



Learning Tree Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	258584
Inspection date	30 January 2007
Inspector	Judith Rayner
Setting Address	200 Kirkby Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 1GP
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Registered person	Jane Orme
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?

The Learning Tree Nursery operates from a detached house in Sutton in Ashfield, near Mansfield, north Nottinghamshire. It is privately owned and was purchased in 2001. It is one of a group of eight nurseries which are family owned. The setting works closely with Sure Start Sutton East Children's Centre. Families from the local area attend the nursery. The ground floor is used for the under two year olds, and upstairs for the over twos. There are three activity rooms, and children are organised into age/ability groups. There is an enclosed outdoor area, which benefits from grass, bark and hard surfaces.

The nursery is registered for 36 children under eight years. There are currently 48 children on the register, this includes 12, three and four year olds who receive Nursery Education Funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and there are systems in place to support children whose first language is not English.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 throughout the year. It is only closed for bank holidays. An out of school club also operates from the setting. During term time children attend between the hours of 08:00 to 09:00 and 15:30 to 18:00. During the holidays they attend between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00. There are 12 child care staff employed at the setting, 10 of whom hold Early Years Qualifications, with others working towards them. The nursery receives support from the local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted very well. Staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and adhere to the health and safety policies and procedures. There are good systems in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, staff wear aprons when changing nappies, serving food and wipe surfaces down with anti bacterial spray. Children from an early age are learning the importance of personal hygiene. For example, they know they have to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They understand that washing the germs away doesn't make their tummy poorly. Younger children are learning through activities, such as bathing dolls and brushing their teeth. Children are effectively cared for should they become poorly or have an accident. This is because the staff are knowledgeable and confident in dealing with accidents, the care of an ill child and the giving of medication. This ensures that children's needs are met quickly. Information is recorded and parents are kept up to date with their child's condition.

Children enjoy their food and eat well. They are given a well balanced, healthy and nutritious diet with appropriate amounts of food depending on their age and dietary needs. Meal times are a good social time where children and staff have conversations and build up their relationships. Children are learning skills such as, older children are learning to hold knives and forks correctly and younger children are learning to feed themselves. Staff are keen to raise children's awareness to new food through food tasting activities, planned play and topics. For example, children try a food tasting activity where they smell, touch, look and taste a range of tropical fruit such as Asian pear, grapefruit and pineapple. Children's independent skills are developing. Older children use a jug to pour water into cups or a water dispenser and younger children are given more support by staff. Babies fluid intake is monitored closely to ensure they do not dehydrate.

Outdoor play is planned into every child's day. They benefit from the range of activities and apparatus available to them. Their large motor skills are developing, for example, children confidently manoeuvre trikes around their peers and objects. Children are learning about how different physical activities change the pace of their heart and how being outside helps them to grow and be healthy from spending time in the fresh air. They are happy and enjoy their time outside trying the range of resources to support their physical development such as, the slide, jumping sacks and trundle toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery promotes a very warm and welcoming environment to children, parents and visitors. There is a wealth of information displayed around the setting highlighting staff certificates, nursery policies and procedures and, current and topical child care issues. The art work of children is valued. This is because staff attractively present it throughout the nursery and promote and display their achievements. Children are able to access the space, areas and resources independently. This is because the staff effectively organise space, resources and areas of the building both inside and out to promote the development of the children in their care.

Children of all ages have access to a very good range of toys, games, equipment and resources that enhance their all round development. They are developing their independent skills as they self-select toys and games of their choice. This is because the staff carefully arrange the resources and present them attractively to children, thus engaging children's interest and curiosity. Older children are learning to take responsibility for looking after their toys. For example, they help staff tidy away toys and games before dinner or when they choose another toy.

The protection of children is good. There are effective systems in place for the safety of children. For example, daily risk assessments are undertaken by staff. These are reviewed and evaluated to identify the risk impact on children and action taken if necessary to minimise hazards and dangerous situations if required. Therefore, children play safely both inside and outside the building. Children are supervised very well because staff have a good understanding of the different ages and abilities of the children in their care. Young children and babies are closely monitored and supported by staff. Older children are observed and assessed from a distance to allow their independence skills to develop. Support is offered by staff as and where appropriate. The security of children is given high regard and the building is secure. Staff understand and comply with health and safety policies and procedures. Clear written documentation supports the practice.

