



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 650090

DfES Number: 542258

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 05/01/2005
Inspector Name Susan Elizabeth Warren

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Leapfrog Day Nursery (Chelmsford)
Setting Address 5 The Meades
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0GT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd 3229362

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
Address Second Avenue,
Centrum 100
Burton Upon 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, Chelmsford is part of a national chain of settings under the ownership of Nord Anglia. It opened in 2001 and operates from a purpose built single storey unit in Chelmsford, Essex. A maximum of 99 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:00 to 19:00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 144 children aged from birth to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 42 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider community. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 31 staff. Fifteen of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Eight staff are working towards a qualification.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Leapfrog Day Nursery, Chelmsford provides satisfactory care for children.

The nursery is well organised with children appropriately grouped. All supporting paperwork and documentation is in place and to a high standard. The nursery employs a high proportion of qualified staff and supports those in training. The furniture and equipment are satisfactory throughout, but in some areas due for review and replenishment.

Staff have a high regard for children's safety indoors and outside. Fire drills are carried out regularly and there are always First Aid trained staff available. Support is offered to children needing additional help, both from within the nursery and with assistance from outside professionals as needed. Children benefit from nutritious meals prepared on the premises from fresh ingredients. The manager agreed to

review the nappy changing arrangements and timing of snacktimes to ensure that children's individual needs are met.

Children follow planned activity programmes. These are based on the early learning goals for children aged three and over. For children under three, staff are beginning to use the Birth to Three Matters framework. Activities are designed to promote all round development and staff record children's achievements to share with parents.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are welcomed and greeted individually as they arrive. There is an open door policy so parents can visit at any time and discuss any issues concerning their child with staff. Recently a parents forum has been set up. This takes the form of meetings with parents and staff to discuss organisational matters and any issues that are brought forward. The forum has had a positive reception so far and has proved a useful way of sharing ideas and expertise.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions arising from the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- The newly appointed manager has had a positive impact on the day to day running of the nursery and particularly on the reorganisation of the grouping of some of the children. As a result children receive better care: they are appropriately grouped to enable them to access activities and care routines and have their individual needs met.
- The key worker system used for babies and toddlers ensures continuity of care for these children.
- The monthly parents' meetings are popular and have improved the partnership with parents, making them feel more directly involved with aspects of their children's care.
- The nursery is fortunate in having a sensory room and a well equipped outdoor play area. These features are well used and ensure that children have a variety of stimulating environments to play and learn in during the course of the day.

What needs to be improved?

- nappy changing arrangements and the timing of snacktimes
- resources throughout, including multicultural resources

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Ofsted has received one complaint since April 2004. This concerned an incident in the toddler's room. An internal investigation was carried out at the request of Ofsted and no further action was taken.

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 should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Review nappy changing arrangements so that ratios are not compromised by staff having to leave their rooms to change children.
2	Review the timing of snacktime to ensure that it meets the needs of children.
5	Ensure that sufficient equipment is available to meet the need of children (particularly play resources and items to encourage multicultural awareness)

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Leapfrog Day Nursery, Chelmsford is generally good. It enables children to make generally good progress in all areas of learning except for mathematical development and creative development, which have significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Overall, staff have a generally good understanding of the Foundation Stage but not all staff show a good understanding of how children learn; they employ a limited range of teaching strategies which do not always offer suitable challenges for children. Planning is linked to the stepping stones and includes activities across most areas of learning, however the value of these is limited by lack of resources in some cases, the result is that written plans are not always reflected in practice.

Children behave well and understand nursery routines; staff manage the range of behaviours appropriately. Staff are still trying various methods of organising the children for group work, free play etc. and to make the best use of available resources and outside play time.

Staff make observations of children but do not currently use the information gained to plan the next stages.

Leadership and management is generally good. The base room manager has responsibility for most aspects of the organisation and delivery of activities, with support from the nursery manager. Staff meet regularly and plan together. Whilst there is a recognition that training is important for staff development access is sometimes limited by lack of cover to release staff.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents have a daily chat with staff as well as more formal opportunities to discuss the children's progress. Newsletters keep them up to date with activities and developments.

What is being done well?

- Staff develop a good knowledge of individual children's needs and preferences. They offer praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour.
- Children have opportunities to write for different purposes in the role play area, which is frequently themed to reflect aspects of the topics followed.
- Meal time routines provide children with the opportunity to develop social skills as they sit in small groups and help one another by serving food, learning to share etc.
- Children become aware of letter sounds as staff use stories and introduce a

letter of the week, with linked activities to reinforce the learning.

What needs to be improved?

- organisation and provision of resources to support learning in all areas to allow children to gain more from the available resources and facilities
- knowledge of all aspects of the Foundation Stage, including principles of how children learn
- the assessment system, to include evidence of achievements and to clearly show the next stages of learning for individual children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

n/a

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident, interested and motivated and concentrate well on self-chosen activities. Self esteem is developed as children celebrate birthdays. They are beginning to be aware of their own needs and feelings. Children share equipment and co-operate at tidy up time. Good behaviour is promoted by praise and encouragement: children are independent at mealtimes and in personal care. A programme of festivals throughout the year introduces a range of different cultures.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening and responding to stories. They can talk about real and imaginary events as they play and work. Children are introduced to letter sounds via a letter of the week and related activities. The range of books offered is limited and not thoughtfully presented; many are in poor condition making them unappealing. At times children have free use of mark making equipment. They enjoy writing for a purpose in the role play area and have help with developing pencil control.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children recite numbers to ten and beyond but limited teaching strategies do not encourage recognition or ordering of numerals or use of mathematical ideas to promote problem solving. A few activities allow children to develop calculation skills but further opportunities during daily routines are missed. Children are able to sort by colour and size and use some maths language as they describe objects and shapes. Sand and water play allows children to learn about capacity, volume etc.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

A nature table provides interesting items for children to investigate using magnifiers and magnets. They learn to care for living things but questioning skills are not developed fully. Children design and build using construction kits and found materials. Children use a computer to extend learning and have some items of play technology in the role play area. Children talk about their homes and families, the weather, seasons etc. Few opportunities allow children to explore the local environment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use the fixed equipment for climbing sliding etc, though access is limited to set times. Wheeled toys, balls and hoops are used outside. Children can negotiate space in the playroom and as they move about the nursery. Children understand and follow basic hygiene routines, they dress appropriately for outside play and learn how to look after their teeth. Children use tools in the role play area and for mark making. They have help with scissors and holding a pencil correctly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children explore colour and texture through free and guided art and craft activities, such as using paint and collage materials. Musical instruments are available however these are used only occasionally. The role play area is themed and offers the possibility for imaginative play. Further resources are needed to extend the learning opportunities. Small world play includes vehicles, dollshouse and a railway. The senses are developed using playdough, cornflour etc and observational drawing.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- review daily routines and general organisation to provide a learning environment which allows children to develop independence and be more in control of their own learning. Make fuller use of all available facilities, including the outside area as an outdoor classroom. Ensure that resources are sufficient and of good quality to support learning across all areas of the curriculum
- review the staff training programme to ensure that all staff have a sound knowledge of all aspects of the Foundation Stage, including the principles of how children learn, to improve the range of teaching strategies and develop children's questioning skills. Include more first hand experiences for children to encourage them to participate in the activities offered
- develop the existing assessment records to include evidence of achievements and to clearly show the next stages of learning for individual children.

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.