



## Leapfrog Day Nursery - Mill Hill

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	147572
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 February 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Malini Parmar / Kanwal Sonia Lobo
<b>Setting Address</b>	30 Millway, Mill Hill, London, NW7 3RB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate - enforcement action. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - special measures.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Leapfrog Day Nursery, at Mill Hill London, has been registered since December 2000. It forms part of a 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 situated in a largely

residential area and is within walking distance of local amenities and main transport links and routes.

The areas of the nursery that are used by the group are the ground floor, which includes the two baby rooms, pre toddler room, toddler room, reception area, kitchen, laundry room, visitors toilet and an outdoor play area. There are three base rooms used upstairs for children aged between 2 and 5 years.

A maximum of 78 children can attend at any one time, of these 29 may be under 2 years old. At present there are 120 children on roll. The group receives nursery education funding. There are a total of 29 children who receive the funding. Of these children, 21 are 3 year olds and 5 children are 4 years old.

The group operates from Monday to Friday between 07:00 to 19:00 all year round.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is inadequate.

Children's hygiene is not successfully promoted to help them develop a secure awareness of how to maintain their health. They do not benefit from using premises that are clean throughout. Although, older children clearly enjoy washing their hands at appropriate times, for example, before they eat and after using the toilet. This is, however, not supported by secure systems followed to prevent the spread of infections. As a result, children are at greater risk to illnesses because they, for example, play with dirty toys. The mechanisms in place to ensure all staff follow clear procedures such as when nappy changing, are not yet fully reliable. As a result, children experience a greater risk of cross infection as staff do not change their gloves after each nappy change. Older, children have limited opportunities to raise their awareness of maintaining good hygiene because they do not learn about the benefits of regular hand washing, because this is not reinforced with useful explanations about why it is necessary. Babies under one year, are supported in their personnel routines for eating and sleeping. They do not, however, consistently benefit from positive levels of involvement to support healthy emotional well being. For example, they experience minimal conversation whilst having their nappies changed, during meal times, or when they are tired.

Children clearly enjoy freshly prepared nutritious meals and snacks, which comply with all special dietary requirements and parental wishes. They eagerly eat cheese on toast for snack and relish the fruit yoghurts. Children in the pre- school area benefit from being able to access a drink at all times to ensure their energy is consistently replenished.

Younger children have limited access to fresh air and lack consistent opportunities for regular exercise or vigorous play. Indoor space and routines are not utilised effectively to ensure children receive consistent opportunities to engage in physical play. As a result, babies are not motivated in their movements, they do not have sufficient space to crawl or stretch. Little attempt is made to ensure they receive good

chances to be stimulated by the outdoor environment, or experience a change of environment to maintain their health. This means that during winter months, some babies spend the majority of their day in one room.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is compromised due to ineffective organisation and procedures in place to protect their welfare.

Insufficient attention is given to promoting children's safety within the setting. Not all risks are systematically identified in each area of the nursery, and those which are informally known by staff are not effectively reduced. As a result, children are vulnerable to accidental injuries caused by, for example, sleep-on mats exposing foam. Children are not closely supervised in all areas of the nursery and pre-school children in particular, receive little support in learning to keep themselves safe. As a result, they are not aware of potential dangers, for example, of sitting on stacked chairs. Children are at greater risk to injuries caused by electrical equipment because systems to ensure these are checked for safety at regular intervals, are unreliable. Fire fighting equipment is checked appropriately, and a monthly fire drill ensures children have a greater chance of learning to cope during an emergency evacuation. However, not all staff have a clear idea of their specific roles and responsibilities during these times. This confusion increases the risk to children's safety, as it may jeopardise a quick evacuation, in the event of a real emergency.

Children's welfare is further compromised because staff are not fully secure in their knowledge of issues surrounding child protection. This does not form part of a secure induction programme and staff are not aware of possible signs and indicators of children at risk. They are particularly insecure of what would happen in the event an allegation is made against them. This means there is an increased risk that concerns may not be handled effectively and children are not securely protected from harm.

Children do not benefit from an effective use of space. Pre-school children are not able to access all play areas at all times. Nor, do they benefit from a consistent quiet space in which they can comfortably withdraw from play, when they need to relax. This is not effectively encouraged or managed. Younger children's need to sleep without disturbance is not successfully accommodated. As a result, they are often disturbed by the needs of other children to engage in noisy activities.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is inadequate.

Children do not benefit from a carefully considered and well planned environment to ensure their progress.

