



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Footsteps Day Nursery
Howell Drive
Welshpool
Powys
SY21 7AT**

Date of inspection: June 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Footsteps Day Nursery

Name of setting	Footsteps Day Nursery
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Louise Macken
Person in charge	Louise Macken
Number of places	39
Age range of children	0-12 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	9
Number of children funded for up to five terms	10
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday between 7:30am and 6:00pm
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service does not provide an 'active offer' of the Welsh language. It does not participate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's 'More than just words' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Date of previous CIW inspection	01/06/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection	No previous inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	25/06/2019
Additional information	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Adequate
Learning (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Care and development	Adequate
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Environment	Adequate
Leadership and management	Adequate

Non-compliance

We have advised the responsible individual that improvements are needed in relation to ensuring that practitioners are deployed effectively so as to attend to children's individual needs effectively at all times (Regulation 20 (1) (a)), ensuring all areas of the premises in which relevant children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their safety (Regulation 25 (a)) and to make suitable arrangements to establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and improving the quality of care given to children (Regulation 16 (1)) in order to fully meet the legal requirements. A non-compliance notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no immediate or significant impact for children using the setting. We expect the responsible individual to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Promote older children's dignity through making sure that their independence is promoted at all times
- R2 Improve children's ICT and problem solving skills
- R3 Improve the systematic use of assessment information to plan the next steps for children's learning
- R4 Ensure that self-evaluation and planning for improvement processes identify and address all areas for improvement in education and care
- R5 Address areas of non-compliance identified during this inspection

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn and CIW will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most children express themselves confidently and know their requests will be listened to most of the time. For example, when a child asks a practitioner to help them glue different coloured paper, they are provided with the support needed to complete their activity appropriately. However, older children, when asking to play outdoors were unable to do so until almost the end of the club session, which resulted in some children's disappointment. Older children are confident and articulate when making their requests for more food at snack time, which was given without question.

Most children are settled and approach practitioners confidently. For example, when a younger child gestures being tired, their needs are responded to in a timely manner making them feel reassured. During nappy changing, a child is asked if they want to be changed while standing or laying down on the mat. This makes the child feel relaxed and comfortable. Older children have good levels of self-esteem and happily share their stories about attending the club.

Most children interact with one another and those caring for them positively. They are learning to take turns and share appropriately. For example, they take turns to use a knife safely to chop an apple and share craft materials well. Older children share play equipment appropriately and use an egg timer to help them know when it is time for someone else to use the console. When playing a racing game one child was the 'time keeper' for example, using their wristwatch to control events to make sure everyone had a fair turn.

Most children enjoy circle time, singing nursery rhymes and playing their musical instruments to '*ba black sheep*'. Younger children are inquisitive and enjoy turning the pages of the storybook to find an owl picture they can press to make bird like noises.

Most children are learning to develop their co-ordination skills through dance and music activities suitably. They practice using their senses well. For example, children enjoy squeezing the bird feed mixture with their hands and scooping soil into various containers while stirring in water. When playing a colour matching game, most children sustain interest appropriately and place the correct colour object onto their card with care.

Nearly all children develop their independence appropriately. Most children during breakfast time use small jugs to pour their own drinks skilfully and serve themselves to cereal appropriately. During outdoor play, most children explore freely and make choices suitably. However, a few children are not confident about knowing where to access certain resources, such as pens for the outdoor white board. Most children develop their self-help skills positively and put on their own coats and shoes appropriately.

Learning (only applies to three or four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

Most children make good progress from their individual starting points, particularly in the development of their social skills. For example, they pass the milk jug to their friends at snack time when they notice their cup is empty.

Many children communicate confidently with adults and their peers and have good speaking and listening skills. They speak clearly when chatting about things they like to do in nursery. Most listen carefully and respond accurately to what they have heard. For example, they follow instructions to wash their hands before snack time.

During story time, many children pay close attention and express enjoyment. They talk enthusiastically about the real vegetables used as props and remember which ones are growing in the nursery garden. Most children look at a book that they choose for themselves. They handle books correctly and turn the pages carefully and enjoy choosing books to take home. Most children recognise their name independently and find their place at snack time.

Most children develop their mark making skills successfully and many use mark making resources independently. Most children make very good attempts at writing their name clearly. They ask to have the whiteboard photocopied and they are confident that practitioners will respond to their request.

