



Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 Child Minding and Day Care (Inspection and Information for Local Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2010 The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010

Inspection Report

Footsteps Nursery

Merthyr Tydfil Industrial Park
Pentrebach
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 4DR

Type of Inspection – Baseline
Dates of inspection – 29 May & 4 June 2014
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Summary

About the service

Footsteps Nursery (Wales) Limited operates from a leased unit on Merthyr Tydfil Industrial Park. The nursery is one of two owned by a wife and husband team. It is registered to care for up to forty children from birth to eight years of age. The nursery provides full and part-time care including pick ups from local schools, after school and holiday time care. It recently became a provider of Flying Start places on behalf of Merthyr County Borough Council. English is the language of the majority of activities. Some Welsh is introduced through games and songs.

What type of inspection was carried out?

This was a scheduled unannounced baseline inspection. It reports on all four quality themes. The evidence for this report came from:

- discussions with the Responsible Individual (RI) who is the owner; the Person in Charge (PiC) of the nursery on a daily basis; staff and children
- scrutiny of daily records, staff files and children's development profiles
- observations of care practices
- two parent and six staff CSSIW questionnaires
- use of the SOFI (Short Observation Framework for Inspection) tool. This enables CSSIW to collect evidence around the quality of staff interactions with the children and child engagement.

What does the service do well?

We did not identify any specific areas of excellence during this inspection. We found areas of good practice in relation to assessments and observations being carried out in respect of children receiving the Flying Start service.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery now offers places on behalf of Merthyr County Borough Council for children aged two to three years of age under the Flying Start initiative.

What needs to be done to improve the service?

There were no issues of non compliance to report.

We advised the RI and PiC to:

- strengthen and develop links with the Health Visitor in relation to the Flying Start service being offered
- develop a noticeboard for parents using the Flying Start service.

Quality of life

Overall we, CSSIW, found that the needs of the children were met. They benefitted from a warm and respectful approach from staff. The children played happily and appeared to be at ease with their carers. A key worker system was in place to support settling in and for children to access familiar adults.

Children have opportunities for freely chosen, unstructured and self-directed play. We saw children in the two year plus room enter into free play once they had completed their craft activity. They had free choice and staff assisted when a child asked for a specific toy to play with. In the baby room the children were playing on the mat and had a range of toys within reach. We saw the room leader give the children toys they were looking at and showing an interest in when they were seated on her lap.

Children have their individual needs recognised and catered for. Each child has a key worker who initially secures information about the child from parents. The key worker undertakes observations on the child and completes their developmental record and scrap book of craft activities. Daily diaries are also completed by the key worker to keep parents informed about their child's day. We had sight of these records across both rooms and noted that staff understood children's needs and planned appropriately to meet them.

Children have opportunities to develop skills by participating in physical activities indoors and outside. During the course of our visit we saw the older children play outside. It had been raining but the children were appropriately dressed and went outside to play with whatever they chose. Two of the children brought dolls pushchairs out and enjoyed imaginative play around the dolls. Others played with balls and simply enjoyed running around outside. We did not see the babies go outside because after lunch they all slept. Their key worker told us that they frequently played outside and had their own sand pit. We saw photographs of the babies developing curiosity and tactile skills by playing with water and jelly in their base room.

Children are supported to deal with difficult feelings and are helped to develop coping strategies during times of change. We used the SOFI tool to observe one child during the lunch period. We undertook a ten minute observation over two minute time frames. The child became anxious during lunch and was asking for his parent. Staff reassured him that he would be collected soon and encouraged him to finish his lunch. The child became unsettled and eventually left the table. Staff enabled the child to deal with his anxiety by letting him wander for a short while and then suggested that he go to play in the quiet area where toys were put out for him. We saw that staff acknowledged the child's distress and were patient and showed understanding towards the child which settled the child and helped him to relax and not to become too focussed on waiting for collection.

Quality of staffing

Overall we found that children benefit from being cared for by familiar staff. There is a consistent staff group all of who were present at last inspection.

Children receive care which is based on up-to-date knowledge of child development and child care practice. We saw the training matrix for the nursery which confirmed that all mandatory training was ongoing. The RI told us that both the PiC and her deputy were near completion of the level five qualification in management. Two other staff members were said to have shown an interest in doing a level five qualification in mentoring and supervision. The deputy is also the person overseeing the Flying Start delivery in the nursery and hopes to complete her level five qualification by the end of July. She, the PiC and two other staff members had attended the local authority mandatory training for Flying Start providers as evidence in staff files seen. Staff questionnaires confirmed to us that regular training to update knowledge was available to staff.

Children are encouraged to develop new skills. We saw across all age ranges staff provide opportunities where children could develop new skills. This ranged from feeding themselves at lunch, to putting their own coats on, to being independent with toileting. Children were encouraged by all staff to choose games, toys and activities. We saw staff respond to children's individual interests by providing toys of interest. They also referred to children's experiences, such as recent holiday's, in conversation. This demonstrated staff knowledge of individual children.

