



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 134308

DfES Number: 547361

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/03/2005
Inspector Name Jackie Pulsford

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Leapfrog Day Nursery (Bicester)
Setting Address 1 Barberry Place
Bicester
Oxfordshire
OX26 3HA

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd 3229362

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
Address Central Office
Second Avenue, Centrum 100
Burton Upon Trent
STAFFS
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Leapfrog Day Nursery (Bicester) opened in 2000 and is part of a national chain of nurseries. It operates from a purpose built, two storey building, with an enclosed outdoor area, in a residential area of Bicester. The group serves the local area and beyond.

A maximum of 108 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 168 children from 3 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 51 funded 3 and 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is open from 07:00 until 19:00, 5 days a week all year round.

There are 34 staff who work with the children. Fifteen staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Ten staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Leapfrog Day Nursery (Bicester) provides acceptable nursery education but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in several areas of learning.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff promote behavioural and social skills well. They provide suitable activities for physical, language and literacy development. There are procedures in place to support children with special educational needs. However, plans do not clearly show learning objectives and do not cover all areas of the curriculum. Staff provide suitable activities for younger and less able children, but these are not extended effectively for older and more able children. Staff provide insufficient opportunities for children to develop and consolidate their skills, particularly in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They provide limited resources and opportunities for children to explore their creativity and imagination. There is a system in place to assess children's learning, but this does not clearly show how children are progressing and is not used to inform future planning.

The leadership and management of the nursery has significant weaknesses. Staff have opportunities to attend training to develop their skills. The new pre-school room leader and new manager have identified some areas for improvement but these have not yet been addressed effectively. There is no effective system in place to monitor and evaluate the nursery education provision. Staff do not share space and resources effectively to promote the children's learning in all areas.

The partnership with parents is generally good. The nursery provides parents with an informative brochure and regular newsletters and reports. Staff encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning, but do not invite them to contribute to their child's records.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional skills are fostered effectively by staff. Staff give children opportunities to be independent and help them to develop their confidence. They help children to form good relationships and they manage children's behaviour appropriately.
- Children develop a strong enjoyment of books and staff read to them regularly. They have access to a good range of books and enjoy reading on their own and in pairs or small groups.
- Children have regular opportunities to play outdoors and they use the equipment with confidence.

- The nursery develops good relationships with parents and encourages them to be involved in their child's learning. Staff inform parents of current topics and events and children are able to take books home to share with their parents.

What needs to be improved?

- the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and use of resources to ensure that weaknesses are addressed effectively
- the systems for planning and assessment to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered and to provide opportunities to extend activities for older and more able children
- the provision of practical, everyday opportunities to develop and consolidate children's learning in number, calculation, space and measures
- the provision of opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through exploring, investigating, designing and building and for older and more able children to have access to a computer
- the provision of opportunities for children to develop their creativity and imagination through a wider range of activities and resources
- opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's records.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made limited progress since the last inspection. The nursery was required to reduce levels of noise in the pre-school room. Children are now in two groups and the room is partially divided. The level of noise is acceptable although it can sometimes be distracting if, for example, one group is trying to have a quiet story time. Staff have not addressed issues caused by dividing the room such as how to share space and resources effectively.

The nursery was also required to use records to inform future planning and to provide opportunities for parents to contribute to these. The nursery has made no progress in addressing this area. Staff do not use records and assessments of children's learning to effectively plan further activities. Parents do not have opportunities to contribute to their children's written records although verbal communication between staff and parents is generally good.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested in their activities and show confidence in their environment. They form good relationships with their peers and they play co-operatively. They show a good level of behaviour and respond well to staff. They show growing independence in everyday tasks. Staff help them to learn about their local community and other cultures. Staff are sometimes not able to gain children's full attention in group times and the noise levels in the room are occasionally distracting.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact confidently with each other, staff and visitors. They express themselves well and are able to negotiate. They listen with enjoyment to stories and are able to choose books freely. They are beginning to link sounds and letters by recognising and writing initial letters. The staff provide areas in the room for children to practise writing skills, but these are uninspiring and do not encourage writing for different purposes such as posting a letter or making a list.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Staff provide some opportunities for children to count on in sequence and to recognise and write numbers. Children are not able to regularly practise number skills through practical, everyday activities. They have limited opportunities to use simple addition and subtraction. They are able to name different shapes and match them, for example, in a shape game or on a pattern card. Staff do not provide resources or activities for children to explore space and measures freely.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children learn about their local environment, community and other cultures. Younger children have good opportunities to develop computer skills, but older children do not have access to a computer. Staff help children to find out about living things, for example, growing cress seeds, but do not provide opportunities for children to explore and investigate for themselves. Children do not have access to a wide variety of tools and materials to encourage designing and making skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and safely showing a good awareness of space. They practise co-ordination skills by riding trikes, throwing balls and 'painting' with a brush and bucket of water. They show an understanding of their own bodies, but health awareness is not planned into the curriculum by staff. Older children are able to use some tools and equipment with increasing control, for example, scissors, pencils and staplers.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are able to take part in a range of art activities but these are generally adult led and allow little scope for creativity. Staff provide opportunities for some musical activities, but the children do not have regular access to musical instruments. Children are able to take part in role-play but staff provide limited resources to encourage imagination, for example, the home corner for older children is poorly resourced.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and use of resources
- introduce rigorous systems for planning the curriculum and assessing children's progress
- provide practical, everyday opportunities to develop and consolidate children's skills in number, calculation, space and measures
- develop opportunities for children to explore, investigate, design and build and for older and more able children to have regular access to a computer
- develop resources and activities for children to develop their creativity and imagination.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.