



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101805

DfES Number: 545606

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 26/02/2004
Inspector Name Shirley Ann Jackson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Leapfrog Day Nursery (Quedgley)
Setting Address Merlin Drive
Quedgley
Gloucestershire
GL2 4NJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading)Ltd 3229362

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading)Ltd
Address Central Office Second Avenue
Centrum One Hundred
Burton-on-Trent
Staffordshire
DE14 2WF

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 opened in 1999. The nursery, one of a chain of large purpose built nurseries operating nationally, is located in Quedgeley on the outskirts of Gloucester. The nursery is situated in a mainly residential area and supports the local and wider communities.

There are currently 146 children aged five months to four years on roll. This includes 40 funded three-year-olds and 13 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00. Out of school care is offered to school age-children during school holidays.

Twenty eight full and part-time staff work with the children. Over half of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Seven staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification or are upgrading to level 3. The nursery receives support from a teacher mentor from the Early Year Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Leapfrog Day Nursery, Quedgeley offers satisfactory care to children.

Children are cared for in premises which are clean, bright and well maintained. Deployment of staff in the nursery is poor. This impacts on the required adult:child ratios, and often these are not met. Babies are often cared for in group sizes which exceed a suitable number. Staff uptake of training to enhance and update their knowledge is limited. This has an effect on the range of activities offered.

Staff are aware of safety issues and promote this when children are inside and outdoors. Clear procedures are in place for the collection of children. Children are offered a balanced and nutritious menu. However, staff do not help to prevent the

spread of infection through the daily routine, particularly at nappy changes, cleaning of toys, hand washing and nose wiping. Staff complete an in-house first aid qualification. Although staff are aware of each child's routine, this is not always followed. Consequently, many children do not have their individual needs met.

Children have access to a range of activities. However, many of these are not stimulating or challenging for the children. Positive interaction between some staff and children is limited. Many staff supervise rather than interact with the children. Children's behaviour is satisfactory. However, staff are not always consistent in their approach to behaviour management. Often this is not developmentally appropriate for the level of understanding of the child.

Staff have positive working relationships with parents. They are given good quality information about the setting initially. However ongoing information about their child is often limited. Parents are encouraged to share children's individual routines with staff. Parents are happy with the care their child receives and feel that staff are approachable.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to make available evidence that staff are aware of child protection procedures. This has been met in full. Staff have taken part in internal training and senior staff have attended external training.

They were asked to confirm that all staff have been appropriately vetted. This has been met in full. Relevant details are now kept in staff personnel files.

The nursery was asked to plan and provide activities which meet the abilities of children of all ages. The nursery has made poor progress in achieving this.

They were asked to ensure that children were not at risk from staff carrying hot food. This has been met in full. Staff have been trained to re-enforce correct mealtimes practices.

The nursery was asked to make more play materials available to children which positively reflect the wider community. This has been partially met by purchasing additional multi-cultural resources for the children.

They were asked to ensure that the first aid box is appropriately stocked. This has been met in full. The health and safety co-ordinator now checks the box regularly and replenishes supplies when necessary.

The nursery was asked to show the outcome of complaints. This has been met in full. Copies of correspondence and records of complaints are retained in the nursery.

They were asked to show how staff are appropriately deployed to ensure the safety, welfare and development of the children. The nursery has made poor progress in achieving this.

What is being done well?

- Children are cared for in premises which are clean, bright and well maintained.
- Staff are aware of safety issues inside and outside the nursery.
- Children offered a balanced and nutritious menu.
- Staff have positive working relationships with parents.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures to ensure that staff are deployed effectively within the nursery to maintain required adult:child ratios
- the arrangements to ensure that babies are cared for in groups sizes which are suitable in number
- the procedures to plan a range of activities and play opportunities for children which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs
- the arrangements to ensure that staff help to prevent the spread of infection through the daily routine
- the arrangements to ensure that staff actively promote equality of opportunity and that children's individual needs are met
- the procedures to develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown**

Std	Action	Date
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2	ensure the registered person meets required adult:child ratios and ensures that staff deployment allows these to be maintained	26/08/2004
2	ensure that children aged under two years are cared for in groups of no more than 12	26/08/2004
3	ensure the registered person plans and provides play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities	26/08/2004
7	ensure the registered person promotes the good health of the children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection	26/08/2004
9	ensure the registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and that children's individual needs are met	26/08/2004
11	ensure adults looking after children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development	26/08/2004

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children's progress towards the early learning goals is acceptable though limited by some significant weaknesses in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses for all children. Following appraisal, some staff are willing to train but adults have poor knowledge of early learning goals. Several staff plan some potentially worthwhile focus activities. Neither long-term, weekly nor informal daily planning supports learning through the stepping stones and is not linked to the assessment of children's progress that is limited. A few staff show interest in the children and try to support their play. Generally, the interaction of adults does not help children learn, and many benefits of free play are lost. Children are not settled in stable groups nor are they interested in many whole group activities. Children are not often challenged to learn through real-life experiences nor extended, for example, through appropriate questions. The behaviour of individual children is usually effectively managed. Group management is often poor and does not foster children's self esteem. Appropriate support for those with special needs is being developed with help from outside agencies.

Leadership and management of staff have significant weaknesses. Key staff are aware nursery's aims are not successfully reflected in practice. Advice on special needs has been willingly followed. Personnel at all levels have not realistically considered strengths and weaknesses of the setting or made fundamental improvements necessary. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is not realistically evaluated. Some staff are highly committed but others show a lack of enthusiasm and motivation.