Young children are not supported in their learning through the use of the Birth to three matters framework, as a result, activities are not planned for their individual

needs. This has recently been introduced, but staff lack knowledge and confidence in its use to ensure effectiveness. Some children clearly enjoy the positive experience of shredded paper, but young children do not consistently benefit from a rich and stimulating environment to promote their senses. Babies have little opportunity to successfully find their voice, because there is little verbal interaction between staff and babies, for example, to encourage babbling. The lack of effective planning, direction and opportunities available, means that children do not sustain their interest, and often either, sit and watch or wander in search of other options.

Nursery Education.

The overall quality of teaching is inadequate.

In the main, children are engaged in a range of practical activities. Children are beginning to strengthen their concentration, for example, when completing puzzles, but the lack of opportunities available, means that they become quickly distracted by other children and do not consistently persevere in their chosen tasks. They enjoy some friendships with one another, but do not successfully initiate constructive play together at times such as during the water play activity. They are able to approach staff for support. However, opportunities to strengthen self help skills and foster their independence effectively are at times missed. Consequently, children receive limited chances to, for example pour their own drinks or label their own work.

Children talk confidently to staff and their peers and enjoy looking at books individually or with staff. Although some resources and areas of the nursery are labelled, children have a limited understanding of the purpose of the English written language in their environment.

Children are developing pencil control. But, there are few opportunities to develop children's interest in writing through play and writing for a purpose. There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the shape and sound of letters.

Children have opportunities to build with a range of construction equipment and spend some time building towers and bridges. Children have access to a computer and a few programmable toys. However, these are not used as an integral part of their everyday learning. This is because opportunities in the activities provided for children to learn about every day technology are limited and not planned for.

Children do not learn about their local world, through, for example, regular trips. They receive limited chances to regularly explore and investigate natural and man-made objects using a variety of tools such as magnets or magnifying glasses. Children sometimes make spontaneous references to past and present events in their lives, although these are welcomed they are not always extended to support children's thinking.

Children learn to count through a range of practical daily activities and some of them can count accurately up to ten and beyond. There are some missed opportunities to engage more able children in problem solving and calculations. Most children are able to recognise two dimensional shapes but their learning is not extended to

include an awareness of three dimensional shapes.

Children are not supported sufficiently to enable them to use mathematical language such as 'heavier' or 'lighter' when comparing quantities.

A range of art activities are organised and children are engaged and produce collages and paintings. They have access to a room which sole purpose is to accommodate imaginative play. However this area does not form a part of children's every day experience and as a consequence children are not always able to express their emotions and feelings through this safe medium.

Children have opportunities to use tools, such as scissors, art and craft tools. They are able to jump, run, hop at times, such as in the movement session. They have regular opportunities to exercise outdoors, although the range of outdoor activities lack imagination and do not sufficiently challenge the more able children.

Staff have an insecure knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and so activities are not always planned effectively and specifically to support the individual learning needs of each child. As a result, children sometimes become bored and begin to wander in search of other possibilities.

Planning and assessments are not yet fully in place and therefore there is no system to identify the next steps in children's learning. Consequently the individual learning needs for children are not being met.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is inadequate.

Children share their thoughts and feelings and during individual interactions with staff these are valued. This is not, however, fostered effectively within the routine or through activities, as a result children receive fewer chances to strengthen their self worth. Children receive limited opportunities to develop a firm awareness of differences to help them learn to value their own and wider cultures. This is because resources reflecting all areas of diversity are limited to books, and information about the wider world is restricted to the celebration of festivities. As a result, there are few chances for children to recall or revisit these celebrations through, for example, displays, resources, photographs or other activities. Consequently, any knowledge gained is not frequently reinforced to help children develop a secure understanding in order to develop a strong identity.

Children' self esteem is enhanced as they are provided with useful praise and encouragement. Their behaviour, however, is erratic. They are not sufficiently engaged in stimulating challenges and as a result, restlessness leads to frequent bouts of unwanted behaviour. Children receive little useful information about why certain behaviour is inappropriate. As a result there is a strong emphasis on managing children's behaviour rather than their needs and children often ignore instructions to change their behaviour. During these times the needs of more compliant children are overlooked. Consequently, children receive fewer chances to successfully learn to manage their own behaviour. Systems to support the needs of

children with special educational needs are not yet fully secure.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting and are able to settle their children by waving to them from the window as they leave. However, children do not benefit from a thorough system in place to promote healthy partnerships with parents.

