

A report on

First Steps Day Nursery (Rhos on Sea) Limited

**1 Llandudno Road
Rhos on Sea
Conwy
LL28 4TR**

Date of inspection: June 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About First Steps Day Nursery (Rhos on Sea) Limited

Name of setting	First Steps Nursery (Rhos on Sea) Limited
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Rebecca Nicholson
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Rebecca Nicholson
Person in charge	Rebecca Nicholson
Number of places	56
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	7
Number of children who receive funding for early education	7
Opening days / times	7:45 - 17:30 Monday to Friday
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	18 June 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	February 2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	07/06/2022
Inspection visit also held 08/06/22	

Non-compliance

We identified serious non-compliance in relation to Leadership and Management and we have issued a priority action notice to the provider.

Information on all non-compliance is included in the Action and Improvement Summary report, which will be sent separate to the report by CIW.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that there is an effective balance between adult led and child led activities and opportunities
- R2 Develop more opportunities for children to be independent and make their own decisions and choices
- R3 Ensure that children have access to resources that are natural and ones that support their curiosity, problem solving and creativity
- R4 Ensure that any non compliance is addressed

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being:

Nearly all children have some opportunities to make choices and decisions, for example when choosing from the resources available in their respective rooms. A few children have opportunities to explore different areas freely as practitioners ask if they wish to play indoors or outside. Many children communicate confidently as they know most of what they say is listened and responded to appropriately. Most children convey and express their needs using verbal and nonverbal forms of communication, for example showing a practitioner their empty bowl as a way of communicating that they would like some more.

Children cope well with separating from their parents. Many new children settle well as they are welcomed, with most receiving the comfort and support needed. This helps them feel relaxed and content in their surroundings. Most children form positive bonds with practitioners and approach them for comfort when needed. Nearly all children develop friendships that are important to them, and they actively seek out others they wish to play alongside or sit next to, for example when choosing a friend to sit by at lunchtime.

Nearly all children co-operate well and interact positively with their peers and practitioners. Most are respectful and use the toys and resources appropriately. Children understand and follow the routines well, for example lining up when asked to do so by practitioners. Most children show empathy and respect for others by using the space and resources co-operatively. Children show care and are beginning to understand the feelings of others. For example, when a child was upset another child offered comfort by cuddling them to try and help them feel better.

A majority of children are suitably engaged in their play and learning. However, not all children are able to follow their interests and freely choose activities. Many children enjoy some of the adult led activities planned, for example when joining in with songs and rhymes or listening to a story. Nearly all children confidently share their experiences with others, showing enjoyment in talking about what they are doing and what they like to do. For example, a group of children said that they loved taking part in the craft activities. Most children enjoy their time and experiences outdoors, playing ball games and riding on the trikes and scooters.

Children have some opportunities to develop their independence, for example when accessing toilet facilities and feeding themselves. However, chances for children to freely choose activities, make decisions about where they want to play or to be independent are limited. Nearly all children develop a range of skills appropriately. For example, those children who are not yet walking have access to resources that support their physical development, through pulling themselves up to a standing position or attempting to walk.

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development:

Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. They understand their responsibility to safeguard children from harm, including how to respond to child protection concerns. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Nearly all practitioners follow effective routines keeping children safe and healthy, for example cleaning tables after use and ensuring that children wash their hands frequently. Nutritious food is provided and practitioners ensure that children's preferences and requirements are known and met. Nearly all practitioners support children's physical development well by providing opportunities for children to be active and get fresh air during planned times when they can access the outdoor areas.

Nearly all practitioners manage children's behaviour well and consistently. They use praise appropriately to celebrate achievements and reward appropriate interactions. For example, they use praise to encourage a younger child who was learning to drink from a cup. Practitioners encourage children to be kind and take turns. For example, they use appropriate language when two children want the same item from the role play kitchen and a practitioner found a similar item so that they could play together. Practitioners encourage and support children to be well mannered, reminding them in an appropriate way to say please and thank you.

Most practitioners know the children well and understand their needs. Practitioners are caring and supportive. However, sometimes the number and needs of children and practitioners available make it difficult for them to be consistent in the care they provide. For example, on occasion children have their lunch when practitioners are readily available rather than when is best for the children. Practitioners provide some suitable resources and activities. However, they are not always confident to allow children to be free to choose and direct their play. Nearly all practitioners use observations effectively to record and track children's development.

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

Practitioners plan a range of effective learning experiences that meet the needs and interests of the children successfully. They use a well-resourced role play area to build on children's understanding effectively. For example, children develop their understanding about the world as they pretend to be a vet, caring for animals. This develops children's numeracy skills as they purposefully measure and weigh toy animals. Practitioners use imaginative play to develop children's literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills well as they make appointments and discuss times and prices when speaking on the telephone and

using a computer. However, the availability and opportunity for children to experience free play is limited and practitioners rely too heavily on planned experiences for the children to take part in. They develop children's communication skills well, for example when talking about the animals and identifying that their dog has a sore leg and may need an x-ray.