The protection of children is given very high priority. Staff are knowledgeable of their roles and responsibilities with regard to child protection issues. Staff are well trained and confident practitioners who understand their responsibilities, know what to record and who to share their concerns with both internally and externally.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's care, learning and play is supported very well because staff are knowledgeable of the Birth to three framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are skilled in implementing the planning to meet the learning needs of individual children and babies. Staff provide a very good range of toys and resources that promote children and babies emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. The good observations, assessments and planning undertaken by the staff ensure that all children and babies are given the same chances to play with a range of play opportunities which are adapted to their individual needs and abilities.

These are recorded and shared with parents enabling all who care for the child to support their next steps in learning and meet their care and welfare needs.

All children are having fun through play. Older children are presented with a good range of interesting and attractively presented activities that encourage them to be curious and interested in their play. For example, they try new textures in creative play whilst learning new words such as 'squelchy' and learning to understand how the different textures make them feel and, whether they like the feel or not. They enjoy and utilise the freedom of decision making as they make choices to which room to play in and with what activities and toys. However, this becomes restricted during snack time as children stop and do not complete what they are playing with before they have snack. This does not encourage the flow of decision making in their choice of play or if they want to have something to eat. Children are building good relationships with their peers. For example, they have fun pegging out the washing on the line, taking turns and handing pegs to one another. Staff are skilled to utilising such activities further by introducing aspects of learning such as, counting how many socks are on the line and colour matching them. Toddlers' ideas and contributions are valued because staff promote them to initiate activities. For example, they mix paints and decide to add saw dust which staff use later on for potato prints. They are forming good relationships with adults. They enjoy the shaving foam activity and use this to mark aspects of each others face, such as, cheeks and nose with the shaving foam on their fingers. Babies are interested and curious to explore at an early age. This is because the staff provide play resources which are easily accessible, brightly coloured and attractively presented. Staff spend time on the floor interacting with the babies, cuddling, smiling and supporting them to reach objects. Babies are happy and content. They have fun mouthing and exploring pop up toys. They are praised by staff on their achievements through clapping and saying 'good boy', to which babies smile and giggle in response.

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily activities for children. They benefit from the fresh air and exercise every day. Children experience a good range of resources that helps develop their large motor skills, such as, climbing and sliding, jumping in sacks and riding trikes around objects. They enjoy their time outside and play cooperatively as well as on their own. They learn about the different elements in the weather because they are dressed and protected appropriately.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are effective in the implementation of daily tasks and activities to extend children's learning further. Some staff are very skilled in utilising many aspects of one particular activity. For example, children play with coloured teddies, staff encourage them to count how many, colour match and weigh them. Children are focused and engaged in the activity, and are provided with many aspects of learning. However, some staff are not as confident or as knowledgeable of the curriculum when extending the full use of an activity to support children's learning. Effective observations, assessments, planning and evaluation support the next steps of learning for each child and demonstrate staff knowledge on how they value children's learning. Staff organise the routine of the day so all children experience time inside and outside and, have access to the very good range of resources and materials to support their learning.

Children are progressing well through the stepping stones. They are interested, motivated and curious to learn. They confidently engage in activities, try new and challenging activities, independently select toys and make individual choices in their play. They are very well behaved and respect their peers and adults around them. Children have many conversations and often share experiences of events that occurred at the nursery such as, when they spent time sitting in the police car as part of a topic. They have good opportunities to mark make, such as, writing their names on their pictures. Children enjoy accessing a good range of resources that raise their awareness to different cultures and religions. They learn about their local community through visiting local police and fire stations. Every day tasks and activities incorporate mathematical learning for children. For example, they count how many children sit at the table for snacks and how many cups are needed. Children have good control when manoeuvring their trikes around objects and other children outside. They confidently use scissors and have good pencil control when writing their names and forming letters. Children particularly enjoy dressing up and imaginative play. They enthusiastically act out the recent visit from the fire department, pretending to put out fires, making siren sounds and undertaking the role as a fire officer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are treated with respect and their individual needs are met extremely well. Staff strive to find out as much information about the child from the initial starting date and continue the commendable practice throughout the child's time at the setting. For example, records such as, baby diaries are introduced and kept up to date, information is exchanged every day with the parents and staff work hard implementing activities to support the care, learning and play for each child during their time within each group room. Thus ensuring the best outcomes for children. They are learning about different cultures, religions, disability, age and gender. For example, they try Chinese food, make cards and interact with games and activities relating to the year of the 'pig' for Chinese New year. This is because staff are excellent in the organisation and accessibility of resources and offer a very good range of experiences and opportunity. They are learning to understand about their local community and spend time at the local park, shops and visit the fire and police stations.

