

Leicester College Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Alison Edwards

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Leicester College Day Nursery, Freemans Park Campus, registered in 1993. It is one of two nurseries run by the college on two separate sites in Leicester. It is primarily used by parents working or following a course of study at the college. It operates from sole-use purposely-designed premises on the campus. There are enclosed outdoor areas for outside play. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year between the hours of 8am and 5.15 pm. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 28 children from under the age of eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range at any one time. It is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for older children. It receives funding to provide nursery education to children aged three and four years. There are currently 48 children under the age of eight years on roll, 34 of whom are in the early years age range. This includes a number of children with English as an additional language. Including the manager, there are currently 12 regular childcare staff. Of these, all are qualified to at least Level 3 including one with Early Years Professional status, one qualified to Level 5 and one to Level 4.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children quickly establish very high levels of enthusiasm and enjoyment in this very welcoming setting which is extremely well organised to promote their health and safety. The highly motivated and skilled staff team work extremely well with parents to ensure that they have an excellent awareness of each child's individuality. Consequently, children confidently develop very strong relationships with others, and are highly motivated in their play, so establishing an excellent basis for their future skills and learning. The nursery has worked extremely effectively to establish its current excellent standards and is equally committed to further enhancing the quality of its provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- reviewing further ways to extend links with other early years settings such as reception classes to which children progress in order to further promote continuity and progression in children's welfare and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children thrive in an extremely well-organised and stimulating environment where they have excellent opportunities to extend their own interests and ideas, whether

playing indoors or out. Comprehensive and detailed risk assessment procedures and records are very effectively used to underpin children's safety and well-being. Resources and staffing are organised to maximise children's opportunities to move freely between indoor and outdoor play spaces whatever the weather. For example, children are encouraged in their independent use of readily-accessible waterproof outer clothing supplied by the nursery. Very robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure that staff are well-qualified, thoroughly vetted and have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff at all levels benefit from regular training updates on safeguarding issues. Consequently, this underpins their clear understanding of what child abuse and neglect are, and of how to implement the setting's comprehensive and detailed policies in the event of any concerns about a child, or any allegation of abuse.

The nursery gives very high priority to promoting close links with parents. Prospective parents receive a very clear and helpful written pack about arrangements for children's care, the nursery's responsibilities, and the key policies and procedures underpinning these. The nursery ensures that the key person responsible for each individual child's care works closely with parents and child right from the initial visit. This focuses on establishing an excellent awareness of children's individual needs, interests and abilities, for example, how best to support children with dual or additional languages in their initial settling, and in their communication. Parents often enthusiastically contribute their own observations and ideas to their child's individual learning journeys. They have regular opportunities to systematically review these very well-organised and informative records with staff, so ensuring there is an excellent shared understanding of children's progress and the next steps in their learning. The nursery very effectively promotes links between children's experiences at home and in the setting, providing tailored suggestions to parents on ways to support individual children's welfare and developmental needs. These include promoting parents' awareness of consistent and positive ways to support children's self-control and social skills, and the loan of specific games and toys linked to children's individual current interests and skills. The nursery uses a wide range of methods to actively seek and incorporate parental views on many key aspects of its provision. These include participation in the college's nursery consultative committee, the use of regular and carefully-analysed surveys and questionnaires and the review of policies and procedures. The nursery has extremely close links with its sister setting at a second college campus, very effectively sharing ideas for best practice. Very clear systems are in place to enable the nursery to work effectively with other professionals, such as, occupational or physiotherapists, to support the inclusion of children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is already very pro-active in establishing links with the large number of reception classes to which children progress. However, it recognises that there is still further scope to explore additional ways to fully enhance continuity and progression in children's care and development.

Nursery management and staff consistently show extremely high levels of commitment, enthusiasm and professionalism, so enabling them to work very well together as a team. Staff constantly review the effectiveness of their own practice as they monitor children's level of use of particular play areas, or their concentration on specific activities. They use a variety of quality assurance criteria,

