

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Kettering Venture Park

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	220026
Inspection date	31/05/2011
Inspector	Susan Marriott
Setting address	Lamport Close, Kettering Venture Park, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 6XY
Telephone number	01536 525566
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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

Leapfrog Day Nursery, Kettering is one of 88 nurseries run by Leapfrog Day Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1999 and uses three main base areas in a purpose-built building. It is situated on a business park on the edge of Kettering, Northamptonshire. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to provide care for a maximum of 112 children at any one time. Of these, 35 children may be aged under two years. It is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 52 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 123 children aged from six weeks to under five years on roll. Of these, 49 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the local and neighbouring communities. It currently supports a number of children with specific educational needs and/or disabilities and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 33 members of staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is an extremely friendly, well-managed and inclusive nursery which genuinely places the child at the centre of all that it does. The experienced and dedicated staff team work together to safeguard children effectively and deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff sustain good quality interaction with children to guide learning from child-led play and promote positive attitudes to learning. Children make good progress in their learning and development and observation and assessment systems effectively track and secure progress. Children's welfare is promoted very well and there are good partnerships with parents and carers. Competent and capable leadership and effective self-evaluation secures the nursery's good 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:

- increase the range of opportunities for babies to enjoy daily fresh air and play outdoors
- extend the quality of outdoor experiences for all children, building on children's interests and valuing their strengths as active learners and problem solvers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted well in this efficiently-run nursery. Safeguarding is given strong priority and staff attend regular training to ensure that they keep up-to-date with this area of work. Appropriate vetting checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children and the required information about disclosure numbers and their dates of issue are readily kept to hand. Regular risk assessments and daily checks are appropriately recorded and ensure that hazards are minimised. Health and safety systems are linked to a company online monitoring program and involve daily, weekly and monthly tasks to check the effectiveness of procedures. Good physical security prevents intruders entering the premises and closed-circuit television systems monitor the premises. The identity of visitors is checked before admitting them to the nursery, an appropriate record of visitors is kept and the times of arrival and departure are properly recorded. Every courtesy is extended to all visitors and health and safety procedures are explained on arrival.

Senior management are particularly committed to extending the skills and knowledge of staff through in-house training and support from external advisers. The manager and her team of base room leaders steadily introduce improvements to the service through robust monitoring of staff working practices. Their honest, realistic self-evaluation is carried out in consultation with staff, parents, company childcare team support and the advisory services. Staff hold appropriate levels of qualification and work very well as a team, helping to create a positive environment where children feel secure and happy. Staff have a clear understanding of anti-discrimination, enabling them to implement appropriate policies and provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They work with parents and carers to ensure that they understand each child's individual needs, background and culture and are therefore able to meet their needs and promote children's awareness of individuality.

The nursery makes every effort to work in partnership with others to secure smooth transitions and continuity of care for children. The staff are alert to the early signs of needs of the children that could lead to later difficulties. They respond quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as necessary. Staff observe each child at play in order to understand and support their individual wellbeing and development, enabling each key person and family to work together. Parents receive thorough information about the setting and their children's progress, for example, through newsletters, daily talks with staff and formal consultation evenings with their child's key person. The views of parents and carers are actively sought and acted upon. Regular questionnaires are sent out to parents and a few return these. There are lots of positive comments, balanced by one or two criticisms. These are openly addressed and discussed with staff at staff meetings.

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

Children experience an enjoyable programme of learning and development at Leapfrog Day Nursery. They are well-supported by the friendly and caring staff who work hard to meet their individual needs. Staff develop positive relationships, observe children and get to know them really well as individuals. Children are warmly welcomed and well-cared for in a stimulating, suitably safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. The nursery is brightly decorated, with lots of interesting displays of posters and children's work. The premises are due for refurbishment shortly, but rooms are kept clean and orderly and good use is made of space. Toilet and nappy-changing areas are hygienically maintained.

