

Leapfrog Day Nursery - Mill Hill

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	147572
Inspection date	16 May 2007
Inspector	Pauline Nazarkardeh
Setting Address	30 Millway, Mill Hill, London, NW7 3RB
Telephone number	020 8906 9123
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Registered person	Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Day Nursery has been registered since December 2000 and is part of the chain of Leap Frog Day Nurseries. The group operates from a residential building which has been converted to accommodate the needs of the nursery. The nursery is registered to care for no more than 78 children under five years; of these, not more than 61 may be under three years, of these, not more than 29 may be under two years and of these, no more than nine may be under one year at any one time. The nursery is situated in a largely residential area of Mill Hill in the London borough of Barnet.

Children play and are cared for in five groups according to their age. On the ground floor there are three suites of rooms: a suite for babies, a suite for toddlers and a suite for two-year-olds. The three to five year olds are based upstairs and have access to three playroom and a bathroom. All children use the outdoor play area. Adult facilities include the reception area, kitchen, laundry room, visitors and staff toilets and a small staff room.

Currently there are 107 children on roll, children attend on a full or on a part time basis. The group receive nursery education funding for a total of 33 children. Of these children, 26 are

three-year-olds and seven children are four-year olds. Children who speak English as an additional language attend. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday between 07:00 and 19:00 all year round.

The manager and 10 of the 18 staff working with the children have appropriate early years qualifications. The staff complement also includes an administrator, cook and kitchen assistant and nursery assistants. The nursery receives advice and support from the company headquarters, their area support workers and from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are rigorous procedures in place to sustain good levels of hygiene and prevent the spread of infection, such as the new dispensers provided for staff to ensure that they are wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their meals. All permanent staff hold valid first aid certificates which enables them to confidently deal with any accidents or administer medication.

Children enjoy regular activities which contribute to their health. Each day there are outdoor activities to help them develop control of their bodies and use their large motor skills. For example, they play with space hoppers, tricycles, climbing frame and a slide. These outdoor games improve children's physical development. Children also participate in a fundraising bounce activity which they all enjoy.

Children's health is maintained because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their needs. Children benefit from a range of nutritious meals and they are offered drinks regularly. Older children can help themselves to drinking water and learn the importance of taking regular drinks as a way to maintain their health, for example, staff talk to children about having a drink after their physical play. Children sit together in small groups for their meals which have developed into very social occasions, as they talk to each other and to adults about events in their lives. Older children help to serve meals to their peers and all children enjoy the food provided. Staff are aware of children's individual dietary needs and there is an excellent system in place to monitor the food provided to children with allergies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to premises that are warm and welcoming. Their art work is attractively displayed and there are photos of children at play displayed at their level. Rooms are now organised for the varying ages of the children in attendance and provides good space for the children to move freely and comfortably. Resources are stored in each room within easy reach of the children which means that they are able to make independent choices. Babies and toddlers now have a large play space with supervised access to an outdoor area, adjacent to their playroom and plans are being made to further develop outdoor play and learning. Facilities for older children now include a base room, construction room and a room for imaginative play.

Children are safeguarded because staff have attended training and have a suitable knowledge and understanding regarding child protection issues and the possible signs of abuse and neglect.

The child protection co-ordinator knows the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child, and the necessary documentation is in place to support their practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy and relaxed at the nursery. Staff have begun to use the Birth to three matters framework more effectively when planning activities for younger children. They are now planning, observing and evaluating systems to support younger children's learning.

Young children are becoming competent learners as they involve themselves in a range of activities which are suitable for their age and stage of development. Babies and younger children are provided with 'treasure baskets' to encourage them to use their senses to explore natural and man-made objects which feel and sound different. Children have equal access to the activities on offer and staff provide appropriate support for the babies and younger children and challenges for more able children. The improvement in the presentation of these resources means the younger children and babies gain much more from their play. The key worker system enables staff to build sound relationships with children and their parents. As a result, their care, welfare and learning needs are met within the setting.

Younger children have fun as they participate in music and movement sessions, they are encouraged to participate and their own versions of the movements are valued by staff. They are able to listen and concentrate as staff read stories, even the very youngest of children are able to identify the 'red tractor' as their favourite book. Children enjoy imaginative play; however the home corners are not providing children with opportunities to fully experiment during their play. Children are helped to make sense of what they see, hear, smell and touch. They paint with their fingers, look at touchy feely books, play in the sensory areas, and explore sand and water.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The changes in the organisation of the pre school area have created a warm and secure learning environment in which children are making good progress towards the stepping stones of the early learning goals. Children now have many opportunities to develop their independence as they play in three different play rooms, which offer a wide range of activities and resources. They are able to access the bathroom by themselves and the introduction of the snack bar allows children to have drinks and fruit without interrupting their play. Staff have developed their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and the systems for planning, observing and evaluating children's progress have been put in place. This still need to be further extended. Some learning opportunities and challenges for children are missed as the planning system does not fully cater for the more capable children in the group. Staff use sound teaching methods such as demonstrating new tasks and open-ended questioning to help children to think for themselves and to develop their language skills.

