



Inspection Report

Action For Children Stepping Stones

**Mayhill Family Centre
Mayhill Road
Mayhill
Swansea
SA1 6TD**



Date Inspection Completed

14/06/2022

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About Action For Children Stepping Stones

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Creche
Registered Provider	Action For Children
Registered places	9
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is a post registration inspection
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	The service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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

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

Summary

Children are happy and settled at Action for Children Stepping Stones. They have a strong voice and make choices about what they do and how they spend their time at the setting. Children have a strong sense of belonging and have excellent opportunities to develop their play and learning.

Care staff understand children's development, promote children's learning, and meet their individual needs. They demonstrate how they value their relationships with the children because their practice is child-led, and children's well-being is at the centre of their care. Care staff understand and implement key policies and practices to ensure the health and safety of children.

The environment is safe, secure and clean. It provides a space in which children can play and learn in a safe and engaging manner. Resources and furniture are of an excellent quality, are plentiful and offer children a variety of learning opportunities.

People who run the setting have a clear vision for the service which is shared with the people around them. They keep all required children's record and have a range of policies in place. People who run the setting ensure staff are suitable to work with children and carry out meaningful professional development. They have developed positive relationships with parents.

Children have good opportunities to follow their own interests. They know care staff will support their choices. For example, one child led a staff member by the finger, to get them to open a gate to their preferred area of play. Unsettled children are well supported, and less confident children are given time to move and explore their play space.

Children are delighted and express enthusiasm and enjoyment. For instance, children made happy babbling noises as they took part in activities. They clearly have a strong sense of belonging, forming strong relationships and are very familiar with routines. For example, after washing hands children went towards the snack table and other children confidently went to care staff for reassurance.

Interactions between children and adults are consistently very good. Some children mimic staff, copying them during activities and some children are beginning to play alongside each other. Children confidently use non-verbal gestures to communicate as they know the care staff will respond appropriately. For example, staff picked up a child after they gestured 'up' to them. Children's feelings, likes, dislikes and needs are acknowledged and highly valued.

Children are interested in their play, exploring the different areas confidently. For instance, one child made lots of happy noises as they played in the water outside and another child laughed while rocking in the boat. Children are self-motivated to initiate their own play and to influence their tasks and activities because child led activities predominate. They enjoy moving and bouncing on the mini trampoline as well as sitting with staff to read a book. Children take part in activities resulting in a great feeling of achievement and high self-esteem. For example, one child spent time moving a push along toy up steps and over to the slide, laughing loudly as it slid down.

Children have lots of opportunities to experience developmentally appropriate toys and activities. They access a range of resources, and some children take them from the open shelves and baskets. Children have some opportunities to develop their independence skills and are given support when needed. For instance, children received encouragement to walk up the steps before a staff member stepped in to support them to succeed.

Care and Development

Excellent

Care staff fully understand and consistently implement policies and promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety, and well-being. They regularly remind children about safety, using language which the children will understand. They have an excellent understanding of children's needs and ensure that they adapt their practices. Safeguarding is prioritised and they have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children. They answer confidently about what to do if they had any child protection concerns. They consistently implement robust cleaning and very good hygiene practices. For instance, they wipe the table before snack and ensure the play areas are free from hazards.

Care staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive behaviour management strategies. They use gentle tones with the children, using positive reinforcement. For example, they encourage the behaviour they wish to see and use distraction techniques successfully with them. Care staff have an excellent understanding and knowledge of their children's development and how this affects their behaviour. They vary the use of appropriate language to suit the needs of the child. Care staff are passionate about their roles. They are consistently responsive; they genuinely listen and respect children's views. The interactions are very positive, demonstrating warmth and kindness. They are sensitive to the needs and experiences of individual children and support families and children who wish to access the service through Welsh.

Care staff are committed to providing a broad range of play and learning activities. They tailor activities, adapting their approach and style to suit the needs of the children. Care staff actively contribute to planning that shows progression and significantly supports the individual needs of all ages. Care staff fully participate in the assessment of children's individual needs and development. They have developed and implemented their own assessment materials to suit the children in their care, using advice from outside professionals. Care staff discuss; as a team, children's individual achievements, any changes they have noticed, as well as contributing towards specific individual assessments. They make effective use of the support services and ensure there is a person-centred approach.

