



The Learning Tree Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY235998
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Registered person	The Learning Tree Day Nursery
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

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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 opened in 2003. It operates from a converted hall situated in a residential area of Grove Park and has use of an enclosed outside play area. The nursery serves the local community. The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 to 18:00.

The nursery is registered to provide full day care for 32 children from three months to under five years. There are currently 34 children from one year to under five years on roll. This includes six children who receive nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The setting supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

Nine full-time staff work with the children. All but one member of staff hold early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Staff have access to training courses and support services run by the Lewisham Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the Lewisham Early Years Advice and Resource Network (LEARN).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from good staff role models who promote high levels of hygiene within the nursery for children. Children have access to tissues and are seen independently blowing their noses and placing them appropriately in the bin. Younger children are given support with wiping noses, washing faces and hands before and after meals and after toileting or nappy changes. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene because they receive simple and clear explanations and instructions from staff. Posters, pictorial aids and written information around the nursery enhances children's understanding of good hygiene practice. Staff have access to relevant resources to prevent cross infection within the nursery, such as disposable gloves, aprons and cleaning materials for changing mats.

The nursery uses some good documentation procedures to promote children's ongoing health needs. Food hygiene is monitored closely to ensure procedures and practice meets environmental health standards. The cleanliness of the nursery is carefully monitored and assessed to ensure children play in a clean and well maintained environment. Accidents are closely monitored and recorded effectively, they are shared openly with children's parents. However, medication administration is recorded well but lacks some information and clarity as to which medication is given.

Children are given very healthy choices of food and drink and have their dietary needs catered for and effectively met. Babies feeds are prepared appropriately and stored adequately. Young children have their own routine promoted and met such as having bottles and solid feeds when they require them, using information from parents regarding their home routines. Children have freshly cooked meals carefully prepared for them by a qualified and dedicated cook, who takes pride in preparing delicious and healthy meals for children to tempt them into trying new tastes. Staff are very aware of children's dietary restrictions and ensure everyone in the nursery is aware of each child's needs. All children have access to drinks throughout their time in nursery. Older children can freely access fresh water from dispensers, encouraging them to choose when to drink. Children learn about healthy eating by discussing and taking part in social activities at snack time to discover what they are eating and the benefits of healthy foods.

Children have regular opportunities to participate in good physical activities to promote their understanding of wellbeing. All children partake in outdoor activities to increase their experiences of beneficial fresh air. Babies are taken for walks to local shops and parks. Older children use the outdoor area on a daily basis, even in wet weather, to use the space and equipment available to them. Indoor equipment is also accessible to children of all ages to encourage physical skills such as crawling through tunnels, climbing, soft play, balls, hoops and music and movement. Children are developing an understanding of the effect exercise has on their bodies, saying

that they are worn out from all the running about. Babies follow their own routine regarding sleeping to ensure their physical needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and very secure environment. It is well maintained and regularly and effectively assessed for safety. The nursery uses good measures to monitor who is entering the building. A phone link and CCTV system allows staff to see who is about to enter the nursery. All known and unknown visitors are met at the door and asked to sign a visitors book. The nursery is assessed on a daily basis to ensure safety measures are in place and any identified potential hazards are removed from children's access. More formal risk assessments are carried out and evaluated on a weekly and monthly basis to ensure children's ongoing safety is promoted. All equipment such as cots, chairs and tables are carefully checked to ensure children can use them safely. Children's activities are stored at a low level encouraging children to make safe choices. Children are monitored effectively whilst they are sleeping and staff are deployed well at all times to ensure children are supervised efficiently.

Children's safety is promoted well outside the nursery too. Clear and effective procedures are in place for when children go on outings within the local community. Thorough risk assessments are carried out before hand by staff to ensure hazards are eliminated before the trip. Parents are kept well informed of outings. Good practices and procedures are in place to ensure children can be evacuated safely from the building in the case of an emergency. Fire equipment is regularly checked and additional equipment is carefully monitored for its effectiveness, such as carbon monoxide recordings.

