



Leapfrog Day Nursery - Shenley

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307712
Inspection date	12 December 2005
Inspector	Suman Willis / Tina Kelly
Setting Address	22 Andrew Close, Shenley, Radlett, Hertfordshire, WD7 9LP
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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 is one of a large chain of nurseries throughout the UK. This provision opened in 2005, and was an existing nursery. It operates from 6 rooms in purpose-built building. It is situated in a residential area of Shenley on a new estate. A maximum of 110 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 for 52 weeks a year excluding bank holidays. All children share access to an outdoor play area and an indoor soft play

room.

There are currently 90 children from birth to 4 years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and come from a wide catchment area. The setting supports children with special needs.

The nursery employs 32 staff, this includes the manager, a cook and an administrations assistant, 12 of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing their physical skills through a range of indoor and outdoor activities. They have regular access to an indoor soft play room and an outdoor play area. Younger children enjoy crawling through tunnels and balancing with support from staff as they learn to walk. Older children are taken out for walks to the park and make use of the climbing apparatus in the outdoor area, therefore developing their large motor skills. They all have the opportunity to use the ride-on toys which promotes their pedalling skills. Older children learn about changes that occur to their bodies after physical exercise through conversation with staff.

Children are developing their knowledge of maintaining hygiene practices through their daily routine. They are encouraged to wash hands before meals and after toileting. Children learn to maintain oral hygiene as they clean their teeth after meals. Staff are at hand to wipe children's noses. Therefore, although hygiene levels are maintained, children are not developing their independence in all aspects of managing their own personal hygiene. Children are protected from cross-infection as staff follow good hygiene procedures such as wearing disposable gloves when changing nappies. Staff also wear disposable gloves when serving food. Children's emergency health needs are catered for by staff who are trained in first aid. Policies and procedures are in place to monitor children's health and permission for emergency aid and medication administration is sought from parents, thus ensuring that children's health is monitored.

Children are very well nourished, for example, they happily tuck into a roast turkey dinner with vegetables. Individual dietary needs are well catered for as children are offered healthy vegetarian options. Staff ensure that specific dietary needs are always met by checking against their list of children with special diets before serving their meals. The nursery chef plans a rolling menu and provides meals that are nut and egg free thus ensuring that children with severe allergies do not come into contact with foods that may be harmful to them. She updates her knowledge in food preparation and hygiene. The menus are displayed, therefore parents are kept informed of what their children are eating and how their individual dietary needs are being met. Children are given drinks at snack and meal times, but do not have independent access to regular drinking water to quench their thirst as their bodies

need it.

Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework and incorporate this into their daily routine when working with children under the age of three. A separate milk room ensures that babies milk is available with ease to meet the needs of each individual child's feeding pattern. Parents receive written information about their child's day at the nursery which includes their intake of food and milk, sleep patterns and toileting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. A risk assessment is carried out to ensure that all areas are checked and safe. Therefore, children are able to participate in a range of activities safely. The nursery is secure and is fitted with a buzzer to alert staff of visitors. There is also a keypad entry system in place. Consequently children are safeguarded while attending nursery. Children are further protected while at nursery by a clear child collection procedure agreed between parents and staff. Staff are appropriately deployed within the nursery to monitor children's safety. Children have access to a range of resources which are easily accessed and stored at child level in low units. These are age-appropriate and well maintained.

Children learn safety practices as staff reinforce rules, for example children know that it is dangerous to climb on chairs. Older children learn about road safety when they go out for walks to the park.

Children are safeguarded by staff who have knowledge of child protection procedures. Necessary policies and procedures are in place to help protect children, although parents are not informed of what these are. All staff undergo a vetting and recruitment process to ascertain their suitability to work with children. The manager is currently reviewing the procedures to ensure that there is a designated person in charge at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. They confidently access their environment and approach adults for comfort and support. Children's self-esteem is further boosted by staff who are at hand to offer praise and encouragement. They enjoy being cuddled while being read to and point enthusiastically to a picture of a cat as a member of staff makes cat sounds. Babies relish the experience of watching shredded paper fall gently in front of them. They are excited to stretch and touch the paper. Therefore, they are able to engage in their play and extend their development because of their secure environment. Older children play purposefully in their roleplay scenarios as they pretend to use the home corner to make tea for adults.

Staff are currently developing their knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to

three matters' framework and are providing age appropriate activities which are tactile such as playing with shredded paper.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are participating in a range of activities and are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. All staff have basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They plan a range of activities that cover the six areas of learning. However, the aim of the activities does not show how they are going to extend children's learning. Children's individual development is observed and recorded, although this information is not used in future planning. Therefore, the monitoring of the progress children are making through the stepping stones of the early learning goals and how it is being extended is not clear. As a consequence children are not being fully challenged. Staff interact well with children. However, there are many missed opportunities where children's learning could be extended through free play such as counting the number of cups and plates needed when serving tea in the home corner.

Children have access to appropriate resources that are rotated according to the group's plans. Insufficient thought has been given to planning the environment to ensure that they are always available to effectively support children's independent learning and exploration. For example, children do not have free access to a variety of writing materials and there are limited opportunities for working with numbers and shapes. A creative table is available but most craft activities are organised and do not encourage free thinking.

Children are given opportunities to develop mark making skills by using chalk and a chalk board. They are recognising letters and some recognise the letters their names begin with. Children are keen to select their names as they are called off the board at group time. They are developing their mathematical skills by threading beads to make patterns. Children use cotton reels to count up to five. However, their language and maths skills are not always extended through spontaneous questioning during free choice. Therefore, there are lots of missed opportunities for children to learn through their daily free play.

