

The Learning Tree Nursery

47 Beryl Road, Prenton, Merseyside, CH43 9RS



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

22 July 2015

17 February 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- On occasions, staff who do not have a current paediatric first-aid qualification take children out for short visits in the local area.
- Recruitment procedures are not rigorously applied. Some information that supports the process for ensuring the suitability of new staff is not always recorded.
- Methods used by the manager to support and develop staff's performance do not clearly identify what they need to do to continually improve their practice.
- Parents are not encouraged to provide information about what their children know and can already do when they start at the nursery. This means that there is no clear starting point in place for each child's learning. Staff wait too long to make their own initial assessment of children's abilities.
- Staff do not always carry out the progress check for children aged between two and three years at the most appropriate time.

It has the following strengths

- Staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures. They are able to identify when children's safety and well-being may be at risk and know how to refer any concerns they may have. Children are protected from harm, as a result.
- Children are settled and happy. Warm, positive relationships between children and staff promote their well-being. Children behave well and develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that a member of staff with a current paediatric first-aid certificate is present at all times, including on outings
- ensure that all information about checks and vetting carried out to ensure the suitability of new staff is recorded
- seek more detailed information from parents about what their children know and can already do when they start, and complete an initial assessment in a timely manner, so that a clear starting point for children's learning is in place, from which staff can begin to plan swiftly to help them to make progress.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop the supervision of staff's practice further by being more specific about what they need to do to ensure their teaching is consistently improving
- ensure that the established and suitable progress check for children aged between two and three years is carried out at the best time to assess their progress between the ages of two and three years.

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that at least one person who is caring for children has an appropriate first-aid qualification (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that at least one person who is caring for children has an appropriate first-aid qualification (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and care practices in the playrooms and within the outside play area. She conducted a joint observation with the manager, looking at the practice of staff.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff throughout the day. She spoke to parents and carers when they came to collect children.
- The inspector examined a sample of organisational and health and safety documentation, read the nursery's self-evaluation form and held a meeting with the manager.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including children's planning, observation and assessment records. She also looked at a range of policies, as well as information used to assess the suitability of staff.

Inspector

Valerie Aspinall

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Parents are not encouraged to share what their children already know and can do when they first start at the nursery. In addition, staff wait too long to make their own detailed initial assessment of children's achievements. Therefore, there is no clear starting point in place from which staff can begin to plan for individual children's learning. This means that teaching is not immediately sharply focused on helping children achieve the next steps in their learning. As a result, children starting nursery make steady rather than good progress in their learning. Staff carry out a suitable progress check for children aged between two and three years, but not always at the most appropriate time after their second birthday. However, regular reviews of children's progress are shared with parents at the end of each term, helping them to continue their learning at home. Staff use the extensive and interesting garden well to help children to recognise different features of the natural world and motivate them to learn. Children confidently and excitedly follow instructions and cooperate well with each other. These skills help children to prepare for the next stage in their learning, such as moving on to school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children requires improvement

The nursery is organised well to allow children to access a variety of resources independently. Staff use a range of methods to ensure children feel emotionally ready for the change to moving on to school. They plan specific activities, provide additional resources and familiarise children with their prospective school. On occasions, children go on short local outings with staff who do not have a current first-aid certificate. However, the risk to children is limited, as the first-aid qualification in question has only very recently lapsed. Children spend time outside in the large garden everyday. They play freely on a suitable range of equipment to support their developing physical skills. Children eat a variety of well-balanced meals and snacks and know they need to wash their hands before eating. They are beginning to understand how to develop a healthy lifestyle.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision requires improvement

Since the last inspection, the manager has obtained a foundation degree. However, despite her extended knowledge, she has not ensured that all requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. Systems to monitor children's learning and staff's performance are not implemented robustly to ensure assessment of children's learning is timely or the quality of teaching is consistently improving. Staff are observed by the manager, but the feedback given lacks specific detail to help them develop their practice. Nevertheless, the manager encourages unqualified staff to obtain qualifications and provides regular in-house training to ensure all of them maintain a good understanding of child protection procedures. Recruitment procedures are not robustly applied. While staff are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks, information about other checks is not always recorded. The manager acknowledges the weaker areas of practice identified and is keen to develop the nursery further, showing a capacity to drive improvement.

Setting details

Unique reference number	306503
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	867672
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	31
Number of children on roll	57
Name of provider	Jane Orme
Date of previous inspection	17 February 2011
Telephone number	0151 677 3560

The Learning Tree Nursery was registered in 1999. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or 3, including the manager who also holds an appropriate foundation degree. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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