



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

A report on

**Little Footsteps Day Nursery
Blakedown House
Heol-Mostyn
Village farm industrial estate
Pyle
Bridgend
CF33 6BJ**

Date of inspection: January 2016

by

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

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 setting'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

Little Footsteps (Porthcawl) Ltd is an independent day nursery in the Bridgend local authority. The nursery opened in May 2015 after relocating from Rest Bay. It offers day care and wrap around care for children aged between 0 years and 11 years, and education for children aged between three years and four years. The owners are qualified practitioners who own another setting in Porthcawl. They divide their time between the two settings assisted by three part-time deputies.

There are six children on the register aged between three and four years of age, funded by the local authority for part-time education, of whom four were present during the inspection. Most of the children come from English-speaking homes and live in Bridgend or neighbouring local authorities.

This is the first time Estyn has inspected the setting. The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) has not inspected the setting since it registered as a care provider in May 2015.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Practitioners provide children with an imaginative range of experiences
- The planning and teaching are good overall
- There is a good balance of adult-directed and child-led activities
- Practitioners demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and work well together as a team
- Rooms are inviting with age-appropriate resources

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Roles and responsibilities within the nursery are well defined
- Managers know the nursery well and are committed to improving the provision continually
- The setting has built up strong partnerships with parents in the relatively short time since it opened
- The setting has good links with the local community
- Leaders identify strengths and areas for development effectively
- The setting has enough suitably qualified staff to support children's learning well

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that pace of sessions is appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the children
- R2 Make better use of assessment information to plan for the next steps in children's learning
- R3 Extend opportunities for practitioners to benefit from continuous professional development

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	n/a
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Standards: n/a

Wellbeing: n/a

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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

Practitioners provide an imaginative range of experiences based on themes that engage and motivate children to learn, such as fairy tales and dinosaurs. Planning is comprehensive and focused, and it covers all areas of the Foundation Phase Framework. This includes a good balance of adult-directed and child-led activities, such as making magical glass slippers and investigating the treasure tray. Practitioners have recently completed a detailed review of planning and, as a result, children have improved opportunities for learning. There are effective opportunities for children to contribute orally to planning.

Practitioners provide many valuable opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The book corner is well resourced and children have worthwhile opportunities to read independently. Practitioners plan activities to support the development of children's mathematical concepts effectively such as colour and shape. They make good use of songs and rhymes, such as 'five currant buns' to support children's early counting skills.

The setting offers a comprehensive range of resources to develop children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Practitioners provide a good assortment of equipment to meet the physical needs of the children, for example bikes, a gardening area and a slide. They plan worthwhile activities to develop children's thinking and creative skills in order to develop children's understanding of the world in which they live, for example making potions and baking in the muddy kitchen.

Practitioners plan engaging circle time sessions that successfully promote children's use of the Welsh language, for example counting in Welsh and singing weather songs and greetings. Practitioners plan a variety of well-organised visits and events to celebrate Welsh culture and traditions such as trips to the local country park estate.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners are warm and welcoming towards the children, creating a relaxed and happy atmosphere. They have high expectations of behaviour and frequently

give verbal feedback to praise behaviour and learning. Strong teamwork supports children effectively in their learning. Practitioners are skilled in assisting children to make choices about what equipment to choose and where to play. They intervene sensitively to support learning through questioning and regularly make time to talk with, and listen to, children. Practitioners use toys effectively to engage children during focus activity sessions. Valuable use is made of the outdoor area in all weathers to support children's physical development and interest in the natural world. However, occasionally the pace of sessions is too slow with children kept too long on the carpet. Practitioners generally make good use of songs to develop children's listening skills. However, the use of a recorded story reduces opportunities to interact effectively with children.

Practitioners make good use of the Foundation Phase Profile to record children's progress and stages of development. They have developed a reliable method to assess and record progress for use with focused activities. Practitioners use this information well to identify targets for individual children and to measure their progress. However, practitioners do not always use assessment information effectively to plan for next steps in children's learning.

Practitioners encourage children to feedback on what they enjoy most each day in order to evaluate sessions and to plan to capture children's interest. This provides good opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills.

Parents and carers are well informed about their child's progress and wellbeing through regular, informal feedback.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Effective arrangements exist to support children's health and wellbeing. Practitioners encourage high levels of independence through activities such as handwashing and teeth cleaning with children. They successfully promote good behaviour by children in a calm, consistent manner. Practitioners encourage the sharing of resources, such as painting equipment and chalkboards, well through discussion and modelling. Outdoor provision is very well organised and encourages physical exercise.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their spiritual, moral and social understanding of the world in which they live. For example, practitioners provide seeds in the garden for children to feed to the birds. There are appropriate opportunities for children to develop their understanding of other cultures by celebrating events such as St David's Day, Chinese New Year and Diwali. The setting is making good progress with developing links with the local community following its recent relocation. Provision for sustainability is satisfactory with relevant opportunities for children to learn about recycled materials.