There are very effective systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and special needs. Staff are extremely sensitive in discussing issues and concerns with parents and work in partnership with other agencies. Staff are proactive in meeting the needs of the children. Assessments are undertaken and used to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting.

The behaviour of children is very good and impressive. It is consistently high. This is because the staff are very skilled in promoting a sound environment where children understand what is expected of them. Messages delivered to children are clear and appropriate to each child taking into account their level of understanding and maturity. Children are constantly praised on their achievements. For example, staff clap hands and give smiles supported by verbal praise such as 'good boy' well done', 'that's fantastic'. Children are being respected and acknowledged on their good behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents and carers are warmly welcomed in to the setting. They take part in activities and events such as, fund raising to support their child in the setting. An exceptional range of information about the nursery, the staff and child care issues are displayed through the setting. Information is exchanged in a variety of ways which are effective in delivering messages about their child. Therefore, children's on going needs are met very well. The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. For example, parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning at home and at the setting. Newsletters informing them about current and forth coming topics are presented, discussions are held on a regular basis, records and assessments are shared and information is displayed in the foundation rooms about the curriculum. The manager strives to inform parents and keep them abreast of the curriculum through daily informal discussions and structured meetings.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected because there are effective systems in place to ensure that adults working with children are suitable to do so. Children are cared for in a happy and secure environment. They have good opportunities to learn new skills and enhance their all round development. This is because the staff are very committed to the service that they offer and work very well as a staff team promoting a sound environment for children to play, learn and develop.

Clear routines set by the staff encourage children to feel safe and secure. The well organised play and daily tasks continually support children in their all round development. For example, children help lay the table for dinner and know when it is time to go outside to play. They are effectively supported by staff who deploy themselves well in meeting the needs of the children and maintain the activities that the children play with. Children's development and welfare are effectively promoted as a result of the good training and systems in place. For example, there are very good opportunities available for staff to undertake training to develop their own skills and knowledge which is then successfully transferred into delivering a high standard of care and learning for children at the setting. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The operational plan clearly guides staff to a positive vision of continually improving the already good service they offer to children, parents and carers. Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children, are maintained effectively. These are held securely and documented accurately supporting parents wishes whilst meeting the needs of the children.

The leadership and management for funded education is good. The manager is effective in her role, has a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and is very committed to ensuring that the nursery and education provision is of a high standard. There is a clear focus and understanding that staff undertake training to improve and develop their knowledge of the curriculum. This is identified through staff meetings, individual observation, monitoring and assessment of staff. Good supportive links are in place from the proprietor and other senior managers. Meetings are held between the other settings within the organisation which are used effectively to share best practice and information from outside professionals. This ensures

that the systems in place work effectively in delivering an effective learning environment for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection no recommendations were made.

There were two points made at the last nursery education inspection. The setting agreed to: improve staff knowledge and understanding of how they can challenge more able children in all areas of mathematics and the routine of the setting to allow children the opportunity to access and complete all activities. The setting has worked very hard in addressing points made. An action plan has been set up to promote staff training, effective implementation in the planning and assessments to support children's next steps in learning and the routine of that day is now more flexible. This mostly supports children's learning and their next steps in their development when completing activities, decision making and accessing their toys. However, snack time still prevents the free flow for children and restricts their time to complete their chosen activity. This has been raised as a recommendation in this inspection.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- further improve the opportunities for children to complete their chosen activities around snack time.

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):

- further improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage enabling them to confidently extend children's learning within the different aspects of activities.

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