Most children develop their numeracy skills well. They count beyond ten and a few identify accurately that there are more boys than girls present. Many children count up to five objects accurately and select up to five objects from a larger amount successfully. Nearly all children sort according to one criteria and many sort to two criteria. For example, they find the sheep from a selection of animals and then sort according to colour. Many children use language to describe position accurately during their play.

Most children make good progress in developing their physical skills. They throw a large ball confidently and jump with two feet off the ground when splashing in puddles. Nearly all are improving their fine motor skills when using tweezers successfully to pick up small objects.

Nearly all children use the tablet to play simple games independently and a few older children choose songs to listen to confidently. However, generally children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills are limited.

Most pre-school children are developing suitable problem solving skills. They experiment and work out how to make crowns fit on their head which also develops their creative skills well.

Most children develop their Welsh language skills well. Nearly all join in with songs enthusiastically and show enjoyment. Many respond positively to simple Welsh instructions and phrases. They answer simple questions about how they are feeling with Welsh words. Around half of the children use Welsh to describe the weather accurately.

Care and development: Adequate

Practitioners implement satisfactory methods to keep children safe and healthy, for example by encouraging healthy eating and following suitable hygiene procedures. They encourage outdoor play for younger children appropriately, developing most children's physical skills positively while being active in the fresh air, but this is not consistent for the out of school provision.

Practitioners understand and implement the setting's policies and procedures suitably. The setting's arrangements to safeguard children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Practitioners have completed and updated suitable safeguarding and first aid training. They record accidents and incidents consistently but not all of these are signed by both practitioner and parent. Practitioners conduct fire drills at appropriate intervals and record the outcome suitably.

Practitioners have a gentle and relaxed approach to providing care and demonstrate genuine affection to reassure younger children. However, at times practitioners do not follow the behaviour management policy effectively. For instance, an incident occurred between older children regarding the use of an electronic device. The practitioner gave no explanation as to why the device was being taken away leaving children with a lack of understanding about the situation and how to manage their own interactions better in future.

Practitioners provide suitable activities and learning areas. They use visual aids such as soft toys and related props well to enhance the story time experience. Practitioners encourage younger children to draw freely to develop their creativity appropriately. Practitioners promote the Welsh language suitably and use simple phrases throughout the day to help children become familiar with the language. There is no planning for activities for older children, although there is a 'wish list' book for children to insert ideas for activities they would like but this was not being implemented effectively.

Practitioners, at times, are not deployed effectively, resulting in them not always able to attend to children's individual needs, successfully. For instance, when a child required specific attention the practitioner present was also tasked with supervising other children resulting in the child's needs not being addressed in a timely manner.

Practitioners ensure children have some understanding of the world around them and promote learning about their own and different cultures suitably. For example, they raise children's awareness of culture in Wales through celebrating St David's Day and Santes Dwynwen and plan suitable opportunities for them to dress up and bake Welsh cakes. However, there are restricted opportunities for children to learn about sustainability. For instance, they do not have any opportunities to re-cycle waste food or packaging.

Practitioners track children's individual progress appropriately and are at the early stages of beginning to use these observations to inform all planning.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three or four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

Practitioners plan a suitable range of learning experiences that are successful in engaging nearly all children, including those with additional learning needs. Practitioners arrange visits for children to local areas in the community to enrich the curriculum. They make good use of children's interests to plan future activities. For example, they provide plenty of resources in the 'making area' after noticing that children enjoy making crowns and jewellery.

Practitioners plan opportunities which reflect the foundation phase ethos successfully. There is a reasonable balance between child-led and practitioner-led activities during the session. Practitioners plan beneficial opportunities for children to learn through first-hand experience during free play. This is particularly effective in the outdoors where children explore the muddy area independently.

Practitioners provide opportunities for children to develop their communication and reading skills effectively. They are good language role models and use questioning well to challenge children. For example, they ask children which type of tree might grow from the seeds the children have collected during snack time. Practitioners plan valuable opportunities for developing early writing skills well. They offer a good range of exciting materials to encourage children to experiment with mark making resources. As a result, pre-school children make effective progress in their early writing skills including when writing their name on their work.

Practitioners plan worthwhile opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills across the curriculum well. For example, there is a plentiful supply of open ended resources for children to sort, count and make patterns with.

Practitioners plan systematically for the provision for literacy and numeracy to ensure children make good progress with support from the local authority advisory teacher. However, there are limited opportunities for children to develop their ICT and problem solving skills progressively.