Environment**Excellent**

People who run the setting have comprehensive and highly effective measures in place to ensure that everyone fully understands their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children. They ensure that the environment is safe, secure, and extremely well maintained indoors and outdoors. They regularly carry out safety checks, fire drills and ensure that regular testing is carried out and recorded. People who run the setting effectively organise consistent cleaning routines that reflect very good hygiene practices. They complete comprehensive risk assessments that cover nearly all aspects of the environment. Their risk assessments are thorough, completed frequently and they are of an exceptionally high standard.

People who run the setting ensure the environment has a good indoor play space for children to move freely and explore. For example, children can access areas which develop their movement, balance, senses and social skills. They ensure the environment meets nearly all the children's needs and enables them to reach their full potential. They offer a main playroom as well as smaller rooms which develop specific skills. For instance, they have a social and communication room as well as an area for cognitive development. Care staff enhance the areas with resources suitable for the children's stage of development or to enhance the children's play. For example, care staff offered children a variety of weighted balls as well as textured balls. Children have opportunities to access the outdoor area on a daily basis. People who run the setting organise the environment well so that it provides a good range of play opportunities suitable for the children cared for. Children can access toys and resources from open shelves or boxes. They are also able to request anything which is out of reach from staff. The premises are very welcoming, warm and accessible to all.

People who run the setting ensure that all children can easily access excellent quality resources and an extensive variety of developmentally appropriate furniture, toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors to stimulate the children's interest. People who run the setting have a good system in place to ensure the quality of resources and the processes in place to deal with any broken/unsuitable resources or equipment.

Leadership and Management

Good

People who run the setting have a strong vision for the service that they share with others. They are well organised and use the resources at their disposal effectively. They have an up-to-date statement of purpose. However, it did not include all the regulation information and did not fully reflect the service. Since the inspection visit, the statement of purpose has been updated to include all the required information and better reflects the service provided. The people who run the setting ensure they comply with nearly all relevant regulations and meet the National Minimum Standards (NMS). However, they do not always notify Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of changes to the service. Since the inspection visit, they have completed the notification of a new member of staff. They have a range of policies in place, some of which reflect their processes. However, a few do not include all the relevant information. They keep the required children's records and complete accident, incident and existing injuries records. The person in charge consistently audits records to ensure that they are accurately kept and make improvements when these are identified or followed up if appropriate.

People who run the setting actively implement self-evaluation. They seek and implement the suggestions of children, their parents/carers, care staff and other interested partners. People who run the setting have a good process when dealing with complaints or concerns. They ensure that they use this as an opportunity to reflect and implement improvements if needed.

People who run the setting implement robust recruitment procedures to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are qualified and they work extremely well as a team to help each other promote children's development. For example, they share their knowledge, skills, and training with each other to support the children's all-round development. They attend regular training and all staff have recently completed a first aid at work qualification. However, none of the care staff had attended a paediatric first aid course within the last three years. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Care staff know the people who run the setting value them as regular supervisions and annual appraisals provide opportunities to discuss their opinions and personal development. Care staff said they felt well supported, they feel like they are listened to and really enjoy working at the service. They keep accurate records of children's attendance and who is looking after the children at all times. People who run the setting ensure that they exceed the recommended ratios and meet the children's needs.

People who run the setting ensure that all communication and engagement systems with parents are very good. They keep parents well informed through daily verbal feedback, regular WhatsApp messages and termly reports. People who run the setting have very strong links with a wide range of professionals. They attend a range of meetings, contribute towards external assessments, and share information to ensure they offer the best care for the children or to support them in their transition to school. Parents said that their children

enjoy attending the service, they feel they can ask staff anything and they are kept informed about their children's progress.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1 – Further develop the risk assessments to cover more aspects of the service

R2 - Further develop the policies and operational plan to reflect the settings processes and include best practice.

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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24	Staff do not have a valid suitable paediatric first aid qualification. Ensure that suitable first aid qualifications are maintained at all times.	New
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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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