

A report on
The Highway Day Nursery
115-117 The Highway
Hawarden
Flintshire
CH5 3DL

Date of inspection: 11 and 13 April 2011

by

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



INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Context

The Highway Day Nursery is privately owned and was established in September 2001.

The nursery is located in Hawarden, in Flintshire, North Wales. The nursery is managed by the owner and the general day to day running is carried out by the owner and the management team.

The entrance outside the pre-school room has information for parents to view when they drop off or collect their children. Inside, the room is divided into areas for play and outside; space around the building provides good opportunities for different outdoor activities.

The nursery is open all year and operates from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The Highway Day Nursery is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide full day care for 53 children.

The last CSSIW inspection was in July 2010 and this is the first inspection by Estyn.

There were six children present aged three who were eligible for funding during this Spring term.

The nursery is English speaking, providing care and education for children from families for whom this is their first language.

Ethnicity is all White British and no children have additional needs.

The nursery has an equal opportunities policy and an admission procedure that welcomes all children. The area served by the nursery is considered neither to be advantaged nor disadvantaged. Most children attending the nursery are from the local area and come from a range of social backgrounds.

The Highway Day Nursery receives support from Flintshire Early Education.

Summary

The nursery's current performance	Good
The nursery's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

All the children are very happy and well behaved in the nursery.

Teaching is good.

There is a wide range of stimulating learning experiences offered.

Practitioners care for the children and effectively use resources to support their well being.

Prospects for improvement

There is a positive attitude towards improvement.

Self evaluation is effective and shows clear goals for improvement.

There are very effective working relationships with parents and the Early Education teacher.

Recommendations

The inspector has agreed with the provider the following recommendations for improvement:

R.1. To further develop planning and assessment so that they link more effectively together and take into account individual children's learning needs.

R.2 . To extend links with the local community.

R3. To provide more opportunities that enable children to problem solve, find out, explore and develop their ideas.

What happens next?

The provider will produce an action plan that shows how the setting will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

All children achieve well and make good progress across all areas of the Foundation Phase. The majority of children effectively acquire new knowledge and understanding and enjoy the challenge of new and varied activities for example learning about the guinea pigs.

All children apply a range of skills well to a wide variety of play activities. The majority listen well and communicate appropriately and a few use mature vocabulary and well structured sentences.

All join in with stories and songs in both English and Welsh and enjoy sharing books. Many are interested in writing and are keen to mark make. The majority know and can recognise their names and those of others and older children have written labels to caption displays they have made such as 'Our Pets'. Almost all use early mathematical skills effectively to count and recognise shapes and many use mathematical language correctly in play.

Almost all children understand basic instructions in Welsh and most can use simple words and phrases. Nearly all know the names of colours and use Welsh words and phrases spontaneously throughout the session.

Most know and use correct positional language for example under, beside and on top and many use electronic toys with a good understanding and play games confidently on the computer.

Wellbeing: Good

All children have developed positive attitudes towards learning and all show great interest in what they are doing. All engage enthusiastically in a good range of activities that are on offer and contribute to their learning environment and activities.

They all concentrate well on tasks and activities and behaviour is good. All relate well to each other and the adults around them and they settle quickly to activities and enjoy their learning. All children are confident to ask for help if needed. Almost all co-operate with each other and work together well. All are confident to develop their play.

All children are polite and respectful and many show care for each other as they play, take turns and share and ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

Almost all children are considerate and thoughtful and the majority help each other for example with putting on painting aprons and reaching to put paintings on a rack to dry.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The setting is very well organised to provide a range of interesting and stimulating learning activities and resources that can be accessed easily by the children. Although the outdoor environment is used to encourage respect for the outdoors and wildlife by taking care of plants, birds and squirrels the local environment is not sufficiently used, nor are there currently enough visitors to the setting to extend the learning of the children.

The children have good opportunities to care for living things including tadpoles and guinea pigs. They grow their own vegetables such as spring onions and cabbage, which are used in the nursery by the cook.

There are good opportunities for children to access technology such as Bee Bot and computer programmes and cameras that they confidently use themselves. The children enjoy role play and playing together using their imagination in the home corner.

There are opportunities for the children to count and sort, match and make patterns for example in the sand. Practitioners know the children well and respond well to their differing needs and abilities. Planning engages all children and is successfully evaluated.

The children have good opportunities to develop early mark making skills and play provision enhances their communication and literacy skills. They enjoy singing and listening to stories. The children are encouraged to think for themselves and have a few opportunities to problem solve and experiment.

Practitioners develop the children's Welsh language well, using it throughout the day and encourage children to use it as much as possible. There are good opportunities provided to learn about the traditions, celebrations and culture of Wales.

Parents bring scrap paper into the nursery for the children and the nursery re-uses yoghurt pots. There are plans to introduce more re-cycling and practitioners were in the process of organising re-cycling boxes for the children.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is good. Practitioners are very good role models and gently remind the children, for example to use an indoor voice. They maximise and extend learning opportunities and make the most of spontaneous opportunities such as making a train out of balancing beams or looking at the shape of footprints made by the guinea pigs. Practitioners use good questioning techniques to extend the learning of the children and challenge their thinking.