Practitioners plan a range of worthwhile learning experiences which promote children's spiritual, moral and social development successfully. For example, a sense of awe and wonder is fostered well through opportunities for children to make bird feeders to care for wildlife and to grow their own vegetables.

Practitioners have positive relationships with each other and the children. They are good role models and offer warmth readily to the children. As a result, children know that they can go to them if they need help or comfort.

Practitioners use a systematic approach to ensure that foundation phase skills are taught throughout the year. Practitioners make useful observations of children. They have sound understanding of how to use this information to inform next steps in planning for the pre-school children to make systematic progress. However this is in its early stages and it is too early to measure any impact.

Practitioners keep pre-school parents and carers well informed of the progress their child is making. They provide helpful information and ideas to support learning at home effectively.

Environment: Adequate

Leaders use the environment appropriately to meet most children's needs. For example, most children are allocated individual space for their personal items and a designated area for meal times. This helps to create a sense of belonging. Furniture is appropriate for the stage and development of most children but the environment for older children to relax during their time at the club needs improvement.

Leaders ensure most children are cared for in a suitable environment. For example, they have an appropriate system to manage access to the premises and keep a record of visitors. They complete risk assessments appropriately. Daily health and safety checks are not conducted satisfactorily to ensure that all aspects of the outdoor play area are free from potential hazards to children's safety. Leaders have confirmed that this matter is being addressed and areas requiring repair or improved maintenance have been either actioned or are in the process of being addressed.

Leaders make sure children's artwork is displayed attractively and this creates a welcoming environment. The outdoor play area provides children with opportunities to actively participate in ball games, gardening activities and sand / mud play appropriately.

Leaders have a well organised notice board and information area for parents providing them with additional information on relevant agencies.

Leaders ensure most toys and equipment are of suitable quality. For example, there is a balance of natural based resources against plastic resources for children to practice using their senses. There are some resources, which reflect our wider society, for instance displayed photographs of children from different cultures, books, puppets and small world figurines. The home corner lacks recycled commercial household goods to extend children's imaginary play. Not all outdoor resources are maintained well. We discussed this with the responsible individual who acknowledged these areas for improvement.

Leaders have organised suitable reading areas for children but some storage boxes are overfilled making it difficult for children to access their contents easily. Books are of appropriate quality but not all rooms display books attractively to encourage children to read them.

Leadership and management: Adequate

Leaders have a clear vision for the work of the setting and communicate this well to practitioners. Leaders create a positive ethos. As a result, all practitioners feel valued and supported in their work.

The responsible individual shares an up to date statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of what the service offers. However, leaders have not provided enough information to inform parents about the setting's facilities nor outlined the arrangements to review the document and inform Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of any changes to the service.

The responsible individual ensures that there are policies and procedures in place to support practitioners in most aspects of their work suitably. However, not all procedures are carried out well enough such as health and safety checks of equipment, particularly in the outdoor play area to meet requirements effectively.

Leaders safely recruit suitably qualified practitioners and they receive regular supervision, which focus on identifying future training needs appropriately. However, discussions around practice is limited. The responsible individual presented her updated enhanced criminal record certificate but needs to make arrangements to present this to CIW.

Leaders do not always deploy practitioners effectively. For example, children do not benefit from making choices about when to play in the outdoor environment. Leaders have limited staffing contingency plans in place when unplanned absences occur.

Leaders ensure pre-school practitioners have appropriate opportunities to improve their professional knowledge. Pre-school practitioners are supported to attend training events to improve provision and outcomes for children. For example, following recent mark making training the setting has introduced valuable opportunities for children to mark make in meaningful contexts. They achieve this through close working with the local authority advisory teacher and this helps towards securing improvements in the pre-school.

Leaders have produced a report reviewing the quality of care but this does not highlight the comments and views of all those using the setting to identify what the setting does well, what requires improvement and by when. Leaders have not drawn on the first hand evidence of the quality of care provided to evaluate the setting suitably to meet requirements effectively.

Leaders draw well on advice from external reviews. Partnership working with the local authority is strong and leaders view the support as being valuable in improving outcomes. They respond positively to advice and work with practitioners to secure improvements to the provision in the pre-school room appropriately. But this is not consistent throughout the setting. Action plans focus on improving outcomes for children suitably. The setting has a track record of making improvements.

The setting has good links with health visitors who work on site. They are confident to seek advice if they have any concerns.

Leaders and practitioners nurture relationships with pre-school parents well and provide good support for learning at home. For example, the setting sends home literacy bags to promote good reading behaviours.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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