



National Day Nurseries Association



## Quality Counts Assessment Report

Name of Setting	Jigsaw Curzon House Day Nursery
Address	Wrexham Road, Chester, CH4 9DQ
Date of Assessment	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
Name of Assessor	Val Aspinall
Date of Award	22/02/2019
Level	<b>Platinum</b>

### Overview of the Setting

The Nursery is situated in the local authority of Cheshire West and registered in 1999. It is registered for 181 children and operates between the hours of 7.15 am and 6.15 pm. The nursery has six rooms and school age children are accommodated in a converted double decker bus. There are a wide variety of outdoor spaces including a pond area and a forest area. The nursery employs 50 staff. Of these, 4 have qualifications at level 6, 1 at level 5, 3 at level 4, 31 at level 3 and 9 at level 2.

### Play & Learning

Staff plan weekly for individual children based on their next steps identified in previous observations, ongoing cohort tracking and children’s interests. Staff also plan spontaneously ‘in the moment’ and have an overarching medium- and long-term plan. Staff use monthly topics, such as Autumn, to provide provocations for children’s learning. Consequently, children are offered a range of rich and varied learning experiences. Staff use an online learning record which includes assessment and is shared with parents via an app. Parents contribute their own observations to the app. Room leaders monitor how staff complete children’s learning records and review all of their observations and assessments prior to them being published (sent to parents)

Staff effectively use various tools to gather assessment information about individual children and plan appropriate learning opportunities. For example, they gather developmental starting points from parents when children start, they regularly ask parents for children’s current interests and home circumstance and each child has a schema evaluation sheet to identify individual schematic play/preferences.

Staff confidently explained how they gather information about what children can do prior to starting and how the information from parents supports their own baseline assessment and ongoing cohort tracking. Parents commented that the communication between them

and staff is excellent. Parents said they provide starting points information in an all about me document, are encouraged to share information during settling in sessions and on a daily basis. They said they received newsletters, emails, access the learning record app, various social media, complete room mover sheets, attend parents' evenings and can borrow resources.

The quality of teaching is strong. Staff use techniques such as demonstrating and modelling to help children learn. They join in with young children's play which encourages children to persist and be challenged. For example, children try to balance and climb, catch balls and take turns with the support of staff. Staff working with toddlers and babies use lots of visual support and Makaton to boost their understanding. For example, toddlers each pick a wooden spoon puppet which represents the song the group will sing. Specific weekly additional activities, such as forest school, beach school and various outings are planned for children. Lovely evidence can be seen on the nursery Facebook page. The setting is exceptionally well-resourced outdoors. Children have access to a fantastic range of learning opportunities. For example, children can access a forest school area, a nature area with pond, a natural climbing area, an outdoor library, a block play area, a builder's yard, a petting area with Guinea pigs and more traditional outdoor areas with space for bikes, races, balls, role play, reading, planting, mud kitchen, water play and mark making.

**Met Level Platinum**

**Criteria Not Met and reasons why**

**Health, Safety and Well-being**

The management team demonstrate a passion and commitment to children's health, safety and well-being. Detailed risk assessments and safety audits are in place, staff confidently discuss how they protect children from harm while encouraging appropriate risk taking and challenge. The setting has been awarded Millie's Mark, staff have also had defibrillator training and have a defibrillator on site. Staff are fully aware of children who have health conditions such as asthma. Care plans are in place to ensure all staff know how to respond to children's needs for medication. Managers update health & safety policies regularly. They use various audit tools to ensure their procedures for keeping children safe are effective and up to date. Staff review one policy each month and complete a quiz to demonstrate their understanding. Managers and staff described how a more focussed approach to supporting staff well-being has been implemented. Staff are recognised for their hard work and attitude on a monthly basis through awards and a positive comments board. Parents are asked to nominate staff who have gone the extra mile to support them and their children. Managers ask about staff well-being and discuss professional conduct at termly supervision meetings. The manager has implemented a corporate gym membership which allows all staff to access the gym at no cost to themselves. Managers recognise the benefits of physical activity in supporting staff well-being.

Managers have identified that more information could be shared with parents about

sources of external support, eg children's centres, local groups, amenities and services. However, partnerships with other professionals have a positive impact on children's development. The nursery SENCO's work with staff, parents and with specialists such as the local visual impairment team to provide targeted support and intervention to individual children. Children make consistently good or better progress as a result. Staff ensure that children access the outdoors daily in conjunction with the specific planned activities such as forest and beach school sessions. Children also participate in relaxing physical activities such as simple yoga. All children were observed to be very well behaved, friendly and curious. Despite holding up to 21 young babies and toddlers under the age of 20 months it was lovely to see how calm and engaged they were and how interested many were in a new visitor. Staff were observed to have warm, nurturing relationships with children; lots of lovely interactions were observed and staff had lots of fun with children. For example, two year olds had great fun doing races in the garden. Menus are healthy and varied. The cook reviews and develops the menu with managers seasonally. The menu follows a 5-weekly cycle with each week represented by a specific continent. The Autumn menu has lots of casseroles and stews. For example, children were observed having Irish Stew. The kitchen has been recently awarded 5 stars by environmental health.