Children are at ease when speaking in familiar groups and they initiate conversations with adults and each other. They are developing their social skills as they interact in the excellent role-play area. Children have opportunities to write spontaneously at the writing table, construction area and during imaginative play. There are many opportunities for them to recognise their name and words in the environment.

Children are developing their problem solving skills as they confidently complete puzzles, build with bricks and use equipment in the sand and water play. They use mathematical language such as big and small. Children are increasing their knowledge and understanding of technology as they use calculators, telephones and play computer games. They spend time observing and finding out about living things, for example they talk about the tadpoles in the fish tank. Children enjoy exploring different textures such as play dough, sand, and water. They have opportunities to explore colour and shape as they paint and stick with various materials and they use a range of tools confidently such as spatulas and brushes. Children enjoy listening to different types of music and are benefiting for the range of musical instruments now available to them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children participate in activities and celebrate various festivals, for example, Christmas and Diwali. They have access to a range of resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their understanding of diversity such as dolls, books, posters and puzzles. They know what is expected of them within the setting as they respond positively to consistent praise and encouragement from staff. This enhances the children's self-esteem and confidence. Overall children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The special educational needs coordinator for the setting has attended relevant training. A suitable special needs policy is in place. Due to the reorganisation of the rooms children now have time to relax listening to music and stories, or just quietly reading a book.

There are appropriate systems in place to share information with parents and carers. Information is shared verbally, through the use of updated notice boards and regular news letters. Parents of the younger children and babies also receive a daily written sheet containing information about their children's day. Partnership with parents and carers in relation to nursery education is good. Information about the Foundation Stage curriculum is included in the nursery prospectus. Parents are able to speak to staff about their children at any time, the newly introduced information board provides parents with details of the topics and themes and they receive a written progress reports. This enables parents to be involved in their children's learning both at the nursery and at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by suitable staff who are appropriately vetted. Comprehensive and effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place and are overseen by the management team. The day runs smoothly for the children because the play areas are well organised and the staff are clear about their role and responsibilities. Children share warm relationships with the kind and caring staff, consequently, they are happy and confident in their surroundings.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are good. The new manager has developed some effective systems such as time out for planning, allocating staff responsibilities and facilitating regular meetings. She monitors the quality of teaching through staff appraisals and observing practice. Planning, evaluation and assessment procedures are not yet fully developed. As a result some of the older and more able children lack challenge from activities provided. These weaknesses have been identified through the evolving systems to monitor the quality of the nursery education and evaluate its impact.

The relevant policies and procedures are in place and they are regularly reviewed and updated as legislation changes. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery were asked to ensure that they improve all staff's understanding of child development for the under threes; ensure that staff have appropriate time to plan, discuss and evaluate their work; to ensure there are consistent staff to care for the children in their key groups; and to promote equality of opportunity for all children.

In addition the nursery were asked to support, monitor and review the management of the nursery and to develop positive partnerships with parents and carers making sure that information regarding Ofsted's role as the regulator was available to them.

The nursery's development plan has been implemented, actions have been addressed and a new plan has been drawn up to take these developments still further. Through management involvement staff are now provided with non contact time for specific work. All staff have undertaken a range of training which includes first aid, managing behaviour and equal opportunities. In addition key staff have taken more in-depth training on these topics.

The nursery has also been reorganised which has meant that provision for children is better and there is also less need for staff cover so ensuring consistency of care. New and effective systems for communication have been put in place and information about Ofsted's role as regulator is displayed for parents.

At the last inspection the setting needed to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum; the systems for assessing children's progress and the use of these to inform planning; provide children with greater opportunities to develop their self help skills and increase their independence.

All staff have undertaken training and the pre school area has been given regular support from the management of the nursery and an early years teacher. Staff have an increased knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals, and how young children learn. The pre school has been reorganised, children now have many opportunities to develop their independence. Effective systems have been introduced to monitor the quality of the nursery education which are evolving to take into consideration the new learning opportunities available to children and to cater for the more capable children in the group.

This has ensured the quality of the care and nursery education overall is now of a good standard throughout the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to monitor resources, especially in relation to imaginative to ensure that they are suitable for children's development
- put in place the plans to further develop the safety of the outdoor play area to allow regular access for the younger children

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop the system for planning and assessment in order to identify the more capable children's individual learning priorities and use these to inform future plans

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk