



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY152150

DfES Number: 537036

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/10/2003
Inspector Name Susan Marriott

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name JUST LEARNING NURSERY
Setting Address Progress Park
Elstow
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK42 9XE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Just Learning Ltd 2809756

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Just Learning Ltd
Address 45 High Street
West Malling
Kent
ME19 6QH

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 Ltd., opened in 1995 and now operates 56 nurseries in Great Britain. The Bedford site opened in 2002 and provides a 112 place day nursery for children aged six weeks to five years. The nursery occupies purpose built single storey premises on the edge of an industrial estate to the south of Bedford town, with easy access from the A6. The facility is open throughout the year, with the exception of public holidays, from 07:30 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. The nursery serves the needs of working parents who live or travel to work in the locality.

The nursery provides designated rooms for specific age groups; comprising six rooms for the under two's, two rooms for the two to three year olds and two further rooms for the three to five year olds. There is a flexible multi-purpose reception area for alternative activities. Staff, kitchen and laundry facilities are grouped together away from the children's areas.

Seventeen staff work with the children. Of these, eleven hold suitable qualifications in child care, with six members who are undergoing training.

There are 79 children currently on roll, with 11 three year olds and one four year old in receipt of Government funding for nursery education. There are currently no children who have been identified as having special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. The setting has recently received support from the Early Years Advisory teacher. Overnight care is not provided.

How good is the Day Care?

Just Learning Day Nursery at Bedford offers an unsatisfactory quality of care for children. The National Standards are not being met. Many aspects of the provision are poorly organised and the company policies and procedures are not consistently implemented to underpin the smooth operation of the nursery. Poor use is made of the staff, space and resources and children are not being cared for in a safe environment.

Although formal risk assessments are currently being undertaken, these are not being used effectively within the setting and staff do not have a practical awareness of health and safety issues to maintain a safe environment. The nursery does not implement company procedures to promote the good health of children and significant incidents are not reported to the registering authority. The staff mostly have an adequate understanding of children's dietary needs to promote children's growth and development but do not ensure that children have appropriate access to drinking water at all times. The nursery does not presently meet the needs of all children including those with special needs and English as an additional language.

The young and inexperienced staff team do not always work well together. The nursery benefits from dedicated accommodation with plenty of space but this is used ineffectively by the staff to provide a worthwhile range of activities and play opportunities which promotes children's learning and development. The dedicated outdoor area is not fully used to support play and learning.

The staff do not always interact well with the children and develop good relationships with them. The children do not always behave well and challenge the boundaries set by staff.

The nursery has satisfactory relationships with parents although it does not provide regular information on children's progress or have clear complaint procedures in place. The nursery does not respect privacy and confidentiality when in discussion with parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- The nursery has suitable premises and resources that could be used to promote children's development.

What needs to be improved?

- compliance with all conditions of registration and the regulations
- appointment and induction procedures for all staff
- staff deployment within all areas of the nursery to ensure the maintenance of ratios and consistency of care for all children.
- the operational plan to ensure the effective running of the nursery and that shows how the resources are being used to meet the needs of all children.
- the standard of care, learning and play for all children across all age groups
- staff's use of available resources to provide a suitable range of stimulating activities with particular reference to the over twos

- the conducting and recording of risk assessments to minimise risk to children and adults and that comply with Health and Safety legislation requirements.
- the accident records that should be completed accurately and record all necessary information at the time of the accident
- the reporting of significant incidents to comply with the regulations and with other Health and Safety legislation.
- the availability of drinking water
- staff's knowledge and understanding of special needs including the Code of Practice for children with special educational needs, a designated person with responsibility for special needs and an effective special needs statement that promotes the welfare and development of the children.
- Staff's knowledge and understanding of children's behaviour that adopts a positive and consistent approach to the management of behaviour, establishing clear boundaries according to the child's level of understanding.
- the information on children's progress for parents in all areas of the nursery that supports all children's well being, development and progress.
- the complaints procedure that informs parents of the procedures to be followed in the event of a complaint and that includes the name, address and telephone number of Ofsted.
- privacy and confidentiality for parents both the keeping of the information and how it is shared with the parents
- staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues including the arrangements in place for the protection of each child and arrangements to safeguard children from abuse or neglect including procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff.
- the accessibility of records relating to day care activities
- the implementation of policies as effective working procedures that support the day-to-day running of the nursery as a safe and caring environment.

Outcome of the inspection

Unsatisfactory

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
3	Demonstrate that staff are competent in their role and interact appropriately with children, promoting positive opportunities for independence and developing self esteem	28/11/2003
3	Devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs	28/11/2003
3	Demonstrate how positive links are built between the children and the parents and how children's individual needs are facilitated within the structure of the provision	28/11/2003
3	Demonstrate how staff interaction will be monitored and children valued and listen to	28/11/2003
3	Ensure that there are consistent procedures in place to observe and record children's developmental progress	28/11/2003
3	Demonstrate how resources are organised so that they are readily available to children and staff deployed to support children's play and learning	28/11/2003
3	Demonstrate how staff will increase their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage	28/11/2003
5	Demonstrate how staff will develop their knowledge and understanding of providing a suitable range of stimulating toys and activities, in order to meet the developmental needs of children aged from 2 to under 5 years	28/11/2003
6	Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of conducting regular risk assessments on the premises identifying action(s) to be taken to minimize identified risks in compliance with Health & Safety legislation requirements	28/11/2003
6	Demonstrate how children will be effectively monitored and supervised at all times	28/11/2003
6	Ensure that the designated Health & Safety representative has appropriate skills and knowledge of current Health & Safety procedures inclusive of RIDDOR	28/11/2003
6	Demonstrate the action undertaken following the significant incident of a child receiving a laceration to the face	28/11/2003
7	Demonstrate what procedures are in place to support the reporting of significant incidents to the	28/11/2003

