

Helping Hands Nursery – Service User Satisfaction Survey **January 2008**

• Introduction

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has a statutory duty under the Care Standards Act to undertake quality assurance exercises. This helps to ensure that a high quality service is being provided in all areas.

The Helping Hands Nursery Service User satisfaction survey has been carried out in recent years as part of this requirement. The first satisfaction survey was distributed to all parents of children attending the nursery in November 2003. The managers decided that this exercise should be repeated annually with the parents whose children had begun attending the nursery during the previous year. For the present exercise, a decision was made to consult with the parents of all children who were attending the nursery at that time, rather than just those who had recently started. This was partly due to the low response rate in previous years, and partly so that if any changes had taken place in parents' experiences we would be able to target them all.

The Operational Manager for Partnership and Service Development for Children's Services undertook the survey with the support of the Policy and Consultation Officer for Community Services in January 2008.

The objectives of the survey were as follows:

- To determine the levels of satisfaction with the service provided by the nursery.
- To ascertain whether the relevant Care Standards were being met.

Methodology

This year it was decided that both questionnaires and interviews would be used to gain parents' views. The Policy & Consultation Officer arranged with the manager of the nursery to attend at the times that parents would be available to speak to. Parents were asked when collecting their child whether they would mind being informally interviewed. These were carried out after both morning and afternoon sessions to ensure as many parents were targeted as possible.

Questionnaires were given (by hand) to those who preferred to respond in their own time, and they were also given pre-paid envelopes to return the questionnaires to the Policy & Consultation Officer.

The questionnaires have been designed to incorporate specific Care Standards, and in turn they were designed to allow parents to give, or to elaborate on their views about the service, therefore meeting both of the above objectives. There were a few comments from the last consultation exercise regarding questions so the Policy & Consultation Officer amended them where appropriate.

The questionnaire was divided into four main areas, described below:

- **Information Sharing**
- **Quality of Care**
- **Management**
- **Dealing with Complaints**
- **The Environment and Surroundings**

- **Results**

28 parents were contacted, either via questionnaire or interview. There were 17 responses altogether. This is a response rate of 61% which is excellent. It was a great improvement from last year's response rate of 36%.

Section 1: Information Provision

All of the 17 respondents felt that they had been given adequate information to make an informed choice about using Helping Hands. Nearly all were also encouraged to visit before the children began attending which is good. Those who were interviewed seemed to feel that visiting the nursery greatly reassured them that their child would be happy there. Some also mentioned that it was also a good opportunity to meet the staff that would be looking after their child.

Most respondents (94%) said they had received written information regarding the Admissions policy, the opening hours, and contact details of the nursery. The same proportion had also had written information about the staffing of the nursery, the children's routines and the activities they do at the nursery. Most (88%) also received information about the ages of the children that can attend the Nursery, whether they can look after children with special needs, and the registration and collection system. 82% recalled having information about the number of children that can attend, and 76% could recall having information about languages spoken at the nursery. The same proportion also recalled having information about how to make a complaint about the service. When this question was asked at interviews however, many of the parents had difficulty in remembering the written information they had received. This may have had an effect on the overall proportion of those who said they'd received it but would not necessarily indicate that the information was not provided. All respondents apart from one (94%) said that they have a written contract with the nursery which includes matters such as arrival/collection times, sickness arrangements etc.

Parents were then asked about the information they receive when they collected their child from the nursery. This could include activities the child has taken part in or changes in behaviour for example. 76% of respondents said that they were told about what their child/children achieved. Some of the parents who were interviewed mentioned that there was not always time to discuss this at the end of the session however they were satisfied that the staff would always mention significant events. 2 respondents (12%) said this information was 'sometimes' shared with them, and 3 (18%) said they weren't told anything. One of those who responded 'sometimes' said that they were advised about significant events but mentioned that there was not always time to talk about daily achievements. One suggestion given at this point was that the nursery should provide a short written report however they appreciated that this would be difficult to achieve for all children due to limited time and resources.