Staff clearly spend a lot of time and effort completing detailed planning sheets and identified learning intentions are suitably matched to the criteria in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Information is gathered on entry to provide staff with a good quality baseline from which to measure children's progress. The children's learning journey books contain delightful photographs and comments about their learning for parents to read. Staff identify the next steps in children's learning through observations fed back into their planning. The assessment information is updated with consistent frequency to show the progress made during the children's time at the nursery and fully supports staff in ensuring that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Babies are taken into the garden for fresh air on most days, but do not experience frequent trips out into the locality to experience daily life outside the nursery walls. Children who are mobile benefit from free-flow access to the outdoor garden areas where staff provide activities to reflect all areas of learning. Staff generally make good use of the garden areas and available resources are used well. Action plans show that senior management acknowledge that there is scope to improve the quality of outdoor experiences for children. For example, staff in the 'First Steps' room are developing mark making in the garden area. Staff in the pre-school room have found ways to provide digging, planting and growing experiences for the children, despite the whole garden being covered with soft pore surfacing. However, outdoor activities do not always build on children's interests and value their strengths as active learners and problem solvers.

Staff create a delightful environment for children under two, where they are secure and carefully nurtured. The babies are encouraged to sit, crawl and walk, enabling them to make discoveries around them. General practice observed in this room is excellent and individual routines are respected. Staff attend to the children's needs with great care and diligence, creating a gentle, nurturing environment where genuine concern is shown for each child as an individual. Babies use all their senses to investigate and explore the many different materials and textures presented to them and have many varied opportunities to enjoy messy play. For example, children enjoy picking up safe objects from the tray of warm water and dropping them to make a splash. Toddlers are engaged in purposeful play throughout the day and staff interact well to support their learning. Children experiment with paint, watching the colours mix and exploring what happens when

they smear the paint on the table top, before placing paper on the top to take a print of the pattern. Caring staff join in with child-led play, extending language and vocabulary, and pre-school children are encouraged to explore to expand their mathematical learning through counting and problem solving. For example, whilst waiting for lunch to arrive, staff encourage the children to count how many boys and girls are sat at one table and how many at the other, and to add the numbers together to find the total waiting for lunch.

Company initiatives are introduced to raise the quality of provision for all children. For example, the 'Imagination station' initiative involved staff bringing in many bags of sand to transform one of the base rooms into a 'beach experience' for the children. Another scenario being eagerly anticipated in the near future is the 'Woodland experience'. Staff survey the children's existing knowledge and vocabulary at the point of introduction to the target experience and then a month later repeat the survey to observe and measure the learning that has taken place. Photographs clearly demonstrate the children having fun and enjoying themselves and parents and carers are invited to join in too. 'Wake and shake' is another innovative scheme designed to stimulate brain activity, encouraging children to feel re-energised and ready to learn. The five minute daily dance activity supports children in adopting a positive approach to their day. The cross-lateral activities introduced into the dance movements encourage coordination and concentration, inviting children to laugh and relax and enabling them to explore their environment and improve their confidence.

Well-organised mealtimes in each room provide some good opportunities for children and adults to interact in small groups. At snack and meal times, staff maximise the learning opportunities for promoting children's independence and discussion about healthy eating. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to talk about themselves, their families and recent experiences. Children recognise differences about people and the world around them and the nursery embraces this natural inquisitive nature through activities and tasks that celebrate being different. Children can express themselves through imaginative play and through selecting materials and resources they wish to use, with the emphasis being on the learning process rather than the end product. Staff actively encourage children to find solutions and ideas to their own ideas, and staff model positive behaviour and quickly tackle any situations that need addressing, or supporting. Children's behaviour is managed well by the staff and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs. Children develop skills for the future as they become increasingly independent, share ideas and work together. For example, staff encourage children to try to fasten their own coats rather than doing the task for them. Transition days support children in learning how to manage their lunch boxes and change for physical education lessons provide useful information for parents and carers prior to the move to school.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	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