



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 306503

DfES Number: 534161

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 30/11/2004
Inspector Name Susan, Helen Spencer

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Learning Tree Nursery
Setting Address 47 Beryl Road
Prenton
Merseyside
CH43 9RS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Jane Orme

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

The Learning Tree Nursery has been operating for 5 years. It is one of a group of nine nurseries under joint ownership, with seven other nurseries being situated in Nottinghamshire and one in Derbyshire. The group coordinator visits The Learning Tree as required.

The nursery is accommodated on the ground floor of a detached house that has been converted to suit the needs of children and staff. Indoors, children have access to a quiet room, a playroom and a room for creative activities. In addition, there is a secure garden that has an area with a safety surface and a large grassed area.

The nursery is open each week day from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. all year round. It is registered for 20 children between the ages of six weeks to eight years. There are 43 children on roll, with most of them attending for full days. This includes ten funded three-year-olds, most of whom attend for five sessions each week. The majority of children who attend live locally and progress to a variety of schools within the area.

There are four staff who work with funded children. Two of them have a nursery nursing qualification, one has achieved an NVQ III in Childcare and Education and the fourth is working towards the same qualification at level II. Support is available through the local early years partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The Learning Tree provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world enables children to make very good progress in this area of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff manage children well and have good relationships with them. Planning and assessment are structured around the six areas of learning, although they are not fully effective in meeting children's differing needs. Staff provide resources for writing but there is little encouragement to use them purposefully. Children have good opportunities to work in different groupings and with different adults during the day. At times however, they lack opportunities to make choices about activities and resources and too little time is given for them to pursue ideas.

The leadership and management of the nursery are generally good. There are clear aims which staff endeavour to put into practice, and roles and responsibilities are well defined. The nursery has a good range of well organised documentation which outlines all policies and procedures and a development plan shows when they will be reviewed. Staff have access to training and support through the local early years partnership. Although staff appraisals take place there is a need for a review of the quality of teaching to ensure a consistent staff approach.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are given a good range of information about the nursery and what children are expected to learn. Staff provide ideas for follow up activities at home. Children's records are shared regularly with parents giving them good information on children's progress towards the early learning goals. There are very good relationships between parents and staff.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident communicators and they express themselves well.
- Good relationships are evident between staff and children.
- Children are well behaved. They are learning to share, take turns and to be considerate.
- Children enjoy books, rhymes and songs.
- Children are confident when using the computer.
- Staff provide good opportunities for children to investigate objects and to explore the local environment.
- Parents are well informed about the setting and the progress their children are making towards the early learning goals.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to make choices about activities and resources, and sufficient time
- for children to pursue their ideas
- a consistent staff approach to promoting learning
- and the provision of more opportunities and encouragement for children to write for real reasons
- the display of children's own art work
- the use of information from assessments to be used to help in planning activities to meet children's differing needs
- the use of the outdoor area to promote all areas of learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are confident when making their needs known and expressing their views. Trusting relationships are evident, with staff offering praise and encouragement to children. They are beginning to share, take turns and be considerate to each other. Children do not always make choices about activities and resources as they are not always given time to pursue ideas. Planned activities help children to explore their feelings and they take pride in their achievements.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children know a good range of stories, rhymes and songs. They are confident communicators as they share their news and tell stories in their own words. Children have good opportunities to recognise their names as they put their coats on labelled pegs and staff label their work. Staff extend children's vocabulary as they look at books together. There is a good range of resources for writing but little encouragement for children to use them purposefully.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count confidently to ten and they recognise the numbers displayed on the wall. Rhymes are used to help children gain an understanding of addition and subtraction and this is reinforced by a computer program. Children are not questioned effectively to help them use mathematical ideas to solve practical problems and some learning opportunities are missed. Creative work provides good opportunities for children to learn about shape and pattern.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

There are good opportunities for children to investigate both natural and made objects. They find out about change as they bake and undertake planting activities. They are able to use a computer confidently and they make models using a range of techniques. Trips locally allow children to explore features of their environment and photographs record what they did. Children celebrate a wide range of festivals, and a good range of resources helps them to learn about other cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently, displaying spatial awareness as they use wheeled toys outdoors. They display control as they stride around when playing a game and they balance well as they walk along a row of tyres. Some work on health and bodily awareness has been undertaken but there is too little emphasis on the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and making children aware of changes in their bodies when they have been active. Children are gaining control as they use cutlery and thread beads.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy using a good range of toys that reflect the real world and they use their imaginations as they make up their own stories. There are good opportunities for them to sing and to listen to music and they know a wide range of songs. Children have been introduced to a variety of creative techniques for making pictures and modelling. However, work on display is mostly adult led. Staff provide a good range of sensory experiences to promote children's learning.

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

- use information from assessments to inform the planning of the educational programme, to provide for children's differing needs and ensure a consistent staff approach to promoting learning
- provide more opportunities for children to make choices about activities and resources and give them time to follow through their ideas
- provide more opportunities and encouragement for children to write for a variety of reasons.

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.