



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109121

DfES Number: 540327

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/10/2004
Inspector Name Nikki Whinton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Leapfrog Day Nursery (Swindon)
Setting Address Highdown Way
St Andrews Ridge
Swindon
Wilts
SN25 4YD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd 3229362

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Leapfrog Day Nurseries (Trading) Ltd
Address Central Office
Second Avenue, Centrum 100
Burton-on-Trent
Staffordshire
DE14 2WF

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Leapfrog Day Nursery at St. Andrew's Ridge, Swindon opened in 2000. It operates from a purpose built premises to the north of the town. Children attend from a wide area.

There are currently 156 children from birth to under 5 years on roll. This includes 43 funded three-year-olds and 1 funded four-year-old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07.00 until 19.00

Eight part-time and 24 full-time staff work with the children. Seventeen staff have early years qualifications. Five staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives teacher support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Leapfrog Day Nursery provides good quality provision, which helps children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the foundation stage of learning. They plan and provide a variety of practical, meaningful activities to help support children's learning. However, the assessment system is not used systematically. There are significant weaknesses within children's creative and mathematical development and limited challenges for those who learn more quickly in these areas. Staff do not always manage the time effectively. Staff know the children well and are forming positive relationships with them. They actively support children's developing independence and confidence. Staff ask children good indirect questions to make them think. They offer very good support to those children who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership and management have significant weaknesses. The group do not effectively monitor or evaluate the educational provision and have not been proactive in tackling identified weaknesses. However, a new management team is in place. They have a good understanding of the areas for development and are now putting strategies in place to support improvement.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are provided with regular, good quality information about the setting and its provision. They are not initially asked about their child's achievements. However, they do have the opportunity to share with staff what they know about their child's ongoing educational development. Parents are kept regularly informed about their child's progress. They are encouraged to become actively involved in their child's learning, both within the group and at home.

What is being done well?

- The staff have an effective partnership with the parents and carers. Parents are provided with regular, good quality information about the educational provision. They have bi-annual opportunities for formal discussion with their child's key worker and are encouraged to share their own observations of their child's development. Parents are invited to become actively involved in their child's learning, such as by helping to bring in articles for the interest table or introducing suggested topic linked discussion at home.
- Children love using their imagination through construction design and whilst involved in sustained role play. They use tools, props and materials skilfully to develop and enhance their play ideas.
- Children are confident, independent and have good self esteem. They have a good range of vocabulary and use language well when talking to peers and

adults. Children have a good understanding of letter sounds and are learning how to link sounds and letters.

- Staff provide very good support for children who speak English as an additional language. Pictorial time line displays help all children become aware of the timetable of activities during each session. Resources and play materials are labelled in languages appropriate to those children attending. Children's reports are made available in each family's first language.

What needs to be improved?

- the staff's programme for assessment, to ensure regular dated observations and assessments are undertaken on the children across all areas of development and all aspects of each area of learning. Use the information obtained to plan appropriately timed, challenging, activities to support individual children's future learning especially those who learn quickly
- the staff's planning of practical activities to promote children's understanding of calculation, how to form letters correctly and to develop their awareness of music and individual creativity in art
- the leadership and management, to ensure identified weaknesses are regularly reviewed to encourage improvement and that the leadership frequently monitors and evaluates the planning and assessment programmes, to help improve the effectiveness of the educational provision for children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made poor progress since the last inspection.

As a result of the last inspection, the group was given the following key issues;

. ensure that assessments are dated to show progress clearly and use the assessment records to focus on individual children's next steps in learning

. extend staff's knowledge of the teaching of the formation of letters, to ensure that handwriting focuses on developing letters correctly and consistently for the children who are beginning to recognise and wishing to write simple words.

Staff now undertake infrequent observations of the children. Assessments are still not dated. Information from observations or assessments are not used to focus on individual children's next steps in learning.

Staff do not actively support children in developing correct letter formation during practical play activities.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident and enthusiastic. They form positive relationships with staff and peers. They enjoy discussing their news with others, such as telling a staff member "I'm going to dress up as a green witch tomorrow" or a child saying his auntie "lives in a London club". Children have good self esteem and are effectively developing their independence through the daily routine. However, children do not always behave appropriately when activities become too protracted.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have a good range of vocabulary. They use language confidently, such as when noticing "I think the jam's getting thicker" or telling an adult "you must line up to go in". Children understand letter sounds and are learning to link sounds and letters. They regularly explore books and listen to stories. However, children have few chances to make marks for a purpose and those who learn more quickly rarely take part in early writing activities offering sufficient challenge.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have very few chances to solve simple mathematical problems or to develop their understanding of calculation. Those who grasp mathematics quickly are rarely sufficiently challenged. However, they all have regular opportunities to count and to recognise numbers as labels, such as when self registering on a number line or counting spots on a dice whilst playing "Bug Buddies". They take part in practical activities to develop their awareness of shape, space and measure.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children love designing and building, using a wide range of materials. They enjoy investigating, such as when scooping out a pumpkin or predicting which items will sink or float. They frequently discuss significant events in their lives and are learning more about a variety of cultures and beliefs. However, children rarely explore the local environment and do not take part in planned activities to increase their understanding of information and communication technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have good spatial awareness. They use a wide range of equipment, tools and materials safely, demonstrating increasing coordination and control. Children are effectively developing their understanding of healthy eating and good hygiene practices through the daily routine. However, children rarely get the chance to take part in planned activities to promote their large muscle development. Older or more able children are not offered sufficient physical challenges.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Creative sessions are mainly adult directed. Children have very limited chances to express or initiate their own creative and imaginative ideas whilst involved in art and craft activities. Children enjoy using their imagination whilst involved in role play and during construction design. However, children do not have planned opportunities to develop their understanding of music.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve the programme for assessment, to ensure regular dated observations and assessments are undertaken on the children across all areas of development. Use the information to plan appropriately timed, challenging, activities to support each children's future learning, especially those who learn quickly
- plan and provide practical activities to promote children's understanding of calculation, how to form letters correctly and to develop their awareness of music and creativity
- develop the leadership and management of the setting, to ensure identified weaknesses are regularly reviewed to encourage improvement. Ensure that the leadership frequently monitors and evaluates the planning and assessment programmes, to help identify the effectiveness of the educational provision for individual children's learning.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.