



Inspection Report

Castle School Nursery

**The Creative Studio
Snowdrop Lane
Haverfordwest
SA61 1ET**



Date Inspection Completed

21/12/2023

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About Castle School Nursery

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Castle School Pembrokeshire Ltd
Registered places	8
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This was a post registration inspection.
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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

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

Summary

Children have a strong voice as they know their preferences and needs are considered. They feel safe and happy within their environment and with those who care for them. Interactions between children and staff are positive. Children are engaged and enjoy their play opportunities. They develop an appropriate level of independence for their ages and stages of development.

Staff supervise children appropriately and meet their needs and preferences. They are caring and provide positive interactions with children. However, there are recommendations in relation to hygiene practices, incidental Welsh language and meeting children's developmental next steps.

Leaders create a welcoming and friendly environment. They ensure maintenance checks are embedded. However, leaders do not always ensure they assess and mitigate all potential hazards and risks for children, and there is an area for improvement in relation to this. Leaders organise the environment adequately and the resources are of good quality.

Leaders have made improvements to policies and procedures during the course of inspection. However, they are not compliant in relation to staff suitability checks, keeping of records and safeguarding requirements. This has resulted in areas for improvement and priority action notices. Partnerships with parents are positive and staff are happy with the support they receive.

Children have a strong voice. They are confident about making their own play choices and communicate their needs through verbal and non-verbal gestures and words. For example, they point out that they want a car from their bag to play with and others tell staff they want to play with the trains and musical toys. During a singing session, children choose the songs they want to sing, which is respected and acted upon by staff. Some children choose to observe and play on their own rather than take part, which is also respected.

Children are happy and settled and feel safe in the company of staff caring for them. They have formed positive attachments with the staff. For example, they are comfortable and relaxed and communicate their needs confidently. Children feel proud of their achievements. For instance, children proudly show staff the 'cakes' they have made with play dough and feel happy when staff praise them for their achievements.

Interactions between children are good. Children have formed positive relationships and include each other in their play. They feel close to staff, and they cuddle up to staff as they read books to them. Children are familiar with their routines and happily follow the instructions given to them by staff when tidying up and washing hands. Children have chats with staff and include them in their play. Children who shy with unfamiliar adults are made to feel comfortable. For example, they respond well to distractions as staff read stories to them, and then feel confident enough to play independently and with others.

Children are actively engaged and interested in their play activities, concentrating well for their ages and stages of development. They happily join in singing sessions, making gestures, and moving to the songs. Children excitedly play with musical instruments offered to them as they happily sing to themselves whilst engaged in an activity.

Children show an appropriate level of independence for their stages of development. As they arrive at the setting, they take their coats and shoes off and replace them with slippers kept in a basket at the entrance of the setting. During lunchtime, they independently eat their finger foods and hot meals with cutlery and access their healthy drinks. They also wash their hands and dry them independently.

Care and Development**Adequate**

Staff understand and implement many policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy. Those looking after children demonstrate an understanding of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and child protection. They complete records of children's accidents and injuries. However, these are not signed by parents. Staff provide healthy foods, and children have regular access to drinks. Staff encourage children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. However, staff do not always wash their own hands and do not wear clean Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) before preparing food. During nappy changing staff wear PPE, sanitise the areas and close the curtain to preserve children's privacy and dignity. However, they sanitise instead of washing their hands after nappy changing. Staff carry out daily cleaning and environmental risk assessment checks on some areas, however this does not cover all areas of potential risk to children.

Staff interactions are warm and engaging and they demonstrate sensitivity and kindness towards children. They give praise and encouragement to children for doing something well or trying something new. For example, children are praised for tidying up or when they complete a puzzle independently. Staff use positive strategies, such as distraction and explanation to resolve any issues. They are kind and speak appropriately to children and each other. For example, when singing 'The Wheels on the Bus' children are praised for participating. Staff are good role models and consistently promote the use of manners, encouraging children to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Staff support children well in their play and learning and encourage them to follow their interests and ideas. Staff enhance children's play experiences and use of English through singing, recognition of colours and questioning. For example, when a child played with resources in the tuff tray, staff asked questions such as, "*Which is bigger?*" and praised the child when they answered correctly. However, staff do not use any incidental Welsh. Staff observe children's progress and promote their developmental next steps through play. However, these milestones and next steps are not recorded. Staff understand and support children with additional needs appropriately.