Partnership's with parents and carers is inadequate. Children do not benefit from a two way sharing of information through, for example, a key worker system because although this is in place, it is not successfully implemented. Parents receive some information about the provision, activities provided and some of the groups policies and procedures. However, systems to ensure all parents have access to this information are not fully secure. Children's achievements and ongoing developmental needs are not securely documented and therefore only basic information about participation in some activities and enjoyment is verbally exchanged with some parents. As a result, children's individual needs and specific learning priorities are not shared to enable parents to become involved in their child's learning. Parents of children who receive nursery education do not have access to any information about the Curriculum for the Foundation Stage and parental involvement, although desired, is not adequately fostered.

Children's, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development is not fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

The provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children do not benefit from an organisation which has secure systems in place to support staff and value their contributions. Consequently, staff morale is low, they lack motivation and do not offer good quality care and education. Mechanisms for induction training, regular staff and individual support meetings are not securely in place. As a result, there is no structure to monitor practice and ensure effective measures are in place to meet the National Standards successfully. Although, there is a set of policies and procedures in place some of these do not contain the necessary detail. A lack of effective organisation means that children do not benefit from a staff team that have a secure understanding of many necessary procedures and policies. This is particularly apparent with regard to children's health and safety. Poor staff deployment means that correct adult to child ratio's are not consistently maintained, as a result outcomes to promote children's welfare, care and learning are inadequate.

Leadership and management is inadequate. Children do not benefit from a strong staff team who have shared aims under an effective structure. Staff do work closely together to ensure the delivery of the routine, but lack of support and guidance means that the manager is unclear about her specific roles and responsibilities. The staff team do not have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage which has an adverse impact on the quality of education provided for children. The manager shows some commitment to seek external support to be able to plan and provide a balanced curriculum. Children do not benefit from a clear assessment of how well their needs are met. This is because, there are no systems

in place for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The nursery has made little progress overall in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection. They were asked to: keep individual records of staff, including information about recruitment, training and qualifications, accessible on the premises; to undertake risk assessments for each part of the nursery and review systems in place to monitor the safety of the children and staff; to update policies and procedures to reflect the requirements of the National Standards and to improve the organisation of record keeping so that they are easily accessible to parents; to consider staff deployment to ensure that children have sufficient staff working with them at all times; to make sure that, in the absence of the manager, the person in charge is suitable; to ensure good hygiene practises in all areas of the nursery, with particular attention to the cleanliness of toys and equipment and to comply with recommendations raised by Environmental Services.

Accessible individual records are now kept on the premises containing the name and address of staff members, any volunteers and committee members and information about recruitment, training and qualifications. However, children still do not benefit from clear risk assessments conducted in all areas of the nursery. The systems in place to monitor the safety of children are inadequate overall, as a result children are still exposed to hazards and this continues to be an area for improvement. The majority of policies and procedures have now been updated to reflect the requirements under the National Standards, however, some continue to lack the necessary detail. Staff are still not effectively deployed to ensure children's welfare, safety and care learning and play. This is a reoccurring issue raised at the nurseries last inspection in 2004 and then again during a an unannounced visit made in 2006. As a result the nursery have been issued with an notice of compliance to improve practice. The nursery are currently working towards ensuring that in the manager's absence the person in charge is suitable to do so. Issues surrounding the overall hygiene with particular attention to the cleanliness of toys and equipment in order to prevent the spread of infection, have still not been effectively addressed. The overall cleanliness of the nursery is poor and children are still not adequately protected from the spread of infections. As a result this continues to remain a significant area of improvement and the nursery have now been issued with an notice of compliance to improve hygiene.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received one complaint in February 2006. A number of concerns were raised these cover National Standards 1: Suitable person, 2: Organisation, 3: Care learning and play, and Standard 7: Health. The reported concerns related to suitable staff qualifications in childcare and correct adult to child ratios not being consistently maintained. A lack of activities and craft resources available for children. Concerns were raised about a vermin infestation and general hygiene of the nursery.



An unannounced investigation visit was made on 16th February 2006. Four actions to improve practice were set around National Standards, 2: Organisation, regarding the deployment of staff and 7: Health, regarding the hygiene of the nursery. Following this a full inspection was carried out on 21 February 2006. The registered provider remains qualified to provide full day care.

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.

## **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 inadequate - enforcement action. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

Ofsted is taking **enforcement action** to safeguard the welfare of children.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

The setting requires special measures to improve the provision for nursery education. The following urgent action is required:

- ensure staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage in order to make assessments for children so that the next stage of their learning is identified and effective use is made of these to inform the planning
- promote secure partnerships with parents and carers, provide parents with clear information about the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Ensure the opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their child's progress includes sharing individual learning priorities, to effectively meet the needs of the children.
- develop a rigorous system to monitor and review the setting's strengths and weaknesses and that of the educational programme.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the

procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)