Children learn about the effects their actions have on themselves and other's safety. They listen carefully to staff's discussions and instructions regarding running across a wet floor, throwing toys and leaving chairs in the way of others. Staff support children's development and knowledge of safety by using informative explanations and are good role models themselves.

Children's welfare is promoted well and they are effectively protected from harm because staff have a clear understanding of the nursery's safeguarding children procedures and are aware of support systems in place to gain relevant information. All staff have access to clear guidelines and step by step practices to allow them to carry out their responsibilities well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have free access to an excellent range of activities, equipment and resources that promote all areas of children's development in all rooms. Children's activities are well organised to allow children to choose what they want to play with. They receive excellent levels of participation and interaction from staff to ensure that all children are engaged and stimulated throughout the day. Knowledgeable and dedicated staff use appropriate frameworks and curriculum, such as The Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage to provide children with interesting and challenging activities and discussions to enhance their all round

development. The team of attentive and organised staff use effective but flexible planning of the day and activities to encourage independence and confidence in all children in their play. They have a good rapport with all children, building close relationships of trust which enables children to be themselves. Children's own routines are reflected positively throughout the day, especially for children in the baby and toddler room, particularly with regard to meals and sleeping routines, making children feel at home and enhancing familiarity. Children receive plentiful cuddles and are happy in their play. Staff are very aware of children's particular favourite activities and strive to offer these as often as possible, such as the music for babies who all dance as soon as familiar songs are played. They are all achieving their potential because staff provide activities that challenge their development and encourage future progress. However, information about children's developmental starting points are not effectively used when they first start at the nursery, therefore staff have to spend more time to assess and plan for children's ongoing development within their first few months there.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's learning is supported well by all staff involved in nursery education. Staff are knowledgeable and use their initiative to offer an exciting and varied programme of planned activities relating to the Foundation Stage, therefore engaging children's interest in a good range of play situations. Staff create opportunities for children to progress well in all areas of learning through child initiated and adult lead activities, supporting children's understanding that they can learn through play. Staff make effective observations of children's progress and link these well to the areas of learning. However, these observations are not always consistently done and are not linked to the stepping stones of development to actively show their progression and current stages of development. Children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are supported very well within the setting. Children's home languages are reflected positively through routine activities such as register and circle time. Good use is made of pictorial aids to support children's communication skills. Children's special education needs are recognised and supported effectively through the use of professional information, partnerships with parents and fully inclusive systems to help them to participate fully in all activities.

Children communicate effectively through the use of gestures, expressions and spoken word. They express themselves confidently and effectively. They thoroughly enjoy listening to stories and can retell and predict familiar and unknown stories to staff and other children. Staff actively support children's understanding of print for a meaning. Children freely make marks to represent their name, labelling drawings and pieces of work. They are encouraged to recognise written words that are around them all the times, such as writing on clothing.

Children experiment with shape and colour and show a developing comprehension for associating these with every day situations, such as the shape of tools and the shape of real flowers. Children relate to numbers in every day concepts, using amounts to represent how many of them are here today. However, sometimes staff lack initiative to challenge children's understanding further by not encouraging them to count and associate numbers with daily tasks, such as how many chairs they need for snack time.

Children are interested in the outside world and understand the changes in weather and how it affects their play, such as needing wellies when it is raining. Children regularly go on outings to explore the local community and use local facilities such as parks and libraries, gaining a sense of place. Children enjoy investigating materials and malleable resources. They experiment with water and sand to discover that sand sticks to wet hands but not to dry hands. Children actively solve problems for themselves through trial and error, but sometimes have limited challenges from staff to work out why things happen.