The setting has strong procedures in place to identify and support children with additional learning needs. Practitioners have a thorough understanding of child development, and leaders have established good links with other professionals such as an educational psychologist and local authority access and inclusion officer. Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a supportive, family-like ethos where children are valued as individuals. Practitioners are well qualified and experienced in providing for children's learning and skill development. They promote important values such as fairness and equality, for example by encouraging children to have say in what they do and respecting their choices. Practitioners give children choices appropriate to their age and stage of development, such as, during snack time. There are relevant policies and procedures in place to promote equality of opportunity for all children.

The setting is secure, brightly decorated and well maintained. Good quality displays celebrate children's work in an attractive manner. Practitioners use the space well to meet the needs of the children. There are many good quality resources that children enjoy using and that support their learning well. For example, children co-operate purposefully in building with construction blocks to make a castle. An imaginative variety of resources in the water tray develops children's co-ordination skills effectively.

Practitioners make good use of the community library to enhance the children's reading corner and, in turn, develop early reading skills. The setting makes good use of the local environment. For example, an exciting visit to Margam Park developed children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor garden area provides effective opportunities for role-play, digging and space to run.

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

The two proprietors share the day-to-day management of the nursery effectively. They have a strong vision to provide the best standard of care and education for children at the setting, and constantly challenge and support practitioners to do their best to achieve this. Through their commitment and hard work, they succeed in creating a positive ethos in the setting where practitioners and children know they are valued.

Roles and responsibilities within the nursery are well defined, and practitioners work well together. The proprietors communicate successfully with each other and their deputies through regular meetings, which are co-ordinated effectively. Together, the managers set high expectations for every aspect of the setting's work and actively support practitioners to meet these through the well-established performance management system.

Managers review the setting's policies regularly, reflecting changes in guidance and legislation appropriately. They have good systems in place to share information about changes in policy and display policies helpfully throughout the setting.

Managers have established strong links with parents, contributing to the effective running of the setting. They pay good attention to local and national priorities, making sure that children have regular worthwhile learning experiences in the outdoors and that there is a strong focus on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills.

Improving quality: Good

Managers know the nursery well and are committed to continually improving the provision. Through regular monitoring, they identify strengths and areas for development in the day-to-day running of the setting effectively. Practitioners act on findings promptly, such as ensuring that children's daily diaries are completed appropriately. Managers make good use of reviews by external agencies such as CSSIW, and act promptly on their recommendations. They welcome advice from the local authority and use this appropriately to raise the standard of teaching and learning in the setting. For example, using guidance from the local authority, the setting makes good use of the new Foundation Phase Profile to help monitor and assess children's progress.

The setting has recently opened on a new site and managers are at the beginning of a new self-evaluation cycle. They have recently completed a self-evaluation report, which has helped them identify worthwhile development targets for the coming year. These build on development targets from the previous site effectively, such as improving children's Welsh language skills, ensuring that practitioners' expertise develops consistently. However, the development plan does not identify specific timescales or precise funding requirements clearly enough to enable them to monitor progress as well as they could.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has built up strong partnerships with parents in the relatively short time since it opened. Managers take active steps to involve parents and carers in the setting and keep them regularly informed about all aspects of the setting's work. For example, they share information about themes and topics, as well as any staff changes through regular newsletters.

Managers understand the importance of building up strong links with local primary schools and have an established relationship with one of the local schools. This helps to prepare children for the next stage in their education appropriately.

The setting values its partnership with the local authority and with CSSIW, and makes the most of the advice and support it receives from them. Children benefit well from the setting's links with the local community such as their regular visits to the local library. There is a close partnership with the other nursery owned by the proprietors, with children benefiting from the use of shared resources.

Resource management: Good

The proprietors ensure that the setting has enough suitably qualified staff to support children's learning well. They deploy practitioners effectively, ensuring that practitioners have time to complete planning and record assessments. They make good use of individual expertise, and organise staff hours carefully to provide continuity for the children. The setting is beginning to work jointly with its other nursery to improve practitioners' confidence and understanding. For example, pre-school leaders meet to model good practice. Regular appraisals of practitioners help make sure that all practitioners keep up-to-date with essential training such as in

first aid and food hygiene. However, in general, practitioners have fewer opportunities to build on their early years' knowledge and expertise.

Proprietors plan spending carefully and ensure that the setting has plenty of good quality resources. They manage the budget effectively to meet their running costs while establishing the nursery on a new site.

In view of the good quality learning opportunities provided for the children, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Ceri Gibbon	Reporting Inspector
Sheila Birkhead	Team Inspector

Copies of the report

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

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.