



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Little Footsteps Nursery (South Road)
South Road
Porthcawl
Bridgend
CF36 3UP**

Date of inspection: October 2012

by

**Mr Peter Mathias
Reporting Inspector**

for

**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 Nursery at South Road, Porthcawl currently provides in the morning sessions for six children and in the afternoon sessions for four children. All are three years of age. It is open for five full days per week.

Children attend from a wide range of backgrounds and economic circumstances. No child has English as an additional language and no child has Welsh as the language of the home. One child is considered to have additional learning needs. There are no looked after children.

Children generally begin in the setting prior to their third birthday and move into the nursery area when they are three years of age. There are two registered persons and managers who are joint proprietors.

The setting was last inspected by Care and Social Service Inspectorate Wales in the summer term 2011. No issues were raised as a result of that inspection. The setting has not been inspected previously by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

Little Footsteps Nursery is good because of:

- the good progress children make towards the desirable outcomes for learning;
- the good quality of provision in nearly all areas of learning;
- the advantageous ratio of practitioners to children;
- the effective way in which assessment information is used to plan ahead;
- the efficient and well-organised leadership; and
- the effective deployment of practitioners.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because of:

- the systematic analysis of the setting's strengths and areas for development;
- the findings of the self-evaluation feed effectively into the setting's development plan;
- the close links with other providers which are focused on raising standards;
- arrangements for staff development which are well established and well used; and
- a very positive ethos where all staff work co-operatively.

Recommendations

R1. Extend provision for children to have more access to programmable toys and strengthen their skills in the use of information communications technology.

R2. Develop the outside area to provide more opportunities for children to engage in growing plants and vegetables in order to enhance their understanding of healthy living and the processes of nature.

R3. Provide more opportunities for children to begin to evaluate their own learning and to be aware of how they can improve.

What happens next?

Little Footsteps Nursery will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

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

All children in the setting achieve well for their age and make good progress. They are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to learn. They concentrate well in their different activities and try hard.

In communication in English, nearly all are making good progress in their speaking and listening skills. They listen intently to stories and respond confidently and nearly always clearly when answering questions or discussing their work. They are beginning to form letter shapes in their creative activities and to recognise the initial letters of their names. All are interested in books, visiting the local library to investigate them and to hear stories being told.

In Welsh all know the Welsh for the primary colours and for numbers within 10. They respond appropriately to questions about the weather in Welsh. Most use simple Welsh phrases alongside words in English when responding to practitioners about how they feel.

By the end of their stay in the setting, all recognise numbers within 10 in array and when written as numerals. They know when two potatoes are placed next to a picture of four that something is wrong. They thread beads systematically and accurately follow patterns when completing sequencing tasks. They know the names of simple three-dimensional shapes and some of their properties. They match them accurately to their outlines in two dimensions. They are beginning to recognise measure when for example, preparing ingredients to cook.

In the setting all children have good access to a computer and are beginning to learn how to control the cursor and to follow instructions in order to complete simple programs. They use imitation electrical devices in role-play for example, when working on the counter in the shop. They know that binoculars are useful when bird watching from their hide. They make pretend telephone calls to contact friends.

However, they have limited knowledge of how to program an electronic toy to follow a route, to use an electronic microscope to investigate or how to use a digital camera to record their activities and those of others.

Wellbeing: Good

All children in the setting are becoming increasingly independent when dressing and washing hands. They recognise how to put on their shoes correctly and how to put on and take off their coats and hats when working outside. They are beginning to appreciate the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods and how exercise is good for them. They manage their personal hygiene routines appropriately.

Across the setting every child is happy to share and play constructively together. They are polite and take turns fairly. They often choose for themselves when they

wish to move on to a new activity. They listen to instructions and carry them out correctly. They use tools safely and are conscious of not hurting someone else when for example, working in the garden or going on a camping expedition.

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

The setting plans well so that all children have good access to the Foundation Phase curriculum and build systematically on what they already know and can do.

Longer term planning is based around the development of different themes which include activities across all the areas of learning for these children. These are invariably stimulating and imaginative.

The planning is regularly adapted to suit the needs and progress of individual children and so ensure that they receive an appropriate degree of challenge. Children are regularly encouraged to find things out for themselves and to investigate.

They have good opportunities through role-play and creative activities to learn about their own customs and those of others. There is good provision for children to meet with people from the local community for example, through visitors and visits to places of interest.

However, children have limited opportunities to engage in meaningful activities to promote their understanding of how plants and vegetables grow, how to care for them and subsequently how to prepare and eat them.

