

Learning Tree Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	258584
Inspection date	25/02/2011
Inspector	Jennifer Getty
Setting address	200 Kirkby Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 1GP
Telephone number	01623 552144
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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*.

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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

Learning Tree Nursery operates from a detached house in Sutton in Ashfield, near Mansfield, north Nottinghamshire. It is privately owned and was registered in 2000. It is one of a group of seven nurseries which are family owned. The setting works closely with Sure Start Sutton East Children's Centre. The ground floor is used for the under two-year olds, and upstairs for the over two-year-olds. Children have an enclosed outdoor area in which they can play.

The nursery is registered for 36 children under eight years old. There are currently 54 children on the register, 50 in the early years age range. The nursery receives nursery education funding for three- and four-year-olds. It also supports children on the pilot scheme for two-year-olds. The nursery supports children with special educational needs/disabilities and English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, between the hours of 7am to 6pm throughout the year, except for bank holidays. An out of school club also operates from the setting during term-time between the hours of 7am to 9am and 3:30pm to 6pm. During the holidays they attend between the hours of 7am and 6pm. There are 14 members of staff, 10 of whom hold Early Years Qualifications. Four members of staff are working towards a further qualification of the Early Years Foundation Degree. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a welcoming environment in which each child is highly valued and respected. Most systems to support children's continued progress in their learning and development work well in practice and children are supported by well qualified and knowledgeable staff. Their welfare is promoted well so that individual needs are met. There are effective partnerships with parents, and the nursery is highly committed to working with other agencies to support those children with additional needs. The nursery implements effective systems for reflecting on practice and identifying their strengths and areas for improvement, resulting in a strong capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- provide regular opportunities for parents to add to children's learning and development records
- develop the use of the observation and assessment system so that children's next steps in all areas of learning are consistently monitored and planned for.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a secure knowledge of child protection issues and confidently explain the nursery's safeguarding procedures, ensuring that children are effectively safeguarded. The robust recruitment processes ensure that staff are suitable to work within the nursery setting and suitability checks are carried out. Most staff hold childcare qualifications and are encouraged to further their skills and knowledge through training. This means that children receive good quality care. Staff follow effective nursery policies and procedures in order to keep children safe, secure and promote their health. Risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed so that hazards are minimised and children can confidently play in a safe environment.

The resources are organised so that children access a range of adult-led activities as well as being able to make independent choices about play. Staff ratios are well maintained and children receive appropriate support during activities to enable them to make further progress in their learning and development. Staff appraisals are used to recognise the staff's strengths and to identify training. This promotes their professional development and supports the ongoing development of the nursery. The staff are extremely attentive to children's individual needs and ensure that all children are treated equally. Children with English as an additional language have their needs met very well as staff talk enthusiastically about training they have attended. They confidently explain how they implement strategies learned to provide effective support for these children and how this is extended to all children. There are excellent systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and there are excellent relationships with outside agencies are developed and maintained in order to provide high levels of support. Children's backgrounds and cultures are respected and staff are keen to learn more from parents and discuss these with children. They learn some basic words in the child's first language to enable them to meet their welfare needs and help them feel settled. All children have opportunities to learn about diversity in the world through resources, activities that celebrate a wide range of festivals and discussion.

Parents receive a wide range of information about the nursery and their child's progress and development. Policies and procedures are made available and parents are well informed of new projects and developments such as the 'Hello' project and the nursery's participation in the 'Every Child a Talker' scheme. Children's individual needs are met through the strong partnerships formed with parents. Newsletters and parent evenings keep parents updated, although there are fewer opportunities for them to contribute to children's learning and development records in order to further promote continuity between home and nursery.

The manager has a clear vision for the development of the setting and is instrumental in driving improvement. Self-evaluation processes are effective in identifying future improvements and these are acted upon and monitored. For example, the outdoor area has been redesigned so children have a variety of play

opportunities and experiences. Following a review of the space used for the over two-year-olds, the first floor is currently undergoing refurbishment to enable staff to organise children into groups which allow them to tailor activities to their specific stages in development.

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

Children are happy in the nursery and develop warm relationships with staff. They settle easily as they join in activities and young children happily play alongside their peers. Staff are enthusiastic and quickly recognise and respond to children's needs, knowing when to offer support and when to allow children space to be creative and experiment. Staff observe children and closely monitor their progress towards the early learning goals. They regularly review the records to identify their next steps of learning and use these to plan meaningful activities based on children's interests. The systems are not fully effective in consistently monitoring the observations and assessment system across all areas of learning to ensure children's further progress to some of the early learning goals.

Children are settled and confident in the bright surroundings and are actively involved in a balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Young children enjoy feeling different textures of materials such as stone and wood when staff introduce the heuristic play. Children of all ages learn about the natural world whilst planting seeds and have the benefit of a gardening area outdoors. Young children's curiosity is encouraged as they feel the compost and see what happens when it becomes wet. They are beginning to use number and help count the blocks as they build a tower.

Children's communication and language skills are developing well, as they receive high levels of support from staff. All children regularly sing songs and older ones join in, doing the actions at the same time. Older children listen attentively to the story of 'The Gruffalo' and show an interest in stories and books as they talk about what they will dress up as for World Book Day. There are appropriate resources for children to develop their writing skills, for example, pens, paper, paints and large chalks. Older children enjoy messy play, finding their name cards in the foam, swirling their fingers through it to form a letter or pattern. There is a very well resourced role-play area which provides a variety of opportunities for creative play and using their imagination. Children are developing a good range of skills for the future, accurately using of the mouse for computer and demonstrating good social skills. Children improve their physical skills outside, climbing, sliding and riding wheeled toys. They regularly access the outdoor play area and develop their self-care skills as they try to put on their own coats and hats.

Staff support children in learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, talking with children about the food they eat. Some children try mango for the first time and are confident to try new experiences. They know why to wash hands and young children and babies have time and space to sleep and rest as they wish. There is a balanced menu which supports their health needs and children's

individual dietary requirements are known and adhered to. Children feel safe and secure in the setting, and enjoy lots of cuddles. They are confident to express their own needs and behave well. They are responsive to the praise and encouragement offered by staff and recognise good behaviour, for example, telling their friend they are sitting nicely or finding someone to offer their 'snack band' to so they can have snack. Children of all ages play well together, sharing and taking turns, respecting their peers.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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