Only just over half of all respondents felt that records about their child/children are shared with them (53%). The remaining 47% said that they weren't.

In the final part of this section, respondents provided comments about the information provided by the nursery. Most were very positive.

They felt that the information provided was of a good quality and they feel well informed about routines and activities. Moreover, if there was any additional information required the respondents felt that the staff are always approachable.

Section 2: Quality of Care

All who responded (17 parents), felt that the activities and opportunities provided by the nursery met their child's needs and developed their learning capabilities.

94% respondents felt that Helping Hands had acted upon information they had provided about their child's health care needs. The remaining 6% said this was not applicable to them. Parents were also asked whether they had been told what can be safely stored at the nursery regarding their children's packed lunch (if applicable). Many of the children who attend are only present for either morning or afternoon sessions at a time, however of the 12 to whom this question was applicable, 10 (58%) said they had been told and the remaining 2 (12%) hadn't. All 17 respondents felt that their child's behaviour was handled appropriately by staff at the nursery.

Comments provided in this section were very positive about the quality of care in the nursery. Most who provided comments felt that the nursery was excellent and that they were happy to leave their child there. One commented that it was good that parents are introduced to the member of staff who would be looking after their child.

Section 3: Management

This section explored parent's views regarding the management of the nursery. Service users were asked whether they were aware of the Equal Opportunities policy of the nursery, and whether they knew that they were able to see it if they required. 71% of respondents said that they were aware of this, however 29% were not. Despite this, all respondents felt that parents and their children were treated fairly regardless of background or situation. All respondents also felt that their and their child's views about the service had been taken into account if and when necessary.

Some respondents made comments at this stage, which again, were all very warm and positive. One particular comment was regarding the co-operation of the managers with a prospective service user about available spaces for their child who was due to start. They were kept informed and reassured about whether there would be spaces available. Parents feel that they can approach staff about most matters and that they were always very helpful. One person even described them as 'first class'.

Section 4: Dealing with Complaints

88% of the respondents were aware that there was a complaints procedure, however the remaining 12% were not. Only one had previously made a complaint about the service. The following question asked whether any complaint had been followed up by the manager of the nursery. No one responded either 'yes' or 'no' to this question, however 82% said this was not applicable.

Two comments were provided at the end of this section. One respondent said they wouldn't dream of making a complaint. The other person said they couldn't comment as they'd never needed to make a complaint but that the procedure 'sounded OK though'.

Section 5: The Environment & Surroundings

All respondents found the premises welcoming and friendly, although one person said that they could be upgraded. One person said 'definitely'. Furthermore all also felt that the premises and equipment are clean, although one person did comment that the toilet areas can be very smelly at times.

Parents were then asked their views about the furniture, equipment and toys at the nursery. 82% felt these were suitable for the children, 77% felt they were well-maintained, and nearly all (94%) felt that they were stimulating for the children. One parent was happy that there was play-doh and sand available for their child to play with. Nearly all respondents felt that the premises were safe and secure, however one person did not. They felt that the fire doors could easily be opened therefore providing a risk for children to get out.

Comments were then invited about the nursery and its surroundings. There were some issues about the temperature of the building, with some parents finding it too warm.

They felt that this was regardless of the seasons or temperature outside.

Most were happy with the surroundings however, mentioning that they liked the outdoor play areas and the fact that there are two rooms for the children to go into. One parent felt that Helping Hands was a 'home from home'.

Conclusion

In conclusion, most respondents appear to be very satisfied with the service they receive from Helping Hands Nursery. It seems that parents feel very comfortable to leave their child at the Nursery, and had plenty of warm praise and positive comments about the staff there.

Parents felt that their and their child's needs are met and that the standard of care is very good. There were some issues about the temperature and one of the doors at the nursery but generally comments were generally positive, and reflected the overall high levels of satisfaction.

The response rate was a great improvement from last year, and the interviews provided very useful and valuable information. It was good to meet parents also, and they felt that speaking to someone who was objective was good. Many commented that it was a good thing that the Council's services were being evaluated in this manner. Consideration will have to be given in future to improving response rates even more, as we still didn't manage to speak to all of the parents, however comprehensive feedback was gained from this exercise.

