



Learning Curves Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY310801
Inspection date	27 February 2006
Inspector	Geneen Yvonne Hulse
Setting Address	Christ Church C of E Primary School, Long Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 5AS
Telephone number	01695 420123
E-mail	andrea@learningcurvesnursery.co.uk
Registered person	Learning Curves Limited
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?

Learning Curves nursery opened in September 2005. The nursery operates from a self contained unit attached to Christ Church, Church of England Primary School in the Aughton area of Ormskirk, serving the local community. The nursery has access to a large playroom, with office, toilets, kitchen and storage space, with the out of school club operating from the school hall, computer suite and Year 1 classroom. There is a secure outdoor play area available to the children.

The nursery cares for a maximum of 60 children aged from 2 to 8 years. There are currently 35 children on roll, of whom 27 receive funded nursery education. The nursery offers full day care and children attend for a variety of sessions per week between 08.00 and 18.00, including before and after school care during term time for children attending Christ Church School. They support children with special educational needs

Five staff work with the children in the nursery, of whom four have early years qualifications and one member of staff is unqualified. The after-school club employs four staff of whom three are qualified and one unqualified. One member of staff is employed to work with both age groups.

The setting receives support from the local authority development worker and the teacher team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a balanced range of activities that contribute to keeping them healthy. They independently undertake physical activities on a daily basis to develop their skills, enjoying climbing, balancing and pedalling bicycles. Children are developing an understanding of their bodies and know when they want a drink or are hungry. Their fine motor development is successfully promoted as they manipulate tools, such as scissors, pencils, glue spreaders and cutlery. Staff create opportunities to help children learn about being healthy through the use of projects, displays and planned topics.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment, where positive methods ensure they develop good personal hygiene practices, such as hand washing before snack and after messy activities. Posters are used effectively to remind children to wash and dry their hands. They are starting to understand the importance of caring for themselves and demonstrate it in their play and activities, for example, dressing themselves for outdoor play.

Children are developing an understanding of a healthy diet. Staff talk to them about healthy eating as part of the daily routine, offering fruit for snack and using displays and themes to help children explore what foods are good for them. Children make choices about what to have for snack, making choices from large plates of different fruits and eat together around small tables in a social setting. Staff understand children's individual dietary needs and plan accordingly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where risks are minimised. They confidently move around the premises, developing their independence and are

learning to keep themselves safe. Children are reminded not to run indoors and take care when climbing the outside steps. Staff talk to the children about keeping safe as part of regular discussions and use topics to develop their understanding. Staff are effective in ensuring that the premises are kept safe and secure.

Children self-select equipment and activities from a balanced range of easily accessible resources from low shelves and boxes around the room. Well planned areas allow them space to be quiet, use their creativity and access interesting activities.

Sound procedures are in place to support good practice and the staff team all hold current first aid certificates. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of child protection procedures and how to keep children safe. They understand their role in protecting children and use this knowledge effectively to promote the children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at nursery. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of development as staff understand and offer activities and experiences to keep children interested and motivated. Staff make effective use of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to provide satisfactory quality care and education.

Children are well settled and secure as they happily undertake a balanced range of activities. They are confident and interested in their surroundings and have established good relationships with staff and children alike. Children make choices about their play, selecting activities and resources from interesting planned range available. They are developing their independent skills and after-school children successfully plan their own time, making decisions about what to do. Children happily act out roles using small world play, making farms and building tall towers. Staff respond to the children's individual needs and where possible adapt activities to follow their ideas and suggestions, however, the planned routines can on occasion result in older and more able children not being sufficiently challenged throughout the day. They are positively supported to extend and try out new skills, such as using the computer. The setting uses children's special books to record achievements and recall events and celebrations, such as a Teddy Bears picnic and Valentines Day.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage ensures that children make progress in all areas of development. Children are interested and motivated to learn, using planned activities and experiences to extend their thinking. They use their imagination well during role play activities, making up simple stories when using small world resources and exploring the wobbly bridge outdoors. They are developing good concentration skills and have free access to tools and materials to make models during sessions. They design and extend their imagination when creating pictures and animal masks from a well resourced craft area. Children are confident speakers and listen well to each other.

They share experiences, talking about home and family and staff show interest in what other have to say.

Children are very confident and engage well with each other and visitors, sharing their achievements and negotiating roles in games. They play well together and alone to progress their ideas. Behaviour is very good and reflects the staff's high expectations. Children take turns, share and are successfully helped to learn how to manage their own behaviour and respect others. They enjoy learning about the lives of others through topics and planned activities, for example, talking about where they live and how they get to nursery. Children are introduced to number and problem solving through daily activities, counting and sorting as part of daily routines, when tidying away, singing and at register time.

Staff use short observations to monitor children's progress. They produce 'Special books' for children to look at and recall what they have done and achieved at nursery, as well as to inform parents about their progress. Staff have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals and use this to plan a balanced curriculum to include all areas of learning. Planning is flexible enough to respond to children's individual ideas and interests, however, children do not always undertake additional opportunities to further extend their independence. Staff use open ended questions well to extend children's language and develop their thinking. They value what the children say using positive responses, displaying their work attractively and promoting their self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children build good and respectful relationships with staff and each other. They show positive self-esteem and confidently ask questions and make choices. Children are warmly welcomed by staff who are sensitive and value their individuality. They receive praise and encouragement for achievement and attempts, for example, when making animal masks and attempting their names. Meaningful activities and resources help children become aware of similarities and differences and increase their understanding of the wider world. Books, toys and pictures show positive images and children share their home experiences.

Children's behaviour is good and reflects the staff's high expectations. Children understand clear and consistent boundaries, demonstrating care and respect for each other. They wait their turn and understand how to share toys and play games in small groups. They follow good role models in staff showing care and consideration for others.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff use notices and 'Special books' to keep parents informed about what the children are doing at nursery. On the whole parents and staff work well together to meet the children's needs. However, parents are not routinely kept informed about what the children do on a daily basis and how the stepping stones are used to help them make progress. Parents confidently approach staff and demonstrate satisfaction with the setting. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and learning are well supported by the effective organisation of the setting and satisfactory leadership and management of the educational provision. Knowledgeable staff understand their roles and responsibilities and ensure that children's individual needs are met. The newly constituted staff team work well together and there are effective procedures in place to evaluate the nursery provision, however, systems are not yet in place to consistently monitor the after school provision. The nursery managers are supported by committed staff team.

The setting is committed to training and development to consolidate their practices and enhance the provision. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place to support good practice, which continue to be reviewed to meet changes to legislation and working practices. The staff team have many opportunities to meet together, share information and develop working practices. 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 no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.

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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):

- consider how routines are planned to ensure that all children are sufficiently challenged
- continue to develop information for parents and how this information is shared
- continue to develop systems to monitor the after school provision
- continue to update and review policies and procedures.

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 offering children additional opportunities to extend their independence (also applies to care)
- consider how parents can be further informed about how children learn using the stepping stones.

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