



Childcare Inspection Report on

First Steps Day Nursery Ltd

**The Croft
Alltami Road
Buckley
CH7 3PG**

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



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Description of the service

First Steps Day Nursery Ltd. operates from a detached house in Alltami, Flintshire. The responsible individual is Jeanney Reynard and the person in charge is Nanda Merton. The service is registered to care for a maximum of 51 children under 12 years of age. The nursery opens Monday to Friday 7:30 - 18:00 and on Saturdays from 8:00 - 16:00. The main language of communication at the nursery is English; however, some staff are Welsh speaking. The nursery promotes Welsh as a second language, but does not currently meet the criteria of the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

This was an additional unannounced inspection to assess the improvements leaders had made to the service in relation to concerns regarding the management team, security of the premises and subsequent care and development of the children.

We found children to be very happy and enjoying their time at the nursery. They have opportunities to grow and develop as activities and experiences are age appropriate, interesting and stimulating. Staff are competent, suitably qualified and have an appropriate level of awareness of policies and procedures in place to keep children safe. We found leaders had promptly addressed the concerns identified as they had been brought to their attention, but further steps were needed to ensure additional external doors were locked and practices when changing nappies complied with guidance provided by Public Health Wales. Leaders are proactive, approachable and keen to improve their service, and are striving to provide good quality care. They are aware of their responsibilities and have now ensured additional managers are appointed to oversee the running of the nursery, should they be unavailable.

2. Improvements

During the inspection the following were addressed and are therefore noted as improvements to the service:

- The responsible individual forwarded sufficient information to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to swiftly nominate additional persons in charge. They will cover periods when the responsible individual and nursery manager are absent. An updated statement of purpose detailing the management structure was also provided;
- the responsible individual made the required changes to the name of the nursery as the Public Liability Insurance certificate, the Care Inspectorate Wales certificate of registration and the name held by CIW and Companies House, on record, differed. An application to vary details of the registration certificate by removing the word

'Private' from the name of the nursery to 'First Steps Day Nursery Ltd was approved. Leaders notified the relevant organisations of the change;

- risk assessments for the external side door, and for the nappy changing and toileting areas were compiled/reviewed as necessary and a copy given to CIW for examination. They detailed how door keys will be stored securely away from children, but be available for staff in the event of an emergency and when they need to use the door for other reasons. They also detailed how risks in the nappy changing and toileting areas by the door, would be as far as practicably possible, eliminated, and
- changes were made to the nappy changing policy in relation to placing a protective layer of cloth/tissue on the changing mat underneath children, and how staff should ensure the safe disposal of aprons and tissue paper used, before removing gloves and washing their hands.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We identified breaches in relation to the security of the premises and the supervision of staff as this has previously been identified at an earlier inspection this year. We did not issue non compliance notices as we did not find, on this occasion, there was an impact on the well being of the children and also because the concern in relation to security was immediately addressed.

- in respect of ensuring the side door to the nursery premises is kept locked at all times and risk assessments are in place for a recently refurbished outdoor area, and
- staff receive appropriate supervision on a regular basis which is recorded formally and is used during the annual appraisal process.

We made recommendations in respect of:

- Providing further opportunities for children to develop their independence;
- reviewing relevant health and safety policies and procedures in line with guidance from 'Public Health Wales' and 'First Steps Day Nursery' ongoing 'Infection Control Audit' documents;
- logging complaints and concerns in an appropriate record book which can be easily monitored, in addition to the current practice of storing all documentation in children's files, and
- providing additional multicultural resources and displays within the nursery.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children at First Steps Day Nursery Ltd. are confident communicators; they make requests and are listened to. Children feel safe, happy and valued because they are reassured and responded to in a timely manner. They interact positively with others, are polite, co-operate and take turns. Children enjoy their play and learning and can follow their own interests. More opportunities could be given to help children further develop their self help skills and independence.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have a strong voice.