such as, those provided by the local authority, to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of the nursery's provision. The nursery gives a very high priority to ongoing professional development, fully encouraging staff participation in a very wide range of internal and external workshops, training days and courses. Consequently, staff have an excellent awareness of current best practice initiatives and of ways to implement these. These factors ensure that the nursery is able to rigorously monitor its current effectiveness, and to identify further specific ways to continue to enhance the quality of provision for all children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children's safety and health are promoted extremely well. Activities, such as, simple woodwork enable children to learn to safely manipulate a variety of small tools. Children extend their understanding of safety in the wider community as they fully participate in purposeful activities during visits from 'people who help us', such as, fire and police officers, and link these with related pretend play, stories and discussion. Excellent use of available space and resources, together with very careful use of risk assessment procedures, enables children to safely develop high levels of independence and exploration from an early age. For example, babies and young toddlers delight in being able to investigate a stimulating and well-chosen range of man-made and natural playthings carefully displayed on low, open shelves. Staff actively encourage their growing confidence and purpose in clambering and balancing on carefully sited and well-designed climbing equipment. Older children spontaneously use an excellent range of puppets to create their own 'superhero' dramas incorporating their own ideas about possible accidents and their consequences, and how the 'heroes' can help prevent these. Staff are extremely sensitive and responsive in meeting young children's care needs; for example, in relation to their sleep and changing needs. Older children take delight in an excellent range of action songs and rhymes, following complex and varied rhythms. They show high levels of awareness of their own and other creatures' bodies as they laugh gleefully at the suggestion that an elephant might have wrinkly teeth as well as wrinkly toes, knees and ears and explain why this cannot be the case. Staff strongly encourage children to take ownership of arrangements for their health. For example, children use digital cameras to create their own booklets illustrating good hygiene practices such as flushing the loo and using liquid soap and running water for hand washing.

Children with a range of cultural backgrounds and languages confidently play in harmony with each other in an environment which fully reflects the wider community. Staff have an excellent awareness of each child's individuality, and work very closely with parents to value this. For example, they purposefully introduce key words and phrases from home languages and incorporate music and foods reflecting specific cultures. Staff are very effective in fostering excellent levels of independence, concentration and cooperation. For example, young children confidently serve themselves to rice and vegetable curry at lunch time, and are fully engaged for lengthy periods of time in activities, such as, turn taking card games. Staff have developed excellent skills and techniques to help children

understand and manage their own strong emotions. For example, children at varying stages of maturity confidently use signs such as 'thumbs up' and 'thumbs down' to show how they are feeling, and staff actively help them to vocalise the reasons why they feel happy, sad or cross. Staff also actively seek and take account of children's views. For example, children's comments about photographs of different types of outdoor play equipment contributed to the design of the outside play areas.

Nursery staff have developed excellent systems to track each child's changing abilities and interests across all aspects of development, and to identify how to best plan and provide for the next steps in their learning. Consequently, children benefit from stimulating and challenging play experiences helping them to make excellent progress in their learning. For example, during 'circle time', children show very high levels of interest in investigating a parcel wrapped in layers of crinkly paper which they pass round. Staff are very successful in encouraging each child to express their own ideas about what it feels like and what it might contain. This enables every child, regardless of their level of communication skill, to feel that their ideas are valued, to increase their vocabulary, and to extend their thinking skills. Children, including those with dual languages, show very high levels of spontaneous interest in using an excellent selection of books. For example, some choose to use these as the basis for their own puppet shows or pretend play, whilst others delight in recognising and naming letters and sounds in simple alphabet books. From an early age, children gain excellent awareness of shape and space, and develop high levels of problem-solving skills within their self-chosen play. For example, staff very carefully track young babies' growing skill and control in balancing and adjusting piles of wooden bricks. They plan and provide progressively more challenging opportunities enabling older children to purposefully design and build complex three-dimensional models from plastic bricks, referring to two-dimensional pattern cards as a guide. Children across the age range very purposefully explore the use of everyday technology. For example, babies enjoy using 'cause and effect' toys to create sounds and lights, whilst young toddlers and pre-school children very readily use simple cameras to take photographs of their favourite activities or their playmates. Children have excellent opportunities to use their senses to explore the natural world. For example, babies explore the textures, sounds and reflections of natural and man-made materials including fabrics, wood and metal. Older children are intrigued by the structure of an empty wasp nest or by the skin shed by a corn snake. Children are fascinated by the movements of balloons in the wind and by melting ice. They gain excellent awareness of changes within the natural world as they sow, care for, harvest and taste vegetables and herbs from their garden. Children have many worthwhile opportunities to explore different textures, materials and substances, such as cornflour 'gloop', dough, sand and clay. Displays of independent paintings, drawings and collages throughout the nursery ensure that children know that their own creative ideas are valued. Staff carefully track children's growing interest and abilities in making marks, from their early finger tracks in substances, such as runny custard, through to complex and recognisable pictures and words in their independent drawings.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met