	appropriate authorities inclusive of OFSTED	
7	Ensure that accident records are completed accurately by all staff and that all necessary information is documented such as date and time of injury and the child's details inclusive of date of birth	28/11/2003
7	Demonstrate who is responsible for monitoring accident records and what procedures are followed to minimise and prevent reoccurrence of incidents	28/11/2003
9	Ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and that children's individual needs are met	28/11/2003
10	Ensure the written statement on special needs (is consistent with current legislation and guidance) and is understood and implemented by all staff and that management are aware of children identified	28/11/2003
11	Develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development	28/11/2003
11	Keep a sufficiently detailed record of concerns and share this openly with parents	28/11/2003
13	Develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues	01/03/2004
14	Ensure that all records relating to day care activities are readily accessible, maintained accurately and are available on the premises for inspection at all times and stored confidentially	28/11/2003
14	Ensure that regulations are adhered to and policies and implemented as working procedures	28/11/2003

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection	
Std	Recommendation
8	Ensure that drinking water is made available to children at all times
12	Provide opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their children's progress
12	Make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint
12	Ensure that privacy and confidentiality is maintained when in discussion with parents

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Just Learning Day Nursery at Bedford offers an unacceptable quality of nursery education. Children do not learn effectively through a sufficiently wide range of planned activities. They are making poor progress towards the early learning goals overall.

Staff provide some worthwhile play opportunities but the overall quality of teaching is poor. Staff listen and talk to the children, but there is insufficient questioning and stimulation to encourage children to become independent learners and many activities are overdirected. Young and generally inexperienced staff do not have the necessary skills to usefully direct the high proportion of trainees on the staff. Staff have an insecure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and do not understand how to plan an educational programme to support progress in learning. Plans do not give appropriate coverage to aspects of literacy and numeracy. They do not correctly identify what children are to learn from an activity or support staff to promote the learning of all children. Activities are not always well organised or prepared in advance and staff miss opportunities to exploit daily routines to further children's learning. Whole group sessions do not always sustain children's interest.

Assessment of children's learning does not take account of the stepping stones and does not usefully inform planning. Staff do not adapt activities to provide sufficient challenge for more able children or to meet the needs of less able children. Staff do not always know how to manage challenging behaviour from children and relationships between staff and children are fragile.

Leadership and management is poor. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the provision are ineffective. The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. Parents are given good information about the provision but say they do not receive enough information about their child's progress in learning.

What is being done well?

- The staff have some good ideas for activities, such as the "Treasure Hunt" in the outside area.

What needs to be improved?

- Improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the Early Learning Goals.
- Improve the planning of the educational programme, to provide a broad, balanced and purposeful programme of learning for all children.
- Develop the use of assessment to show what the child knows, understands

and can do and to help staff to decide what children need to learn next

- Devise effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision on a regular basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This is the first inspection of funded nursery education at this setting.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Poor

Children are making unacceptable progress because the staff offer inappropriate support and encouragement to promote many aspects of this area of learning. Ineffective use is made of everyday situations to encourage the children to form good relationships with and sensitivity towards others. They do not confidently express their needs and develop personal independence. Children are not always interested and excited to learn and some group activities do not always sustain children's interest.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Poor

Progress is poor and insufficient priority is given to this area of learning overall. Planned activities such as the tracing of names, support the development of formal writing skills, but children do not make marks in practical situations e.g. role play. Opportunities to link sounds with letters are limited. Limited staff interaction does not effectively support the development of speaking and listening skills. Poor emphasis is given to stories although staff read to individual children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Poor

Provision for this area of learning is poor. Insecure staff knowledge inhibits children's progress. Many children count beyond ten but have insufficient opportunities to use their counting skills in practical contexts. Children learn about size and shape through formally planned activities such as drawing around shapes. The nursery has suitable resources for developing the children's comparing, sorting and matching skills but staff are uncertain how to use this effectively.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Poor

Children make poor progress. Planning shows that staff have limited understanding of this area of learning. There are good opportunities for children to use technological equipment such as tape recorders and computers but plans do not support the development of skills in a meaningful way. Activities lack interest and restrict the development of children's desire to observe, investigate and explore the world around them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Poor
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Children are making poor progress. Plans do not correctly identify activities which support the development of physical skills. Children move confidently around the nursery with control and co-ordination, showing an awareness of space, themselves and others. Children have regular opportunities to enjoy freely chosen activities outdoors but plans do not show planned use of a range of small and large equipment and tools with increasing control. Health awareness is not given due emphasis.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Poor
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Children are making poor progress. Staff plan regular opportunities for children to experience an adequate range of media but these are often over directed and do not always encourage children to express their own ideas. Staff do not intervene appropriately to support role play. Music based activities are given insufficient emphasis by staff. Children have too few opportunities to respond using their senses and to use their imagination in art and design, dance, role play and stories.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is unacceptable. Children are making poor progress towards the early learning goals.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the Early Learning Goals.
- Improve the planning of the educational programme
- Develop the use of assessment to help staff to decide what children need to learn next
- Devise systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision

The provider must draw up an action plan within 20 working days showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. A copy of the action plan must be sent to the local education authority. The Department for Education and Skills will write to the provider asking for a copy of the action plan. The Secretary for Education and Skills will then decide whether to withdraw the provider's entitlement to receive funding for 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.