Children made choices in all aspects of their play. They chose who to play with, which toys to use and where they played within their base rooms and outdoors. In the baby room, children were happy to explore a variety of musical instruments and books laid out for them on a mat. We saw toddlers were excited when told during circle time they could play in the sand. A child on seeing others gluing and sticking lollipop sticks and pictures from magazines also wanted to join in, the child was welcomed into the group activity and given the appropriate resources to have a go.

Children are confident to make choices and know they will always be listened to.

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children feel safe, happy and valued.

Children feel safe as they know those who care for them well. They have a sense of belonging as there are photographs displayed in the main entrance, corridors and on boards, walls and from ceilings in all areas. They see their artwork which is well presented being displayed for others to see, this adds to their sense of being part of the nursery as well as having essential things in place such as personalised coat pegs and places to store their personal belongings and things to be taken home.

Children are familiar with their surroundings which are thoughtfully designed; child centred, and add significant value to their sense of well being and of belonging.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact well with others.

Children co-operated well with staff at tidy up time. For example, toddlers helped to tidy up resources outdoors and were praised by staff who said "good helping, well done". They were polite and said "diolch" / "thank you" at lunchtime for their drink without being

prompted. Plenty of examples of turn taking and sharing were seen. For example, when children played in the sand they shared a funnel through which they poured sand to make the wheel spin. Children were encouraged to contribute to discussions during 'circle time' sing a long with rhymes and songs and join in with actions. Outdoors children played hide and peek through the playhouse windows together and enjoyed crawling through the caterpillar, laughing and giggling as they went.

Children enjoy the company of other children, make friends easily and interact with them in a kind and caring manner for the majority of the time.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Children enjoy their play and learning and follow their own interests.

Pre school children played outdoors painting with water, swinging on a tyre and with sand and building materials. They played well together, helping their friends when they needed to, chatting and smiling and consequently had 'a good time' as stated by one of the children. Indoors children were very interested in the 'Numicon Boards' counting, sorting colours and shapes of units. Their interest was sustained for appropriate amounts of time and it was obvious they were learning from their experiences. Other children played imaginatively in the home corner, playing families and acting out situations they were most probably seeing at home during the summer holiday as they packed suitcases to go on holiday and spoke to each other about what was needed. Younger children were able to develop their hand and eye coordination when playing with different sized balls, and rolling them to one another. Babies particularly enjoyed their sensory experiences with muslin cloths touching their faces whilst they lay on the floor and staff sang nursery rhymes to them, this made them giggle and laugh whilst they waited for the cloth to tickle them.

Children really benefit from the variety of interesting and stimulating activities they experience both indoors and outdoors, which inevitably help them learn and provide hours of enjoyment.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children develop, learn and become independent.

Children are developing their independence, for example they wash their own hands and put on outdoor play wear. However, more opportunities could be given, for example pouring their own drinks at meal times. In time children could master techniques needed to pour water from a jug or refill a bottle. By reviewing when and where children can practice these self help skills, children can be empowered to learn for themselves. Babies were provided with the necessary toys and apparatus to encourage them to be mobile and older children experienced swinging on a tyre, balancing on tyres and finding their way across a purposely designed climbing wall.

Children have opportunities to develop, learn and become independent but it is important that they have chances to try things for themselves that normally staff would do for them.

2. Care and Development

Summary

This inspection focussed on the well-being of children and leadership and management. CIW did not consider it necessary to look at all aspects of the care and development. However, this theme will be considered at future inspections.

The care, development and safeguarding of children at this nursery is a priority, staff genuinely care about the children who attend. They work hard as a team to ensure policies and procedures are adhered to and any changes implemented are discussed with staff. However, changes were needed to documentation in relation to nappy changing and ensuring guidance from Public Health Wales is adhered to. Outdoor play and physical activity is promoted extensively throughout the nursery ensuring children have fresh air to boost their feeling of well being. Further involvement with various initiatives will enhance the work staff are already doing and will ensure safe practice is achieved.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff aim to keep children safe and follow policies and procedures in place to assist them.

We discussed child protection and safeguarding procedures with leaders and staff and were satisfied that they were knowledgeable and knew who to approach/contact should they have concerns. All staff received child protection training provided by the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) in October 2016, a few said this was 'really good'.

The nursery is participating in Flintshire's 'Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Award' and 'Healthy Community Initiative' and has received a 'Tiny Tums Best Practice Certificate for Early Years Settings' in June 2018 evidencing, healthy eating is promoted at the nursery. Menus are accredited by Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board.

Staff work well as a team and keep children hydrated and apply sun cream at regular intervals. Outdoor play is promoted; children played in the sunshine and had their lunch outdoors in a shaded area in the fresh air. Healthy eating is promoted and children were provided with healthy snacks and meals. Daily menus are displayed on the kitchen door and staff preparing food were found to be consistent and held appropriate qualifications in Basic Food Safety. The cook prepared chicken and vegetable pie with potatoes for lunch along with a vegetarian pie option made with Quorn. Staff effectively implement key worker systems, and supervised children well for the majority of the time. A recommendation was made in respect of nappy changing and toileting procedures. These should be reviewed to ensure the supervision of children in the toileting area is manageable and correct procedures are followed when cleaning changing mats. We recommended that Public Health Wales Guidelines are followed and an 'Infection Control Audit' is completed.

The safety of children, their health and well being are considered appropriately by the majority of staff. Some practices need reviewing.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff manage interactions well.

Staff praised children with positive language when they co-operated and completed tasks and when they tried hard to accomplish things. Staff cuddled and reassured children, for example after a child fell over when playing with the sand outdoors. The child was soon settled after some gently discussions about what had happened and a cuddle.

We discussed with leaders and staff the recent changes in the behaviour management policy in relation to 'Time Out'. Each member of staff spoken to responded to the questions asked appropriately, evidencing that children may be removed from a situation and sat down with a member of staff who explains to them why their actions may not have been appropriate and asks the child to then apologise to those concerned.

Staff managed children's behaviour consistently with positive behaviour strategies which worked well. Children responded appropriately and in a timely manner.

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

This inspection focused on some aspects of all themes. Ciw did not consider it necessary to look at how well practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs on this occasion. However this will be considered at future inspections.

3. Environment

Summary

This inspection focussed on the well-being of children and leadership and management. CIW did not consider it necessary to look at all aspects of the environment. However, this theme will be considered at future inspections.

The nursery has several systems in place to deter unauthorised access to the premises. However, staff and parents cannot always be relied upon to close/lock gates or doors behind them, which presents a risk to children if this goes unnoticed. Leaders use an external company to audit and help produce written risk assessments for the premises, outdoor areas and places visited. Further risk assessments were provided during the inspection for new areas to be used and where we identified they needed to be reviewed.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

Leaders try hard to ensure the safety of the environment.

The premises have a thumb print access point for entry through the main door and CCTV cameras throughout the premises. There are several gates outdoors which are bolted and have signs giving instruction to close them after use. However, we found a side door to the nursery was unlocked when we arrived and brought this immediately to the attention of the responsible individual. Children could not have left the premises as gates were locked, but unauthorised persons could gain entry. Leaders rectified the situation by locking the door and placing the keys on a hook above the doorway. Numerous notices were in place asking staff to close/lock the door when not in use. We discussed with staff the circumstances in which they would use the door. A further risk assessment was immediately drawn up by the responsible individual with additional action to be taken when placing nappies in bins outside and using the door to take children to school. Staff were immediately advised to lock the door behind them if leaving the premises using an additional key which was to be attached to the vehicle keys used for school runs. This would ensure a key was always available on the hook for the safe evacuation of children through this exit if needed. We also noted that staff perform 'pre opening and closing checks' where doors were to be checked for being locked and the keys were confirmed as being accessible but out of the reach of children. The staff member responsible confirmed as indicated on the checklist that they had performed these checks on the day, prior to the door being found unlocked. We were satisfied that procedures were in place to minimise the risk to children at the close of the inspection.

Staff are provided with a copy of all assessments and those relevant to their working areas are also displayed in rooms. Leaders use staff meetings to discuss risk assessments and involve staff in their writing and implementation.

We saw staff cleaning areas whilst children were present. However, the children were moved around areas, for example after lunch and when activities were being set up, to ensure that they would not be put at risk. Staff told us they don't start cleaning until 17:30

and there are three members of staff each evening that work late to get this done. We saw no evidence to suggest that children are not supervised effectively during these times, or that they were put at risk of harm from cleaning materials. However, in the nappy changing area we did have to ask for some items to be stored safely as they posed a risk of falling from a shelf above the children. Children could not access cleaning fluids in these areas but could handle mops and brushes, which we recommended were moved.

Leaders along with external auditors do their utmost to ensure that the premises are safe, however there are occasional incidents occurring which must be as far as is practicably reasonable, eliminated.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

This inspection focused on some aspects of all themes. CIW did not consider it necessary to look at the suitability of the environment. However this theme will be considered at future inspections.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

Resources and equipment are of a good quality and are regularly inspected.

Resources and equipment seen were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children using them. Leaders checked them regularly and had implemented daily checklists for room supervisors as an effective way of ensuring broken items were identified and replaced.

We recommended that more multicultural displays be created as the service has good representation of different cultures, raises the awareness of children, promotes equal opportunities and respect for others.. Staff and children had created a display of 'The Year of the Dog' using resources to represent China as a country and its people effectively. A few multicultural dolls were seen, but further resources, a wider range, and displays would further widen the children's awareness.

Resources are selected purposefully and are of a good quality. They last as they are well cared for and regularly checked. Further awareness could be developed of a wider range of 'nationalities of the world' if additional displays were created and appropriate resources were available.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leadership and management strive to provide a service which is compliant and meeting the needs of children, staff and parents. Where concerns are raised they respond promptly and have consistently in the past listened to, considered recommendations and worked in partnerships with organisations to put things right. Additional persons in charge have been nominated to cover for absent managers. Staff are deployed effectively and the supervision of children is good. Leaders and staff are approachable and have developed good relationships with parents and carers.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leadership is effective.

Leaders manage the service effectively and aim to be present in the nursery in supernumerary roles throughout each day, except for when they are transporting children or purchasing resources. We recommended that additional person's in charge are appointed to cover periods of absence of the responsible individual and person in charge/nursery manager.

Complaints and concern records are currently kept in individual children's file and not together in a record/log book, which would assist leaders in recognising patterns, times of occurrences and those, responsible for children at the time. We found that leaders had responded to parents raising concerns and to anonymous concerns received by CIW. In all cases the appropriate action had been taken and communication was relatively good. However, parents need to update leaders when changes of address occur to ensure communications can continue.

Leaders were found to be approachable by the staff and parents we spoke to. They were instances when both the responsible individual and person in charge were absent from the nursery as they were involved in purchasing items on a daily basis and transporting children to school. Suitable persons had been left in charge at these times but their details and roles had not been passed on to CIW as required. Leaders are aware they should be available to parents should they need to speak to them and showed us a daily diary where appointments had been made with parents to follow up enquiries. We also saw parents entering the office to speak with leaders during the inspection, some chose to speak to staff directly when picking up their child. The responsible individual listened to advice provided and nominated an additional person in charge and forwarded the required documentation to CIW during the inspection.

CIW Questionnaires returned from 12 staff members evidenced they found leaders approachable and strongly in favour of the way in which the nursery was managed.

Leadership is effective. There is a commitment to putting things right and monitoring staff, their roles and responsibilities. When concerns are identified they are dealt with appropriately.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

This inspection focused on some aspects of all themes. CIW did not consider it necessary to look at self evaluation and planning for improvement. However this theme will be considered at future inspections.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

Staff and resources are managed well.

Following the previous inspection and to ensure staffing ratios are maintained at all times, staff ensure their names are included on daily registers and their times of arrival and departure from the room or premises are recorded accurately. We saw adequate numbers of staff supervising children throughout the day. On occasion, staff moved around to facilitate cleaning routines to ensure the adequate supervision of children, for example during napping changing and toileting times and snack preparation. Leaders and room supervisor's ensured staff took registers with them when they went outdoors with the children. We recommended that individuals are taken to toileting areas and not small groups.

Staff files examined contained all required documentation. We discussed the health declarations of staff and procedures in place to facilitate the administration of medication in relation to staff whilst on site.

We discussed with leaders the procedures followed when bringing in relief staff to cover for absences. Relief staff were found to be familiar with the children, premises and staff and were routinely called in. When asked, full time staff confirmed that leaders are more than happy to help out when needed or alternatively they will send another staff member in to help to ensure staffing ratios are met. One staff member also confirmed that there were enough staff present that morning and every other day to supervise children until the majority of staff arrive at 9:00. Staff rotas confirmed that three staff members arrived at 7:30 each morning; this was adequate to supervise the number of children attending across the age range. All units were in use by 9:00 and staffed by a regular, consistent team.

We found the supervision of staff to be an ongoing process which is not recorded formally. Staff were happy they were suitably managed and had opportunities to discuss practices and training with room supervisors, when in staff meetings and when being appraised annually. We recommended that a more formal supervision meeting is held with staff regularly which feeds into their annual appraisals. Staff told us "the door is always open for us to speak to managers" and "they are wonderful, any problems, they are approachable".

Staff are managed effectively and feel supported and valued.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Relationships with parents/carers are appropriate.

Parents returning CIW questionnaires made comments such as 'staff are friendly and caring', 'approachable and always make the children feel welcome' and 'we have no concerns'.

Systems in place to communicate 'news' to parents are working well. Their responses to questionnaires suggest they are happy with the way in which the nursery operates.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We identified non compliance in relation to the following regulations. We did not issue non compliance notices on this occasion as we did not find they had an impact on the well being of the children and also because appropriate action was taken immediately to resolve the concerns.

- Regulation 25 (a) of The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010: in respect of ensuring that the side door to the nursery premises is kept locked at all times and children in the vicinity of this door do not have access to the keys. Outdoor areas recently refurbished to provide enclosed areas must be risk assessed.
- Regulation 29 of The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010: staff have opportunities for regular supervision meetings with room supervisors and leaders which are recorded for use during the appraisal process.

We also recommended:

- Children are given more opportunities to develop their independence;
- nappy changing policies and procedures are reviewed in line with guidance from 'Public Health Wales' and an 'Infection Control Audit' is completed, and policy and procedures are to be reviewed in respect of the number of children taken by one staff member to the nappy changing and toileting area;
- complaints and concerns are logged in a record book which can be monitored in addition to recording information on existing sheets which are stored in children's individual files, and
- more multicultural resources are purchased and displays exhibited within the nursery to further extend children's awareness of a wider range of religions and cultures around the World.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a focussed unannounced inspection undertaken as a result of a concern. Two inspectors visited the nursery on 19 July 2018 between 8:50 and 16:10 to assess how leaders had responded to issues raised with CIW and how effective improvements had been.

We:

- Inspected all areas of the nursery;
- examined a sample of children's records and staff files;
- looked at relevant policies and procedures, risk assessments and the statement of purpose for the service;
- observed practices by staff and conducted observations of children to determine their mood and levels of enjoyment;
- spoke to children and some staff, all room supervisors and leaders, and
- reported our findings to the responsible individual and person in charge.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Jeanny Reynard
Persons in charge	Merton Nanda Badra Indira Jenifer Gardner Sharon Cappiello
Registered maximum number of places	51
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday 7:30 – 18:00 except for Bank Holidays, and Saturday 8:00 – 16:00
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	27 March 2017
Dates of this inspection visit	19 July 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Is early year's education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No
Additional Information:	