Teaching: Good

Both practitioners provide very well focused support for all children. They work effectively as a team and share their duties in a planned and purposeful way. Practitioners question well in order to encourage all children to think things out for themselves and to make their own choices. When needed, they give very positive support and encouragement to individuals. All children know that they are valued. As a result they work cheerfully and constructively to please their helpers.

The practitioners have a thorough understanding of how to stimulate and support children in their learning. They organise resources imaginatively in order to create learning experiences which challenge children and foster their natural curiosity. They have high expectations of what their children should achieve and help them to reach these objectives.

However, while practitioners praise success warmly, they do not regularly and consciously encourage children to begin to think about how they might improve their work further.

There are thorough short and long-term systems in place to record children's basic skills and levels of maturity on entry and throughout their stay in the setting. These are detailed and well constructed so that practitioners build up a comprehensive

picture of each child's progress. They are well used to plan future work and to share with parents the progress and achievements of their children.

Reports are very easily understood and convey sufficient detail to the reader. They give a good all-round picture of each child.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting places heavy emphasis on ensuring children's health and wellbeing. All children are made aware of what is expected of them and how they should behave and care for each other. All children are encouraged successfully to manage their own feelings and to have positive attitudes to life.

Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. There are good procedures to promote children's understanding of how to live healthily and how to be constructive members of their community.

There are well established and productive links with parents, who are well informed about their children's progress and needs. There is effective support from specialist services when they are needed for those who are identified with additional learning needs. The advice given is acted upon effectively. Arrangements to identify those with additional learning needs are well-organised and involve parents closely in the process.

There are appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children are valued and treated equally. All have equal access to the Foundation Phase curriculum. Practitioners encourage children to learn through practical experiences and to make choices for themselves. All children have good opportunities to learn to be helpful and considerate.

The setting is well-organised and is based in a large hall which has sufficient space and resources to deliver the curriculum. There is a very advantageous ratio of practitioners to children. All practitioners are well qualified and experienced. Generally resources are suitable and well-matched to the needs of children of this age. The local area is well used to enhance learning.

However, while the setting has easy access to a grassed area, there is limited scope for children to experience activities in order to grow and harvest plants and vegetables. Resources to develop children's skills in information and communications technology are limited.

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

The setting is well managed. Both leaders work together closely and constructively to provide positive and effective experiences for all children. They plan carefully and very thoroughly together and have high expectations of themselves and other practitioners. In this process they have established procedures to evaluate and develop the expertise of all who work in the setting. All share a very positive attitude to their work and to the setting's future success.

There are strong and effective links with parents who are encouraged to be active partners in their children's learning.

While the setting does not have a management committee, the joint proprietors have well established arrangements to involve all staff in informal and formal discussions. Monthly staff meetings focus of the quality of the provision and the progress children make. There are good arrangements for evaluating and supporting practitioners' professional needs.

The setting meets local and national priorities well. Good progress has been made in meeting the requirements of the Foundation Phase and in developing children's early use of English and Welsh. There are good arrangements to foster the early development of literacy and numeracy. There are close links with other settings to judge the quality of provision and to prepare children for the next steps in their education. The setting encourages the development of positive attitudes to healthy living.

Improving quality: Good

The joint proprietors, working closely with staff have a very clear understanding of the setting's needs and areas for development. They have successfully established procedures to gather information from a wide range of sources, including a detailed survey of the views of parents and all practitioners. The information collected and the decisions made are closely linked to the setting's development plan. This is carefully organised and is used on a day-to-day basis to plan and evaluate the progress of initiatives.

Links with the local authority are strong and based around focused discussion and purposeful planning. As a result, all practitioners regularly attend courses and share their expertise. There are well constructed arrangements for staff to evaluate the impact of what they have learnt in their training on the development of children's skills and how best to teach them.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has well established and effective links with all parents. Parents are very aware of the work of the setting and how their children are thriving in it. Links with the nearby primary school are strong and include arrangements for the transfer of information about individual children's successes and personal needs.

There is a close working partnership with the local authority's advisory teacher who is a regular visitor. The setting has mutually beneficial links with several local schools and places of further education. These include the provision of opportunities for students to work with children and to develop their professional expertise.

Resource management: Good

All staff are well deployed and used effectively. The setting is generally well equipped. The wider environment is well used. The setting uses its financial resources wisely.

However resources to develop children's skills in the use of information communications technology across the curriculum are limited. There is also scope to improve further the outdoor learning environment.

Bearing in mind the progress all children make and the quality of education provided, the setting gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Only a small number of parents responded to the questionnaire. It is not appropriate to report in detail their replies. However parents' views were positive.

All children in the setting are happy and confident. They come willingly to meet their friends. They enjoy being asked to be helpful and are eager at the end of their stay to return.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Peter Mathias	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)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

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 partnership's 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>

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (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.