Children's all-round needs are met. Throughout the inspection we saw examples of children's basic physical needs being met. We heard staff offer encouragement and praise and saw children respond positively to it. Staff reminded children to be aware of others around them. The older children were reminded to play quietly as the babies were put to sleep in the cot room. Children were encouraged to share particularly when engaged in group craft activities with glue and coloured paper. One child moved the containers towards him and was gently reminded that they were to be shared by all around the table. When the containers were placed back in the middle of the table the child was seen to accept the need to share and take his turn.

Children experience good interactions with staff and as a result their emotional needs are met. We saw children interact with all staff including the RI, her husband and the nursery cook. Relationships were warm and children went easily to staff. This was helped by the nursery layout which meant that at points during the day, such as mealtimes, the whole group came together. This accustomed children to all staff members and also aided transition between age groups.

Quality of leadership and management

Overall we found that parents could be reassured that their children were safe because the service is well run. We saw evidence of sound administrative procedures in place supported by a good range of policies and procedures.

Parents have all the information they need to make an informed choice about using the service. The nursery have a Statement of Purpose and informative website for parents to access. There is a noticeboard for parents in the nursery foyer with additional information such as the latest CSSIW inspection report. We suggested that a separate noticeboard for the Flying Start provision be developed in the foyer area.

Children and parents using the service are actively involved in defining and measuring the quality of the service. The nursery has an established Quality Assurance system in place. There is an annual survey of parents and children's views undertaken by questionnaire. We saw a copy of the questionnaire used with children which was child friendly and easy to complete. It gave children to opportunity to draw pictures of things they enjoyed doing whilst at the nursery. Staff acted as advocates for the younger children and completed the form after consultation with the child.

Children and parents benefit from a well run and planned service. Parents and staff know who is responsible for the business and who to talk to with issues or concerns. The RI visits the nursery twice a week and is said to be readily contactable on other days. The PiC is well established in the role having worked in the nursery for a number of years and under previous owners. A staff noticeboard with photographs in the foyer identifies all key personal for parents and visitors to the nursery.

Children and parents experience a reliable service. This is because the service operates with a well established PiC and staff group where there is little change. The RI ensures that maintenance is undertaken regularly and when required. A small roof leak was being fixed on one of our visits. Parent feed back suggests that the service is flexible in that part-time placements and school collections in addition to holiday care are provided by the nursery.

Quality of environment

Overall we found that the physical environment was suited to the children's needs. All child accommodation was located on the ground floor. There were base rooms for the under twos and over twos. The larger open plan base room, which accommodated the over twos, had the cot room, quiet television room and kitchen off it. It leads directly out to the enclosed garden to the rear of the building.

Children have opportunities to experience different areas within the nursery. We saw the babies have use of their base room, the cot room and larger base room which doubled as dining area for the whole nursery. The older children used their base room which had separate areas for construction, messy play and role play, and the TV room off it for some quiet supervised TV and DVD time. This gave more than sufficient space for the children.

The environment is suitable for children with additional needs. This is because all care takes place on the ground floor and all areas at this level are easy accessed. A child with mobility difficulties can access the toilets, garden and TV room easily. Doorways had been adapted for this purpose.

Children benefit from a good range of toys and equipment to promote their all-round development. The baby room had a good range of age appropriate toys placed around the room. Not all were accessible to the children but we saw that staff ensured that a good variety were put out for the children to access.

Personal information is properly protected and confidentiality is maintained. There are systems in place within the nursery to ensure that child and staff records are appropriately stored and accessed only by relevant people. The office area provides a quiet space where the PiC can speak in private to parents or staff.

How we inspect and report on services We conduct two types of inspection; baseline and focussed. Both consider the experience of people using services.

Baseline inspections assess whether the registration of a service is justified and whether the conditions of registration are appropriate. For most services, we carry out these inspections every three years. Exceptions are registered child minders, out of school care, sessional care, crèches and open access provision, which are every four years.

At these inspections we check whether the service has a clear, effective Statement of Purpose and whether the service delivers on the commitments set out in its Statement of Purpose. In assessing whether registration is justified inspectors check that the service can demonstrate a history of compliance with regulations.

Focussed inspections consider the experience of people using services and we will look at compliance with regulations when poor outcomes for people using services are identified. We carry out these inspections in between baseline inspections. Focussed inspections will always consider the quality of life of people using services and may look at other areas.

Baseline and focussed inspections may be scheduled or carried out in response to concerns.

Inspectors use a variety of methods to gather information during inspections. These may include;

- Talking with people who use services and their representatives
- Talking to staff and the manager
- Looking at documentation
- Observation of staff interactions with people and of the environment
- Comments made within questionnaires returned from people who use services, staff and health and social care professionals

We inspect and report our findings under 'Quality Themes'. Those relevant to each type of service are referred to within our inspection reports.

Further information about what we do can be found in our leaflet 'Improving Care and Social Services in Wales'. You can download this from our website, [Improving Care and Social Services in Wales](#) or ask us to send you a copy by telephoning your local CSSIW regional office.