Children thoroughly enjoy music and dance. They fully appreciate rhythm and show a great talent for movement to music. Staff positively encourage music as part of their daily routine. Children use role play well, to act out familiar roles in society such as shop keepers and effectively re-enforce their understanding of stories by using well resourced home corners adapted to recently read stories. Children freely self represent with a well resourced creative workshop, where children can choose from a selection of materials and media to create their choice of 2d and 3d creations.

Children have competent dexterity skills. They access tools and equipment themselves to develop these skills, such as scissors, rolling pins and scoops. Throughout the day children are encouraged to use self help skills to enhance their fine motor skills, such as pouring drinks, doing shoes up and buttoning coats. Staff actively encourage children to use a preferred hand and provide equipment to progress children from a palmer grip to pincer grip.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individuality is highly recognised and positively reflected through good care systems and effective use of resources. Staff gain excellent detailed information about children's backgrounds to ensure their individual needs are respected and reflected through their daily routine. The nursery's equal opportunities procedure and statements is positively reflected through the staff's practice, therefore making children feel proud about themselves, developing their self esteem. Children learn about diversity in our society, celebrating people's differences through cultural festivals, playing with resources that portray positive images and visits within the local community. Children's own cultural backgrounds are celebrated through social events within the nursery such as children wearing their cultural dress from home.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities have excellent systems in place to support their needs. Staff work very closely with parents and professionals and value their comments and advice to offer consistency and continuity to the children. Activities are clearly planned to allow full inclusion for all children. Staff competently and sensitively adapt resources and play situations to ensure all children can participate fully to achieve their highest potential.

Children receive high levels of praise and recognition for their achievements and social inclusion of all. Children take pride in themselves for managing new skills and make this achievement known to staff, who clap and cheer, however small this achievement may be. Children's manners are impeccable, they use please and thank you freely, often reminding others when they have forgotten. Children learn about appropriate play because the staff use very simple and clear explanations as to the rules of the nursery and children understand the impact that their actions

have on others. Even the younger children in the nursery have a developing understanding of right and wrong.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children develop good self help skills throughout the day; putting their coats on, laying the table, cleaning their teeth, pouring drinks. They have opportunities to make excellent choices and are encouraged to finish what they are doing in their own time rather than when routine dictates, enhancing their decision making and pride in their finished product. Children help each other around the nursery, sharing and negotiating in their play, they help children with different tasks such as putting aprons on and laying the table. Children are very interested in all that is offered to them, but also use their ideas to initiate play themselves and encourage others to join in their social play, building secure relationships with other children and adults. They have a clear understanding of their own needs as well as other's needs and react positively when others ask for help.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in every aspects of their child's care and development. Parents give very positive feedback about the nursery stating that they have every confidence in the staff and managers to meet their children's needs well. They appreciate the flexibility of the service, especially if they are working parents. Parents have regular opportunities to review the service that they receive. Staff competently evaluate the comments made and assess what changes can be made to the care and educational programme within the nursery to meet not only the children's needs but also the parents wishes and needs. Parents have access to a fully comprehensive policy and procedures file as well as daily and weekly planning of children's development to ensure they are aware of the service provided and the learning systems. They are kept fully informed of events and topics that their children are involved in, therefore encouraging parents to participate in children's activities and learning at home. Parents are frequently invited to workshops to support their parenting skills at home and build consistent professional relationships within the setting. Good levels of consent are sought from parents for many different aspects of care to ensure the nursery has authority to do so, such as local outings, emergency treatment etc. Parents are always welcome in the nursery, who operates a meaningful and flexible "open door" policy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a team of suitably qualified, experienced and dedicated staff, who demonstrate their love for children and commitment to delivering an ever improving care service and nursery education programme. Staff recruitment systems are very robust, ensuring only suitably checked and qualified staff have access to the children in the nursery. High numbers of staff hold level 2 and level 3 childcare qualifications. The nursery has excellent contingency staffing plans to ensure child:staff ratios are always met when staff are absent. The manager and proprietor give excellent levels of support throughout the whole nursery throughout the day to monitor staff's practice and to offer support and guidance.