Practitioners understand the Foundation Phase and use a wide range of approaches to stimulate play and learning effectively engaging all children.

Children have time to complete tasks and develop ideas and although most practitioners intervene appropriately and in a sensitive manner as needed, sometimes there is too much adult direction.

Although practitioners make useful observational assessments that plan the next steps for the group they do not yet plan for the needs of individual children.

They record observations on post it notes that inform This is Me. Practitioners provide helpful feedback for the children so that they think about what they are doing and how it may be improved or done in a different way.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

Practitioners make excellent use of the animals in the setting to help the children to settle into the nursery. They maximise the formal and informal learning opportunities provided by the animals to support the children and help them to deal with their feelings. Practitioners effectively teach children the importance of being gentle and quiet whilst holding and stroking the guinea pigs.

All practitioners know the children exceptionally well and treat all of them on a very individual basis with a high level of care and concern. However the way in which a practitioner comforted a child using a variety of techniques to calm and settle the child was observed to be outstanding practice.

Practitioners develop the spiritual development of the children by singing a thank you song before eating their lunch.

The nursery promotes health and well being through exercise and healthy eating.

There are no children with additional needs however there are good systems in place in the nursery that enable practitioners to work with parents to provide children with personal and specialist support for example with the Individual Progress Plan.

The nursery has an appropriate policy and procedures in place to safeguard the children. The policy has been updated in light of recent guidance and practitioners have received training.

There are policies and procedures that are relevant, detailed and effectively reviewed that promote the moral and social development of the children. There are good induction arrangements when children start in the nursery and when they move rooms. The partnership with several local schools contributes significantly to their smooth transition to school.

Children celebrate festivals which are relevant and meaningful and promote their cultural development, for example St David's Day and Chinese New Year through simple activities including dressing up and making observational paintings of daffodils.

Learning environment: Good

The room provides a welcoming environment for all children. The nursery offers equal access to the curriculum and practitioners actively promote equality and diversity through the activities.

There is a behaviour policy to deal effectively with any issues and a complaint procedure that is known to parents and carers that ensures any concerns can be quickly and efficiently resolved.

There are sufficient qualified and experienced practitioners to deliver the Foundation Phase Curriculum. They are well trained and strive to improve their knowledge and understanding. This is evident in their day to day work with the children.

Both the indoor and outdoor environment are rich in learning opportunities for the children and although the resources are well used to develop creativity and confidence the children should be free to make more of their own choices to develop their play in different directions that may not have been planned.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The nursery has achieved the Quality Assured Award from WPPA.

Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and there is a clear direction and purpose in the nursery where the staff and children are valued.

Practitioners respond to relevant national and local priorities for example the Tiny Tums healthy eating initiative and the Food and Health Guidelines for Early Years and Childcare Settings and Food Fun and Active Play for Tiny Tots.

There is a strong emphasis on training and development and practitioners effectively share their expertise with each other to further the experiences of the children, benefit the service and raise standards of provision.

The nursery has recently been involved in the base line assessment pilot and as a result has effectively reviewed and re-developed assessment throughout the setting.

Improving quality: Good

There are effective processes to evaluate the strengths and areas for improvement in the nursery. The nursery has an effective action plan that includes increasing the number of visitors to the setting and introducing more opportunities for the children to re-cycle.

Self evaluation is on going and the nursery positively uses suggestions and comments from parents and practitioners to improve the setting and to identify new resources.

Practitioners reflect on their work and evaluate children's responses to the activities. The outcomes identify any issues for improvement and effectively help them to modify planning, activities and resources.

Practitioners have made very good use of training to improve curriculum planning and organisation and there are effective ways in the nursery to disseminate training that has been accessed both in house and externally.

Partnership working: Good

The nursery works in partnership with parents and provides a good range of information to keep them all updated to include newsletters and a notice board that displays information about the Foundation Phase along with photographs to evidence and support the wide range of activities and experiences undertaken by the children.

The newsletters efficiently inform parents every 2 months of what is happening in the nursery and updates them with any changes.

A good range of partnership working contribute effectively to the children's progress and well being.

The nursery create strong relationships with parents and carers. The good working relationship with the local authority advisory teacher enhances the work of the setting and is purposeful and beneficial to all. Practitioners value the support they receive and respond very positively to any advice and guidance.

The nursery use little Ted to enhance and develop the partnership and links with parents by encouraging the children to take home the teddy and care for him then relate his adventures when they are next in the nursery.

Resource management: Good

The nursery has a good range of up to date resources that is very well used to motivate children and contribute to the progress that all the children make.

Outdoors is used to effectively develop their physical skills.

Practitioners are effectively deployed and are aware of their roles and responsibilities within the nursery.

There is a good understanding of budgets and all additional resources are of benefit to the children. Overall the nursery provides very good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

N/A

Responses to parent questionnaires

Almost all statements have 100% parents strongly agreeing that they are satisfied with the setting, their child makes good progress, teaching is good, children behave well and are safe.

Responses to discussions with children

All the children are very happy in the nursery. They like the staff and enjoying coming.

Many children like to play outside in the sand and enjoy painting and using the computer.

Appendix 2

The inspection team / reporting inspector – delete as appropriate

Anne Manning	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)