On a general note, it was acknowledged that children have greatly benefitted from the care at Helping Hands both socially and mentally. Moreover the nursery is not judgemental in its outlook if a child was in nappies at a later age than average for example. All have been made to feel welcome and accepted there. It can therefore be concluded that Helping Hands fulfils its objective of providing a quality service to parents and children in the community.

Section 1: Information

1. Did you feel that you were given enough information (either verbal or written) about the nursery to make a choice about using Helping Hands?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....
No response.....0(0%)

2. Were you and your child/children encouraged to visit the nursery before they began attending?

Yes.....16/94%
No.....1/6%
No response.....

3. Were you given written information about Helping Hands that stated:

The ages of children that can attend.....15/88%
The number of children that can attend.....14/82%
The languages spoken13/77%
Whether they can look after children with special needs.....15/88%
The admissions policy.....16/94%
Opening hours.....16/94%
Contact details.....16/94%
Staffing.....16/94%
Routines.....16/94%
Activities.....16/94%
The registration and collection system.....15/88%
How to make complaints to the manager and the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW).....13/77%

4. Do you have a written contract with the nursery (which includes matters such as arrival/collection times, holidays, sickness arrangements, dietary needs etc)?

Yes.....16/94%
No.....1/6%
No response.....0

5. Are you told about what your child/children achieved during the day, about their routines/activities and are you informed of any significant event or change in behaviour?

Yes.....12/71%
No.....3/18%
Sometimes.....2/12%

- Yes re significant events, however there is not always time to talk about general daily achievements, my child tells me about her day.

6. Are records about your child/children shared with you?

Yes.....9/53%
No.....8/47%
No-response.....

7. Please add any comments you would like to make about information sharing

- We always get some feedback
- Always ask for any additional information - all staff are easy to approach
- The information I was given about what my child does there was very good and I was notified of what food she is fed every day also.
- Enough but we don't get a written report. It's a good thing but they probably couldn't afford the time.
- Would prefer to have more written information re: routines
- Very good
- The nursery gave out a prospectus with all information and were good at explaining anything which was not understood.
- Brilliant - plenty of notice
- All you need to know. Sometimes too much and not relevant.
- I feel well - informed about who to speak to if there's a problem.
- Always available for picking up if you want information
- Not been given written evidence but happy to be told

Section 2: Quality of Care

8. Do you think that Helping Hands provides activity and play opportunities that meet your child/children's needs and develop learning capabilities?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....
No-response.....

9. Has the nursery acted upon information you have given them about your child/children's health care needs?

Yes.....16/94%
No.....0
Non applicable.....1/6%
No-response.....

10. Is your child/children's behaviour handled appropriately?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....0
No-response.....1(10%)

11. When you provide a packed lunch for your child/children, are you told what can be safely stored at the nursery?

Yes.....10/59%
No.....2/12%
Non-applicable.....4/24%
No response.....1/6%

12. Please add any comments you would like to make about the quality of care provided:

- Really good and very understanding
- We're always told what has been eaten and at what times.
- The fact that you are introduced to the main carer who will be watching your child is good and they are all very friendly and welcoming.
- Good
- No complaints
- Very good
- Excellent
- Brilliant - Never left with anyone else - he's happy to stay.
- They are always very friendly. I know she's going to be OK. Also the staff are consistent which is nice.
- Excellent care

- Satisfied continuously

Section 3: Management

13. Do you know that the nursery has an equal opportunities policy, which you are able to see?

Yes.....12/71%
No.....5/29%
No-response.....0

14. Do you feel that all children and parents are treated with equal concern?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....0
No-response.....0

15. Do you feel that yours and your child/children's views have been taken into account where necessary?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....0
No-response.....0

16. Please add any comments you would like to make about the management of the nursery:

- Very easy to approach
- The management seems all in order and very well.
- First class
- Very helpful
- Excellent - all staff at the nursery act appropriately to all needs of the children and parents alike. They are very easy to approach with individual problems and keep very high standards of care to each child.
- Always phoned me back when they said they would, especially pre-attendance. Follow up enquiries after Christmas regarding spaces.
- Just brilliant - no complaints

Section 4: Dealing with complaints

17. Were you aware that there is a complaints procedure?

Yes.....15/88%
No.....2/12%
No-response.....0

18. Have you ever made a complaint about the service?

Yes.....1/6%
No.....16/9%
No-response.....