Practitioners provide useful opportunities for children to develop their literacy skills in their play. For example, they write appointment cards in the role play area and record scores when children are outdoors. This encourages children to understand the purpose of mark making in a meaningful way. Practitioners build on children's interest and knowledge of books well by reading stories that are relevant to the session's experiences. This encourages children to look at books independently.

Practitioners plan useful opportunities for children to develop their physical skills through challenging opportunities that are fun and exciting. For example, children develop their ability to crawl, balance, jump, and run with obvious enjoyment. They build on children's interests and knowledge of animals throughout the session. Practitioners provide challenging opportunities that develop children's fine motor skills, for example using scissors to untangle paper around number tiles and drawing tracks in sand. This encourages children to use the resources to extend their understanding and to challenge each other.

A useful range of learning experiences promote children's moral, spiritual and cultural development well. For example, practitioners foster a sense of awe and wonder successfully when children plant seeds and discuss growth. Practitioners provide successful opportunities for children to learn to care for wild animals. For example, they discuss how waste in the sea can hurt whales and other animals. This encourages children to develop their understanding and use of recycling.

Practitioners have an effective understanding of child development. They explain things clearly and model activities purposefully. Practitioners understand how to support children well, for example using a range of useful strategies to encourage language development within play experiences in both Welsh and English. They provide a well-structured session that includes a range of useful experiences both indoors and outdoors. However, opportunities to develop children's independence are under developed.

The setting has an effective system of assessment that develops the children's learning in all areas. Practitioners know children well and identify strengths and areas for improvement through careful and regular observations. They usefully identify areas for development and intervene sensitively to ensure that children make progress in their learning. They accurately record children's opinions and ideas. This informs future planning, giving children a sense of involvement in what they are learning about. Practitioners use regular informal conversations to keep parents well informed about the experiences the children are doing and the progress they make during sessions.

Environment:

Leaders ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. For example, practitioners monitor the secure access to the premises and ensure safety

gates are used appropriately to prevent children accessing areas such as the stairs without supervision. Practitioners follow effective risk assessments and complete daily checks to ensure there are no new hazards. The environment is well maintained with all required safety checks in place, including fire and electrical tests. Regular fire drill practices ensure that practitioners and children are aware of how to evacuate the premises in the event of an emergency. The outdoors has been developed recently providing suitable and safe spaces for children. It creates a space for them to be active and learn about the world around them, with a separate area specifically for growing fruits and vegetables and encouraging wildlife.

The environment is clean and well maintained, and it provides enough space for children to play and learn. The setting is organised so that children can be grouped according to their ages and stages of development. Extra space is available for craft and messy play. However, children cannot access this space freely limiting when they can be creative. Practitioners organise the environment to provide areas with some provision to develop children's imagination. For example, an area created as a police desk as part of the people who help us topic. The availability of continuous provision is not consistent throughout the nursery and requires further development. The outdoor space is inviting and equipped with suitable activities and resources to support children.

Toys and resources available in each room are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children. For example, equipment in the baby room supports them to develop their senses with items including metal, shiny balls, and musical toys. Storage is effective in keeping resources clean, well maintained and easily accessible to practitioners. However, there is little storage that children are allowed to access independently. The environment is equipped with suitably sized furniture and facilities such as tables and chairs and toilets. This encourages children to be independent and helps to ensure that they are comfortable.

Leadership and management:

The leaders share a clear vision for the setting to develop happy children through a caring, safe environment that encourages children to develop to their potential. Leaders work effectively with practitioners to provide an environment that enables children to develop their physical, social and intellectual skills effectively. Leaders work closely with practitioners through regular daily meetings. This enables all practitioners to feel valued and well informed about the needs of the children.

The manager has high expectations and an enthusiasm to develop the work of caring for the children's development in all areas. There are suitable arrangements for identifying strengths and areas for improvement. For example, practitioners have identified the outdoors as an area for improvement, and the introduction of the curriculum for non-maintained settings has enabled practitioners to plan using appropriate play experiences. However, leaders do not allow children to make decisions about their play during sessions.

Leaders make good use of a social media application to communicate with parents and to share the experiences the children have engaged with. They have positive relationships with parents seek their views regularly and ensure they are aware of events at the setting. The setting works well with a range of partners to support

children's learning and well-being. For example, there are strong arrangements with feeder schools that support the children as they move to the next stage of their education. There is a strong relationship with the local authority advisory teacher and leaders respond effectively to recommendations for improvement.

Nearly all practitioners strive to improve their performance through training opportunities that support their continued professional development. This has a positive impact on children's learning, such as in their transition to the new curriculum. Leaders make suitable use of the appraisal process to identify training requirements, this leads to practitioners developing their skills in a range of aspects that support the children well. Leaders generally manage staff effectively. However, leaders do not always make sure that the setting meets the required number of practitioners throughout all sessions.

The setting makes good use of resources to support children's well-being, play and learning effectively. Resources are plentiful and of good quality. Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. For example, they support each other when required.

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)