



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203710

DfES Number: 584523

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/08/2004
Inspector Name Susan Elizabeth Warren

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Just Learning Nursery
Setting Address Notley Green
Great Notley
Braintree
Essex
CM77 7US

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Just Learning Ltd 2809756

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Just Learning Ltd
Address Notley Green
Great Notley
Braintree
Essex
CM77 7US

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

Just Learning Nursery opened in 2000. It operates from purpose built premises in Notley Green, near Braintree, Essex. The nursery, part of a national chain, mainly serves the local area.

There are currently 160 children from birth to 8 years on roll. This includes 28 funded 3 year olds and 9 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:00 until 18:30, Mondays to Fridays.

Thirty six staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Seven staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA).

How good is the Day Care?

Just Learning at Notley Green provides satisfactory care for children.

The nursery employs both qualified and unqualified staff and currently supports several trainees. Documentation and supporting paperwork is all in place and easily accessible; most is to a high standard. The operational plan is effective and helps with the day to day running of the nursery. Resources are generally of high quality and sufficient to meet children's needs, except for babies, whose choice of toys is rather limited and who do not have access to domestic style furniture. Most children can access toys easily except, again, for babies.

Safety is given a high priority in the nursery and effective and thorough risk assessments are in place. Children are well supervised and their individual needs

met. There is a designated member of staff for child protection and an appointed SENCO.

Activities are planned in line with Birth to Three Matters for children up to three years and the Foundation Stage Guidance for children aged three to five. Children aged up to eight years attend an after school club during term time only. The planning for under threes is good and provides a varied programme of activities. Children aged over three work towards the early learning goals. For all children, access to the well equipped garden area is limited.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents have a daily record of babies' days in the home link diaries. Older children have details of the day's activities displayed outside the playrooms. Parents are made welcome at any time and can discuss their child with the key worker. Newsletters keep parents up to date with events and staff changes and are displayed along with a wealth of useful general information about child welfare and related topics.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection several actions relating to policies, documentation and recording of information were given; these have all been met in full.

Two issues relating to hygiene and safety were given, again these have been met in full.

The nursery was asked to make resources readily available to children and to plan activities to provide them with a full range of experiences and play opportunities; this has been met in part, some rooms have been reorganised to provide role play, craft and quiet areas however choice and access to resources is still limited within the baby rooms. A recommendation for further action is included following this inspection.

The nursery was asked to review children's sleep and feeding routines to provide appropriate individual care; staff have now been given guidelines for good practice regarding meal and sleep times and are implementing these.

The nursery was asked to ensure that those handling food are qualified to do so; several staff have now received food hygiene training.

As a result of actions taken the quality of welfare, care and education is improved.

What is being done well?

- Documentation and procedures are well thought out and contribute positively to the day to day running of the nursery.
- Staff are warm and caring and plan a good range of activities for younger children.
- The nursery provides a welcoming atmosphere for parents and children,

enhanced by attractive décor.

- There is a good awareness of safety issues in all parts of the nursery; security is effective and well monitored at all times.

What needs to be improved?

- use of the outside play area
- accessibility to and choice of a wider range of toys for children aged under two
- access to domestic style furniture in rooms for children aged under two.

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
3	Organise the use of the outside area so that all children have more frequent, regular opportunities for play and learning.
4	Provide some domestic style furniture, to assist children in developing mobility and to continue home life experiences, in rooms for children aged under two years.
5	Make toys more accessible for children aged under two years and ensure that they have more choice.

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 Just Learning Nursery, Great Notley, is good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Experienced staff have a generally good understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. Planning is still being developed; long and medium term plans are well thought out and detailed; further refinement is needed at the short term stage so that activities are sufficiently challenging for more able children.

All children enjoy free choice of activities each day, occasionally more guidance from staff is needed to maximise the learning potential.

Children with special needs are supported; staff work closely with parents and professionals to promote individual children's development. Staff generally manage children's behaviour well; in some instances an inconsistent approach does not help resolve problems and has a negative effect.

Generally good use is made of the available space and resources except for the outside area which is under used as a learning environment.

Children's progress and achievements are recorded against the stepping stones. Too few observations are made or other evidence collected; currently the records are not updated frequently enough to form a true record or to help plan the next steps of learning.

