



Inspection Report

Little Acorns Day Care Nursery Ltd

**Llynfi Enterprise Park
Heol Ty Gwyn Industrial Estate
Maesteg
CF34 0BQ**



Date Inspection Completed

16/11/2023

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About Little Acorns Day Care Nursery Ltd

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Little Acorns Day Care Nursery Limited
Registered places	57
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	Click or tap here to enter text. 28 November 2018
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>	Good
<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 very happy and enjoy their time at the setting. They have enjoyable opportunities for play and learning within a nurturing setting. Children interact well and form close bonds with their peers and staff. They have some good opportunities to develop skills for independence. Children learn skills through a range of quality experiences and play.

Staff are professional, qualified and work well together as part of a team. They have an appropriate understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. Staff mostly implement robust, policies and procedures effectively. They plan a broad variety of interesting and fun activities, to support children’s development. Staff keep clear records of children’s progress.

The environment is clean, warm, very welcoming, and well organised, with best use made of the space available. The outside area is an interesting, stimulating, and safe area. There is an excellent selection of well-maintained quality resources, mostly wooden, both inside and outside. Staff follow procedures to ensure the environment is safe and suitable, completing risk assessments regularly.

The leadership and management of the setting is effective. Leaders are passionate and committed to providing high quality childcare. They have processes in place to ensure that staff are fully involved in working together to provide appropriate care for the children. There is continuous improvement and leaders build strong partnerships with parents and others, for the benefit of the children.

Well-being	Good
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Children have a strong voice and are given many opportunities to make choices. They decide what they would like to play with from the wide range of activities on offer. Younger children choose from a broad range of stimulating resources, through both structured activities and free play. This promotes their all-round development, enabling them to follow their own interests with confidence. For example, a child happily played alone for a considerable amount of time with a pirate ship.

Children are happy, relaxed, and confident. They develop strong attachments with staff in their base rooms and they are comfortable to approach other staff when they need help or reassurance as they are familiar with them. Children feel secure by knowing the daily routines and confidently respond to directions from staff. They have close relationships with staff. Some children spontaneously approached staff for cuddles, and babies held up their arms as they displayed signs of wanting a nap. Children seek out staff for comfort or to celebrate success, and bonds of trust are evident.

Children are learning to behave appropriately. We saw children respecting and listening to others during circle time. Children sit happily together and chat to each other and staff. Children have good opportunities to develop new skills. They are curious and engaged learners who value the chance to explore the environment which supports them to play independently. Children also enjoy well organised and more structured activities supported by staff. For example, they enthusiastically join in circle time, children share their news and all children are listened to. When the staff sang their morning song "*Bore da*" the children joined in with some actions.

Children really enjoyed playing outside and expressed their disappointment when they had to come inside for lunch. Children sat at the table for a threading activity, showing real joy, when they achieved their goal. Children particularly enjoyed a '*Tap tap box*' activity where they chose a nursery rhyme to sing. Babies smile as they clap to music, learning to make sounds and rhythms.

Children are developing very well and have opportunities to become independent. They are given time to do things for themselves. This includes taking off their coats when they come inside, using the toilet independently, with help if needed and after lunch all children were given a wet cloth to wipe their hands and faces. At tidy up time children start to tidy up when the 'tidy up' song comes on, showing they are familiar with the routines. Babies are becoming increasingly social and independent. They share positive facial expressions with others and happily explore their playroom accessing toys they would like to play with.

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures to promote the safety and wellbeing of children. They have a thorough understanding of their role in protecting children and answer safeguarding questions confidently. Overall, staff have completed all mandatory training including, child protection, first aid and food hygiene. Staff consistently follow robust cleaning and hygiene practises. For example, they ensure that children wash their hands before entering the dining area (refectory), all staff wear personal protective equipment (PPE) throughout mealtimes, and tongs are used to serve food. They ensure that a variety of nutritious foods are on offer to the children and older children are given the opportunity to serve their own drinks, with support if needed. However, drinks are not available at all times. Staff ensure that all areas of the refectory are thoroughly cleaned once the children have finished eating.

