflect actual times of attendance.

Children enjoy playing in a well-planned environment as the provider has made good use of available space and accessible storage to motivate their free play ideas. Their needs are known as the registration forms are completed with good detail and all necessary written parental consents are in place. Children's developmental progress is not shared with parents as staff have yet to set up the systems to do so.

The satisfactory quality of the provision means that overall the facility meets the needs of the children who attend.

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

The last Children Act inspection set an action that the provider ensured that all records relating to the provision were accessible at all times on the premises and that copies of car documents were sent to Ofsted. Recommendations were also made that the provider documented how the staff-to-child ratios were met when collecting children from another provision; parental signatures were obtained for accident and medication entries; written parental permission was obtained for transporting children in a car and the child protection policy included the procedure to notify Ofsted in the event of an allegation against staff.

The arrangements for children's care have been improved as the provider has established confidential storage on the premises for all records relating to the provision. Children are safely cared for in the setting as the staff-to-child- ratios are maintained when children are collected from other provisions and all vehicle documentation with written parental consents for travelling in a car are in order. Their health care arrangements are in place as parents now sign accident and medication records. The arrangements to protect children have been improved as the child protection policy has been extended to include a statement about handling allegations.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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**

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.
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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):

- extend the arrangements to protect children by reviewing the child protection policy to meet current requirements
- review the arrangements for children's safety by making safe the ground-level drop from the banked area to the lower area in the outside play area and preventing unsupervised access to the kiln in the play room
- develop the systems to observe and assess children's individual needs and link in to the planning of activities and play opportunities to promote their progress in all areas of development
- extend the arrangements for children's care by establishing a complaints record, reviewing the complaints procedure to reflect current requirements and developing a system for the regular exchange of information between parents and staff members
- ensure that the arrangements for children's care in regard to the daily recording of staff and children's attendance accurately reflect the times present.

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