Partnership with parents has significant weaknesses. Parents are not given opportunities to share much home information about children. They are not informed in detail about their progress. General information about the nursery is readily available.

What is being done well?

- In personal, social and emotional development, children develop some confidence through known daily routines. When given the opportunity, they concentrate and persevere for long times at their chosen activities.
- Children enjoy looking at books and making up their own simple stories about their play. They recognise their own names confidently and are keen to draw and paint.
- Children regularly count and solve spatial problems when building their own imaginative models from construction materials. They rapidly complete computer matching puzzles.

- Children develop good fine motor skills, especially when using drawing tools and cutlery. Puzzles, small world and construction toys are stored at the children's level and they are encouraged to choose these resources for themselves.
- A few adults show interest in the children's activities and pose some thoughtful questions to extend their learning. Children with special needs are given helpful support to help them progress.
- Parents are given comprehensive information about the nursery, and topic plans are always displayed on the parents' noticeboard.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Little training relevant to the Foundation Stage is accessed while in-house training and qualifications perpetuate ineffectual and undesirable practice;
- the educational programme where there are significant weaknesses in each area of learning. Long-term planning does not develop children's learning through the stepping stones; daily planning is unimaginative and does not support children's at the right level. Currently, activities for the day are unhelpfully ad hoc, made up by staff as they go along within the daily routine. Focus tasks are not always made available to children in both age groups and there is uninspiring repetition of supporting activities;
- the assessment of children's progress and learning, linked to planning. Staff are relying on their good general knowledge of children, many of whom came to the nursery as babies. Children's progress in the six areas is not meaningfully recorded on the infrequent observations and occasional progress report. The new system of developmental records showing stepping stones has yet to be fully implemented;
- the methods of teaching for all children and management of groups of children. The benefits of free play are lost through over direction and interruption of children's concentration. Most adults disregard what the children are interested in, and do not give appropriate challenges to extend their learning;
- the children's free access to large quantities of attractive, stimulating varieties of resources for independent learning, for example in art-craft, exploring, messy, musical, physical and role play;
- the information parents give and receive about their child's achievements and progress. Daily verbal information is usually a general statement and not personal to the child. Work is not taken home regularly. Parents rarely share their child's developmental records while they attend the pre-school.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Staff have made limited progress in implementing the action plan developed in response to a point of consideration in the previous inspection. The setting was

required to make clear the progression of children's learning. This weakness in the quality of teaching has been partly addressed by dating children's items that are kept. However, these retained items show a limited range of children's learning. Also, the infrequent observations and incomplete developmental records do not adequately show children' achievements and progression over all aspect of the six areas of learning. The nursery still needs to make sure that plans for children's activities are informed by detailed assessment of children's progress through the stepping stones.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children initially settle with warm adult interest but are not cared for in stable key groups. They develop some confidence through familiarity with routines. Children do not learn self discipline and concern for others as they are not treated with respect in some large group situations. Concentration is often disrupted by staff redirecting the child, for example, to a new activity. Children are developing independence in dressing, eating and hygiene though adult encouragement for this varies.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children do not develop good speaking skills. Their attempts at conversation are often ignored and language is not extended. Children listen with enjoyment to books and enjoy pictures. They are keen to make up simple stories about their play. Children recognise their names and some of the letters, but no emphasis is given to rhyming words. They regularly draw, chalk and paint, sometimes saying what is shown. Occasionally they are encouraged to write as in valentine cards, but copy over capitals.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children willingly count by rote though do not hold objects to count them accurately. They say number names, as when holding two biscuits, but are not encouraged to recognise numbers in practical situations. Children have no opportunities to compare groups of objects or give the total. They show interest in a few number problems but are given insufficient time and support, for example, to hold up six fingers in a song. Children learn about shape and position by fitting bricks onto their models.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have inadequate encouragement to share experiences or family events, though they are aware of basic routines and home-time. Their sense of place is restricted by infrequent trips and topics introduced from books. Other than regular play in sand, water and cornflour gloop, they handle few interesting materials, objects, growing and living things. Children confidently complete computer programs and complex constructions, but other design materials or joining techniques are limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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In the general programme, children respond to music by learnt gestures but not spontaneously or imaginatively. Children walk, run and jump off soft play toys skilfully avoiding others, but show little progress in climbing and balancing. Children control ride-ons and small equipment safely but do not construct with large materials such as materials and planks. They learn healthy practices with regard hygiene and resting. Small tools are used competently, such as those for painting and eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children's creativity is restricted by emphasis on pre-drawn colouring and use of adult designs. Inadequate access to resources limits free play, for example for art and craft and musical instruments. Colours are mixed into water, but a limited range of textures are often repeated. Children show good imagination in construction and telling of simple stories about their models but are not fully engaged in sustained role-play. Children are keen to join in rhythmic actions but not words of songs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is not fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children 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

- improve staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones;
- plan activities at the right level, that are informed by detailed assessment of children's progress in the stepping stones;
- improve the adults' interaction with children to help them settle and learn;
- address the significant gaps in the educational programme as detailed for the six areas of learning in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. For example, in personal, social and emotional development, ensure children are cared for in stable groups, that individuals are respected, their concentration encouraged and that larger group activities are of an appropriate length.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.