Environment**Adequate**

Leaders have measures in place to ensure they prioritise the supervision of children and in the main staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They have some measures in place to ensure the environment is safe. There is a record of those visiting the premises and environment maintenance checks are completed regularly and certificates are in date. During the course of inspection, leaders have created risk assessments in relation to slips, trips, toys and climbing hazards. However, all other areas accessible to children are not risk assessed. Leaders ensure that doors are closed, and perimeter gates are visibly closed. However, leaders do not ensure that there are measures in place to ensure the entrance door is locked at all times. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Leaders ensure all areas are suitably clean. Leaders ensure that cleaning chemicals, medication and first aid kits are available to staff and are kept away from children's reach.

Leaders provide a bright environment, which is welcoming and accessible to all. The indoor play space is suitable for the number of children cared for. Leaders ensure there are toileting aids and resources for children to meet their personal needs and privacy and dignity is met and respected at all times. There is a very spacious outdoor environment, which provides children with opportunities for curiosity and exploration. There is also a small indoor classroom space for nursery children, which is a warm and suitable space to rest and play.

Leaders ensure resources are suitable for the age and stage of the children attending the setting. Staff organise resources in a way that meets the individual needs and preferences of children in their care. These include construction toys, crafts, role play resources, imaginative play and small world toys, English books, musical toys and wooden puzzles. However, leaders do not provide Welsh language labels and resources for children. Play resources promote children's curiosity about the wider society, promoting equality and cultural awareness. Staff ensure that outdoor resources are organised to provide opportunities for physical activity, such as ball games, wooden shelters, gardening and growing opportunities, picnic area, water wall, role play mud kitchen and beach café area.

Leaders have very basic regulatory knowledge and understanding. Policies and procedures, operational plan and the statement of purpose for the setting were related to another setting and legal entity. Leaders do not always ensure they have effective procedures in place to safeguard children and effectively meet all of their needs. They have some knowledge of children's dietary needs and other permissions are in place; however, these have not been obtained by the current registered individual. In addition to this, staff obtain pictures on personal phones to share with parents and Disclosure and Barring checks are not in place for all staff. This is placing people's health and well-being at risk, and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address and sustain this issue.

Leaders have good knowledge and understanding of the processes to follow if there are child welfare concerns or if disclosures are made in relation to staff or children. The policy for safeguarding has recently been amended. However, the policy does not refer to the 'All Wales Safeguarding Procedures' and does not refer to appropriate designated safeguarding officers.

Record keeping is inconsistent. There are some records of children's attendance. However, staff do not always keep records of children's attendance and those caring for them are not recorded. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

Leaders deploy sufficient members of staff to ensure adult to child ratios are met and those in charge are qualified for the roles. Half the staff deployed to look after children are qualified, however, the online safeguarding training that staff have completed does not meet the requirements of the national minimum standards. Leaders ensure staff understand most of their roles and responsibilities and staff feel that leaders are supportive of them and their professional development. However, leaders do not always ensure staff have their designated breaks away from their caring responsibilities.

Leaders have completed some appropriate recruitment checks. However, in the main the process for ensuring that recruitment checks are completed before staff start working at the service is not robust. Leaders have not ensured that necessary checks had been completed on new members of staff prior to them starting to care for children; references, medical declaration of health, work history and identification checks had not been carried out. Recruitment checks for many other staff are not complete and job descriptions were not suitable for staff members roles and responsibilities within the nursery. Further to this, some of the checks have not been verified by leaders from the service. This is placing people's health and well-being at risk, and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address and sustain this issue.

Leaders have gained views and opinions of parents and have acted on these appropriately. Since registration, leaders have not informed CIW of changes to persons in charge and

other staffing changes in a timely manner, however these have been actioned during the inspection.

Partnerships with the school are strong. Parents are informed of children's day to day activities and daily needs through a webform app. They inform parents of children's achievements and well-being at collection times. Parents say that the care given to their children is good and co-operation between staff and parents is also very good.

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
28	The Responsible Individual must ensure all suitability checks are in place for staff caring for children prior to their employment to work with children.	New
20	The Responsible Individual must ensure that she ensures effective procedures are in place to safeguard children and effectively meet all of their needs.	New

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
30	The Responsible Individual must ensure records effectively show children's attendance and those looking after children at all times.	New
25	The Responsible Individual must ensure all potential hazards are risk assessed and eliminated as far as possible	New

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)
Standard 10 - Healthcare	Encourage staff to adhere to the nappy changing policy and infection prevention and control guidance
Standard 20 - Child protection	Ensure the child protection policy refers to the 'All Wales Safeguarding procedures' and ensure named designated safeguarding officers are people running the setting.
Standard 5 - Records	Ensure parental signatures are obtained for accidents and incidents
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Ensure children's progress and next steps are recorded

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)
Develop the use of incidental Welsh language and resources in Welsh

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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