19. Did the manager consider and/or investigate your complaint?

Yes.....0
No.....0
Non-applicable.....14/82%
No-response.....3/18%

20. Did the manager inform you of the outcome of your complaint?

Yes.....0
No.....0
Non-applicable.....14/82%
No-response.....3/18%

21. Was your complaint handled in a sensitive and confidential manner?

Yes.....0
No.....0
Non-applicable.....14/82%
No-response.....3/18%

22. Please add any comments you would like to make about the handling of complaints

- Wouldn't dream of it!
- n/a can't comment as I have never needed to make a complaint. The procedure sounds OK though

Section 5: The Environment and Surroundings

23. Are the premises welcoming and friendly?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....0
No response.....0

- Very
- They could be upgraded
- Lovely but always hot!

24. Are the premises and equipment clean?

Yes.....17/100%
No.....0
No-response.....0

- The toilet areas can be very smelly at times.

25. Are the furniture, equipment and toys provided;

Suitable.....14/82%
Well maintained.....13/77%
Stimulating.....16/94%

- Fire door – can get out of it easily.
- Always play doh and sand

26. Do you feel that the premises are safe and secure?

Yes.....16/94%
No.....1/6%
No-response.....0

- Definitely
- Apart from the exit
- The fire doors used as the entrance to the nursery can be easily opened by the children. My two year old does this on a regular basis when I collect him.
- You can't come in unless you come through 6 doors!

27. Please add any comments you would like to make about the surroundings:

- All clean and tidy
- It's a home from home
- Alternative exit arranged

- I like the outdoor play area also. And that there are potty training facilities. The security on the doors is very good-I'm very pleased with it.
- The building is usually excessively warm which is not good for the children or staff and exacerbates coughs/colds etc
- The building is often too hot in both winter and summer.
- It's nice here – the playground is nice in the Summer
- Excellent and very enjoyable for the children. Helps stimulate little minds.
- The two different rooms are nice. You can go from one to the other. The play area outside is good.
- Smells fresh, always clean and friendly
- Always a good atmosphere - Lovely

Additional comments:

- I would just like to add that I think it is great you take children so young as my child is desperate to mix with other children and she seems a lot happier and lively. Also very glad it is not looked down upon if your child is still in nappies, a very understanding place.

Appendix 2: Covering Letter Sent to Parents

Date as postmark
Miss. L. E. Eddins
01446 704778
01446 704794
Policy and Information Team
LEEddins@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Dear Parent,

Helping Hands Nursery – Satisfaction Survey

The National Assembly for Wales has issued National Minimum Standards for providers of day care under section 79C of the Children Act 1989. These standards are used by the Assembly's Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW) when deciding whether services are providing adequate care for children under the age of eight and complying with the relevant standards.

As you know, Helping Hands Nursery is run by Vale of Glamorgan Council and therefore the Council is a provider of day care for children. One of the requirements of the standards is that providers of day care consult with parents to ensure that the service meets your needs. We are therefore interested in hearing your views about the service that you currently receive. This feedback helps us to identify what we are doing well and also any areas for improvement.

All information will be treated in the strictest of confidence and there will be no names or other way of identifying you from any report that is produced.

Your views are extremely important to us and will assist us in improving our service to you. If you require a questionnaire in an alternative format, or you have any queries about this process, please do not hesitate to contact me on (01446) 704778. You can also obtain a copy of the standards from me at this number or at the above address.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please return it in the envelope provided by.....

Yours sincerely

Laura Eddins
Policy and Consultation Officer
Social Services