Staff are deployed well to ensure children are given the quality of support and care that they need and deserve. Staff have regular appraisals to discuss their development and training to improve their practice and the service for families. New staff have access to clear and supporting

systems, to give an effective induction into the nursery. Children's attendance is recorded and monitored closely to ensure accurate documentation shows exactly who is present in the nursery. The same effective system applies towards staff attendance.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Regular feedback from parents is evaluated and practical changes are made to improve the developmental opportunities for children. The staff team as a whole professionally recognise their strengths and weaknesses and make every effort to develop the quality of nursery education further through effective team building, ongoing training and introductions of new strategies and teaching methods. Individual children's achievements and concerns are shared confidentially with the staff team in regular meetings to ensure other staff can observe children for further progression and consistency. The staff apply a proactive and professional atmosphere to the nursery, constantly analysing how the nursery education supports children's needs and what they can do to continually improve this.

Children's documentation and recorded details are kept secure, safe and confidential. Information is regularly updated to ensure children's present needs are met. Therefore, their welfare is promoted well within the nursery.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The nursery have made every effort to improve the quality of care and the nursery education for children. At the last inspection the nursery was given six actions to ensure that the National Standards were met. All six actions have been met and ongoing assessment ensures that they continue to be met well. Nine staff, who hold relevant qualifications and good levels of experience work with the children now. A new staff team was developed 18 months ago and have bonded well to offer stability and continuity to children and their families. Good levels of ratios for children are managed and deployed within the whole nursery. The manager is always available and interacting with staff and children to ensure ratios are met at all times. Planning is implemented for all three rooms, relevant to the Birth to three framework and the Foundation stage. These are linked closely to children's learning intentions and their gained experiences. Adult led activities are evaluated and information is used for future planning. Children of all ages choose from accessible safe storage with all activities appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children have time to choose what they want to play with throughout the day and have excellent opportunities for creative activities in a workshop style of creativity. Fire drills are recorded well and evaluated for effectiveness. All fire equipment is checked and monitored including fire blankets and extinguisher in the kitchen. There are good levels of supervision for babies, they are closely interacted with but allowed freedom to move and to choose activities. Staff are deployed well when children are sleeping or involved in messy activities and monitors are used when most babies are asleep to actively supervise their sleeping times.

At the last inspection the nursery was given seven key issues regarding the nursery education. Changes to the nursery structure have resulted in positive impacts on children's welfare. There are excellent levels of pro-activity to strengthen the impact on children's welfare and

development. Systems are always evaluated for the quality of service and education. Staff are involved in decision making, what works for them and the greatest changes needed to improve the provision for children. There are regular staff meetings, room meeting, which are all overseen by an influential and supportive manager. The owner is supportive of new initiatives and ideas and allows budget control to ensure children have relevant equipment and resources available to allow them to develop to their full potential. Pre-school and some additional staff have a good understanding of The Foundation Stage and implement the educational system well. They have clear objectives to allow children to develop to their full potential and closely monitor children's development. Children are confident and happy because they receive lots of praise and encouragement from all staff regardless of working in the pre-school. Children are very proud of their play and end results and are all eager to have a go at anything. Children freely access books and enjoy participating in story time and independently look at books. They understand print has a meaning and regularly are seen telling other stories from books that are known to them or made up. Children make marks freely either as part of the creative workshop or in the home corner. Children count freely and use mathematical language throughout their play, although there is still some limited use of encouragement through practical every day activities to engage children in mathematical concepts. Children have free use of a computer and demonstrate their competency of using it. Children openly talk about the environment around them and the changes they observe such as the weather. They experience living things by helping to look after the pre-school fish.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that requires 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.

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 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):

- gain all children's developmental details when they start the nursery to influence planning and their next steps of development

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):

- ensure observations of children's achievements are consistent and used effectively to show their present stages of development within the Foundation Stage

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