Children's dietary needs are implemented effectively. The cook has a list of each child's requirements and the days they attend, children are served on various coloured plates to ensure staff recognise those children who are having a variation on the main meal. The transition into mealtimes is a little disorganised in some rooms. For example, Tots wait for a while for food to be served and some become fretful. Older children do not have the opportunity to make choices at meal times as staff pre-plate and serve them meals. One or two pre-school children ate little and staff explained there is no alternative, although they did eat their dessert.

**Met Level Platinum**

**Criteria Not Met and reasons why**

**Leadership & Management**

Systems for monitoring the performance of staff are strong and embedded well, staff have a clear focus and can identify improvements that benefit children. Managers use tools such as room reviews, monthly room leader meetings, peer observations, supervision and appraisal effectively to monitor staff practice including; teaching, assessment, the environment and key person relationships. Three SENCOS provide guidance and support to staff and parents and implement interventions to support individual children. Managers swiftly address any concerns raised by parents. They investigate concerns thoroughly and provide feedback to parents. Complaints are used to review practice and provide learning opportunities to staff. Two staff have overall safeguarding responsibility and they update the safeguarding policy annually. New staff complete a safeguarding quiz during induction to ensure they understand the policy and procedures. The SG leads would like to improve practice by adding safeguarding to the agenda of every staff meeting and to provide staff with annual training, rather than the

current 3 yearly cycle. They would also like to develop a safeguarding file for every room containing all relevant information. Out of a number of staff spoken to, two were hesitant in explaining the process for reporting safeguarding concerns to outside agencies should a manager fail to take appropriate action. I feel this was largely due to nerves being questioned as they were able to tell me where they would find out the information they would need and have been emailed the safeguarding policy and it is written in their staff handbook.

Leaders have robust action plans in place which have clear, smart targets and are regularly reviewed and updated. Plans exist for each room which staff contribute to and there is an overall plan which includes the business case and available funding for new initiatives such as expansion of the available space or new resources. Parents and staff contribute to an evaluation of the setting through the use of existing audit tools such as ITERS and ECERS and also questionnaires on various aspects of the provision and at various stages of children's time at the setting, such as when they move rooms.

**Met Level Platinum**

**Criteria Not Met and reasons why**

**Workforce**

Systems for monitoring the performance of staff are strong and embedded well, staff have a clear focus and can identify improvements that benefit children. Managers use tools such as room reviews, monthly room leader meetings, peer observations, supervision and appraisal effectively to monitor staff practice including; teaching, assessment, the environment and key person relationships. Managers devise a whole setting training plan and create individual training plans for each member of staff.

Training plans take account of information gathered from children's cohort tracking data, room improvement plans, peer observations and supervision meetings. The quality of teaching is strong. Staff observe each other's practice and room leaders' moderate assessments by sampling children's learning records and analysing cohort tracking data. Managers have identified that some rooms are better than others at keeping up to date with peer observations. Staff have monthly room meetings and regular whole team meetings. Staff devise a room improvement plan which feeds in to the whole setting action plan.

Recruitment is safe and effective. The management team have a succession plan and actively encourage staff to continue their professional development and take on new, higher qualifications. Many of the senior staff have risen from apprentices within the nursery, accessing additional qualifications. The systems for advertising, recruiting, inducting and monitoring staff are very good. New staff complete a safeguarding questionnaire as part of their recruitment. They are allocated a mentor who is available throughout a very thorough induction process. They also complete a staff handbook. They meet regularly with their room leader and with the management team to ensure they understand their role and have settled in well.

Staff are observed to be extremely effective key people to children. They confidently talk about individual children, what their interests are, their progress towards the early

learning goals, and their family circumstances. Children behave well and demonstrate how secure and at home they feel in the nursery. Behaviour is very good and young children in particular are extremely settled and calm, despite being in a large group. Parents make very positive comments about staff and how much their children enjoy attending. Parents feel supported and say staff communicate extremely well. They particularly like the e-learning records and enjoy sharing their own observations with staff. The nursery SENCO's work with staff, parents and with specialists such as the local visual impairment team to provide targeted support and intervention to individual children. Effective communication with local health visitors and offering the nursery as a venue for professional meetings also impacts children's well-being positively.

**Met Level Platinum**

**Criteria Not Met and reasons why**