Most children are confident and eager to take part in activities. They communicate well and some initiate conversations with adults and their peers. They learn about past and present through conversation about their daily routine such as what happens after lunch. Children are taken out for walks to the park and occasionally to the library. Therefore, they are developing their knowledge of the outside area. They enjoy singing and participate with enthusiasm in traditional Christmas Carols. They are developing their listening skills as they listen to stories. However, children's enjoyment of books is not promoted as books are left in untidy piles on tables.

Children develop their imaginative ideas as they play in the home corner and are creative with their constructions as they make swords using long pieces of plastic with plastic screws and bolts to hold them together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children from all backgrounds and of all abilities are made to feel at home in the nursery and are treated with equal respect. Staff are sensitive to individual religious needs and plan alternative activities. For example, some children decorate their cards with pictures of candles instead of pictures related to Christmas. Children have equal access with all resources available to both boys and girls. Children learn about the wider world through planned activities and discussion. There is a satisfactory range of resources that develop children's understanding of the differences in society. Therefore, children feel valued and are learning to respect individual needs and other cultures and beliefs. Staff are sensitive to children's individual needs, however the nursery does not yet have an identified special needs co-ordinator. Therefore, monitoring children's progress and enabling them to reach their full potential could be hindered.

Children are learning to work harmoniously within their peer groups. They wait patiently for their meals and acknowledge that their friends meals are different because they are vegetarian. Therefore, children are developing their knowledge of respecting cultural differences. They share paint as they paint their Christmas picture. Children play within their own chosen groups and are happy to introduce their friends to visitors. Children are polite and say thank you as they are given their meals. Children respond well to rewards such as a smiley face being drawn on their work, this encourages them to achieve further.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff gather information from parents about their child prior to them starting. This helps staff be prepared to work around the children's individual routine. Parents receive regular newsletters and daily activities are displayed in each room. This enables them to be involved in their children's care and learning. Information is also shared verbally and through written daily sheets. Parents are invited to open evenings twice a year to meet with their child's key worker. Therefore, parents are kept up to date about the progress their children are making. Parents receive information about funding for nursery education. However, they receive limited information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Therefore, they cannot participate fully in extending children's knowledge in the six areas of learning.

Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a committed team of staff, who are keen to develop their knowledge and skills. As most of the team are new members they are all developing well together and feel supported by the new manager who is also a new recruit. All staff are recruited via head office and the nursery manager ensures that new staff are shadowed by room leaders. This enables both new staff and children to familiarise with each other at their own pace. Staff are enthusiastic and keen to implement good practice and generally have a high regard for the well-being of children. However, procedures and resources for implementing a wide curriculum for children is

hindered. Therefore, children have limited opportunities to extend their learning.

The required documentation is in place, however parents do not receive all the required documents. Therefore, they are not fully aware of all the nursery's policies and procedures. Parents are given limited information about the Foundation Stage. Therefore, parents are not fully involved in the progress their children are making.

Leadership and management of the group is satisfactory. The manager has developed a very good relationship with her team. They all work well together in trying to implement a range of activities. The nursery receives support from external agencies to develop their Foundation Stage curriculum. However, not all areas of learning are fully covered in their planning of activities, so older and more able children are not fully challenged. Therefore, children's learning is still being compromised.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been four complaints made to Ofsted since the registration.

The complaint raised concerns about staff ratios and changes (Standard 2), and the refurbishment of the premises (Standard 4). The provider was asked to complete an internal investigation of the matters. This was followed up by Ofsted with an unannounced visit to the provision on 05 April 2005. As a result of the investigations the provider was given two actions under Standard 2. They are as follows: ensure Child Protection procedures are included within staff induction. Extend registration systems of staff and children to clearly show how many children are present and named staff working with them, this must be updated with staffs' movements within the base rooms on a daily basis and ensure parents are fully informed of staffing and ratios. A satisfactory response was received. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about staff to child ratios (Standard 2). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit on 26 April 2005. Upon investigation the provision was found to be under the minimum required ratios and new staff had not received sufficient induction training. The provider was therefore given two actions as follows: Standard 2, ensure required adult:child ratios are met, to meet the children's needs effectively. Standard 2, ensure all staff have induction training which includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures in their first week of employment. A satisfactory response has been received. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised about a new piece of play equipment installed at this provision. These concerns related to National Standard 5: Equipment and National Standard 6:

Safety. Ofsted made an unannounced visit on 18th June 2005 and as a result set one recommendation, to ensure the new climbing apparatus has a clear policy in place for all staff, students, volunteers and parents, explaining how it is to be utilised and managed safely. In addition the provision was also set two actions and a further recommendation. These are under Standard 2; to develop and implement an action plan stating clearly how lunch time cover is managed effectively to ensure that children are supervised and cared for appropriately, this refers in particular to children within the pre school room (The Farmyard), and to ensure there is a system for registering staff attendance on a daily basis, recording their hours of attendance. This is to be kept up to date. The recommendation was to ensure paperwork regarding induction training includes Child Protection guidance and procedures for staff in the first week of employment. These actions and recommendations will be checked at the next inspection. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised about the security at the provision and the large number of staff changes. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation, 6: Safety and 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the provision on 27th July 2005 and as a result set three actions. These actions were under Standard 2: to ensure the main nursery register is updated throughout the day, to clearly show how many children are present; Standard 6: to ensure a risk assessment of the premises encompasses the arrivals and departures of children at busy times of the day, these should be shared and actioned by all staff; and Standard 12: ensure all records of complaints are readily accessible. These actions will be checked at the next inspection. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaint 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):

- ensure that the environment is organised to promote children's independence and management of their own personal hygiene skills through their daily

routine

- ensure all required documents are up to date and available for parents, this is to include information about the Foundation Stage.

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):

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- develop planning to ensure that children will be sufficiently challenged to make progress in the six areas of learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk