



Inspection Report

First Steps Nursery

Y Garth
Alexandra Road
Llandrindod Wells
LD1 5LS



Date Inspection Completed

05/03/2024

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About First Steps Nursery

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Theresa Mills
Registered places	32
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	2 September 2021
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

<u>Well-being</u>	Good
<u>Care and Development</u>	Good
<u>Environment</u>	Adequate
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children have a voice and make positive decisions about how they spend their time. They are settled and enjoy their experiences. Children learn to interact well and are respectful of each other and the resources. They enjoy their play and develop a range of skills through the opportunities available.

Staff keep children safe and promote a healthy lifestyle. They interact well with the children and provide some opportunities to support children to develop their communication and social skills. Staff plan effective experiences to help children learn and develop and most individual needs are known and met.

The environment is a safe and secure space for children. It provides appropriate areas to play and learn indoors and outside. Suitable facilities are available so children feel comfortable and can be independent. Leaders and staff have introduced more real-life resources and natural materials that help children to further develop their imagination and curiosity. However, there is a need to remove clutter from the play spaces.

Leaders manage the setting effectively. All paperwork is up to date and reflects current practice. They use self-evaluation and advice from outside agencies to make improvements that benefit the children. Staff are managed appropriately and generally there is evidence to ensure staff suitability to care for children. Positive relationships are developed with parents, so information is shared successfully.

Well-being

Good

Children have a voice and a say in where and how they spend their time. They move freely around their allocated room with an exception in the 3+ room. They choose resources to enable them to follow their interests. Children confidently communicate their thoughts and ideas with staff as they chat happily about their experiences. For example, a child asked if they could go outside. Staff responded well and said they could go very soon, after they finished snack.

Children arrived enthusiastic to be at the setting. They separate well from their parents showing they feel safe and content in the care of the staff. Children form positive relationships with staff. They develop positive self-esteem and a sense of belonging as they are familiar with routines, have consistent staff caring for them and feel comfortable in their surroundings.

Children interact well. They enjoy being together and playing alongside their friends. Children of all ages play respectfully together as they learn to understand the needs of others. For example, older children helping younger children during their play. Children learn to use toys and resources appropriately and help to put them away when they are finished. They understand they may have to wait to access certain activities with a little support from staff. For example, some children were told they had to wait to take their turn to sing their version of a song. They accepted this as they knew they would get an opportunity soon.

Children show enjoyment and interest during their play as they can follow their interests. They happily play alongside others or alone and remain focused on their chosen activity. For example, a couple of children enjoyed following each other around the room as they pushed the large vehicles. Children are keen to share their experiences and feel a sense of pride as they share what they have done with others. For example, a child was keen to show us the story they had been reading and their pet rabbit.

Children have free access to most resources so they can be independent. Overall they move around the room choosing what items they would like to play with or finding items to enhance their play experiences. Those children who are able to can access toilets independently. Children develop self-help skills as they are supported and encouraged to try things for themselves, such as putting their coats on and washing their face and hands after eating.

Care and Development

Good

Staff are aware of their responsibility to keep children safe. They implement the settings effective policies and procedures appropriately. Accidents and incidents are recorded and signed by parents to evidence they have been shared. Staff conduct regular fire drills, so they and the children are aware of the procedure to follow in an emergency. Staff promote a healthy lifestyle. They provide healthy food choices including fruits and water to drink at snack time and a balanced meal at lunch time. Staff ensure children have regular opportunities to be active and get fresh air as they access the outdoors daily and forest school. On the whole appropriate cleaning routines are embedded in practice, including handwashing and tables being cleaned before food. However no protective clothing was worn when changing nappies.

Staff are consistent in their interactions. They communicate appropriately with children, showing interest and enthusiasm in what the children have to say. Staff support children to develop their communication and social skills. They play alongside them and talk about what they are doing, using appropriate language for the children's ages and stages of development. Staff celebrate children's achievements and use praise to celebrate good behaviour, such as when they share. This helps children feel proud and encourages them to develop and learn.

Staff have adopted some new strategies for planning. They consider the interests of the children and provide appropriate activities and resources to reflect this. Staff have implemented the new curriculum to extend children's development and skills through their play and the resources provided. Staff know the children well and generally implement effective strategies, routines, and experiences to meet their individual needs. Staff implement routines to help children feel relaxed and understand what will happen next. For example, they give warnings before asking them to tidy up so they are aware their play will need to stop.

Environment

Adequate

Leaders ensure the environment is secure and suitably maintained so it provides a safe place for children. Appropriate risk assessments are completed to ensure all hazards are identified and managed effectively. Staff ensure all visitors are recorded so they can be accounted for. The entrance to the setting is controlled so there is no unauthorised access.

Leaders and staff have made positive changes to the environment that benefit the children and their experiences. The rooms are open and give children space to move around freely and safely. New flooring has given the environment a spacious feel. However, there is a need to remove clutter from the rooms and to remove the drinking water from direct sunlight. Children's work is displayed attractively to give them a sense of belonging. There is access to suitable facilities including toilets and nappy changing areas. The outdoor areas are inviting spaces where children can be active and take part in a range of play opportunities. The recent inclusion of the forest school has been a bonus and it was reported that the children thoroughly enjoy it.

Leaders provide children with a range of resources that are suitable for their ages and stages of development. Storage is child friendly; it is at a suitable height for children to be independent. The introduction of more realistic resources and natural materials has had a positive impact on the children. They showed enthusiasm and real interest in the activities they chose. They were able to explore and extend their learning through their play.

Leadership and Management

Good

Leaders have produced a statement of purpose that provides parents with the information they need to decide if it is the right care for their child. Policies and procedures are in place and reflect current practice. They are dated to evidence they are reviewed regularly. Leaders have listened to advice from previous inspections and made positive changes.

Leaders self-evaluate their setting regularly. They review the previous year to identify what has gone well and possible areas for improvement. They consider the views of parents, staff, children, and outside agencies to make positive changes to the care they provide. For example, they are currently getting advice from a speech and language expert in how to work effectively with the children in their care. Records including children's registration documents are completed with all relevant information.

Leaders manage staff appropriately. The recruitment procedure is generally effective in ensuring all staff have the correct training, experience and checks to evidence they are suitable to care for children. Leaders ensure staff are deployed effectively so ratios are consistently met, this includes staff breaks and lunchtimes.

Leaders and staff develop a positive relationship with parents. They share information appropriately, so parents are kept up to date on their child's experiences, routines, and development. This is done through conversations at the beginning and end of the child's day. The use of an app allows photographs and information to be shared quickly throughout the day. They work closely with the external agencies so good practice can be shared and new strategies and guidance can be implemented to benefit the children. They have excellent links with the local community and regularly visit the local church and old people's homes.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
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N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
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Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
To move drinking water away from direct sun light To remove any unwanted clutter To make sure tables are always wiped prior to eating food.
Staff to wear suitable clothing when changing nappies
To ensure that all children experience the same experiences whilst at the nursery Snack time to be further developed to encourage independence

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children’s well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children’s well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

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