Leadership and management is generally good. The manager ensures that key staff have time for planning and oversees some meetings. A staff appraisal system identifies specific training needs. In-house and external training are used to raise standards of care and education. Trainees are encouraged and supported but in some cases are given responsibilities beyond their abilities; this needs careful monitoring.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents have information about the setting and activities. They can help children at home by the home link system.

What is being done well?

- Parents have formal and informal opportunities to discuss their child's progress; twice yearly open evenings are held and staff are available each day for an informal chat.
- Staff encourage children's independence by involving them in routines such as laying and clearing the table at mealtimes, and tidying up the toys. As a

result children are confident and independent in self-care and are able to choose activities, maintaining good concentration.

- Warm and friendly relationships between staff and children help children feel secure and at ease; they can ask for help when needed. Staff get to know the children as individuals.

What needs to be improved?

- use of observations and assessments
- presentation of short term planning
- resources and opportunities to encourage children to write for different purposes
- use of open ended questioning to encourage children to think and to solve problems
- use of the outside area as a learning environment

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is generally good, however both issues for action contain elements that will be carried forward for further development.

Planning systems have been developed and long and medium term plans now effectively address all the areas of learning and cover the stepping stones throughout the year. The weekly plans show a good variety of activities. At the daily activity plan level insufficient attention to detail means that some opportunities are missed to get the most out of the activity. Staff need to continue to develop the plans at this stage so that activities are clearly focused and include sufficient detail of what children are expected to learn. Evaluations need to be more thorough so that they inform the next stages of learning.

A new assessment system, based clearly on the stepping stones, has been introduced. In order to provide an accurate record of children's achievements and progress this needs to be updated more regularly and include observations and other evidence. Again, this will help when planning the next stages of learning for individual children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident and eager learners, willing to try new things. They can sit and listen attentively when needed. Children are beginning to explore a range of emotions and are coming to term with their own needs and feelings. Children learn to take turns and share and are co-operative at tidy up time. They develop independence and work well at self-chosen activities. They learn about their own and other cultures by celebrating a range of festivals and cultural events throughout the year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact and talk together as they play and work. They listen and respond to stories and instructions from staff. They discuss real and imaginary events, i.e. whilst playing with the doll's house. Children are introduced to letter sounds via a phonics scheme. The book corner is well resourced and cosy although books are not all attractively displayed. Children use mark-making equipment; some begin to write and form letters but opportunities to write for a purpose are often missed.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use number names and can count to ten and beyond. They recognise numerals through the number of the week. Calculation skills are introduced with songs and rhymes, counting up and down, and through use of equipment for simple addition and subtraction. Puzzles and construction kits help with shape recognition. Children sequence and pattern using mosaics and cubes. Sand and water play develop concepts of capacity, volume and weight, as do frequent cooking activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children observe and help to care for fish and snails. Topics include minibeasts and exploring habits such as hibernation. A sensory box encourages exploration of different objects, textures and colours. Children build and construct imaginatively with both kits and found materials. They competently use a computer mouse and keyboard. Visitors, such as a vet or policeman, introduce ideas from the wider world and trips to the local shops build a picture of the environment and sense of place.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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The garden is well equipped to provide exciting physical challenges for children but is under used; children have limited daily access. Children become aware of space as they find a chair or place on the mat. They enjoy hopscotch and show skill and control of movements. Children follow basic hygiene routines such as hand washing and are aware of sun safety. They develop fine motor skills through play with puzzles and toys with small parts, as well as using tools for cooking and craft activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore colour and texture through free and guided art and craft activities with a good variety of media. They enjoy singing simple songs at circle time. Dance and movement is included frequently with lively musical accompaniment. Role play and small world play resources encourage sustained imaginative play; themes such as hospital or office extend children's learning. Senses are developed by regular cooking activities and in the garden with digging, planting and growing.

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

- Develop the system of observing children and assessing their progress to include sufficient details to plan the next stages of learning. Update the records frequently to build a true picture of development with supporting evidence.
- Make full use of the short term activity plans to provide activities suited to children's varying stages of development. Include full evaluations to inform future planning.
- Provide resources and opportunities for children to write for different purposes such as in the role play area or outside. Encourage children to name their own work i.e. when painting or making collages.
- Develop staff's understanding and use of open questioning in order to encourage children to think and develop their problem solving skills.

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.