Medication, incident and accident forms are recorded and signed by both staff and parents and are well documented in the children's files. They carefully monitor children's allergies, dietary requirements, and individual needs. Nappy changing takes place, mostly in the children's base rooms. As this is within clear sight of the other children playing, dignity and privacy is not always respected. There are no hand washing facilities, although hand sanitiser is used by staff after nappy changes as is PPE, and therefore this should be risk assessed.

Staff use positive reinforcement throughout the setting and encourage children through praise. The phrases "*well done friend*," "*good manners*" and Welsh words such as "*da iawn*," were used regularly. Staff encouraged children to follow instructions when moving around the setting, which were followed well. For example, when moving from one room to the bathroom to wash their hands, the children walked in a neat line, quietly so as not to disturb the other group.

Staff are aware and sensitive to the individual needs of the children and their interactions are positive, respectful, demonstrating warmth and kindness. They are great role models, constantly promoting the use of manners such as, '*please*' and '*thank you*' during mealtimes and throughout the rest of the day. Staff have strong relationships with the children and know how to comfort them. When one child was overwhelmed in the room, a staff member went straight over to engage with the child and distracted them with another item in the room, which put the child at ease. We saw staff confidently working with children with additional learning needs and were aware of how to respond to the children and how to comfort them.

Staff work well as a team and are committed to providing a great range of play and learning opportunities, led by the children. One staff member was very enthusiastic and it was clear children enjoyed their personality. Staff observe the milestones that children are reaching, and this is recorded effectively and updated regularly. Staff regularly use the Welsh language during activities and children engage well with this.

Environment

Excellent

Leaders provide a safe, well-maintained, and very welcoming environment. They have detailed risk assessments for all areas of the environment, visits and many activities. These are reviewed on a regular basis. They ensure that maintenance safety checks are completed in a timely manner. There is a secure system for entry to the setting and staff ensure that they sign people in and check identification if required. Staff conduct fire drills regularly and these are recorded well. We saw observations recorded of children whilst conducting a fire drill, including '*children were calm and efficient*' and '*remind children to walk.*'

Leaders have organised the space to a very high standard, considering children's needs. Areas are light and decorated in neutral colours with natural materials, providing a calm ambiance. They provide inviting, well-equipped play areas for different aged children, with good sleeping and toileting facilities. A sensory room allows children to have quiet time or to nap. Nappy changing takes place in each base room.

Play areas are welcoming and homely, many set up to reflect the real world, such as a large home area. There are numerous, well thought out areas for children to play imaginatively. Staff use a designated dining area that has a good range of furniture for the age and stage of development of the children. They have designed the environment so that all children have the option to play safely in the outdoors regularly. The outside space has separate areas for different age groups, but these can be opened up if needed to allow a free flow outside area. We saw children thoroughly enjoying playing in the outdoor area between the rain. They played independently with the outside equipment, and as a whole group singing and dancing with staff.

Leaders ensure that there are plenty of excellent resources to stimulate the children's interest and imagination. Play resources are varied and highly suitable for the age of the children who have access to them. Staff change structured learning areas regularly to maintain children's interest and extend their skills. There is an extensive range of excellent quality resources, such as a wooden home corner, kitchen, washing machine and microwave. There was also an area for 'loose parts' such as shells, acorns and buttons which enhances creativity through play. There is Welsh signage throughout the nursery and plenty of multi-cultural resources. It is a very rich environment for play and learning. The resources are easily accessible to children as they are visible and stored at their level. Leaders invest time and finances in furniture, toys, and equipment in every area of the setting. This ensures that children can always access developmentally appropriate resources that promote their curiosity.

Leadership and Management

Good

The nursery benefits from having an experienced responsible individual and a person in charge who both have high standards. Managers are mindful of their responsibilities and ensure that the nursery meets the necessary legislative requirements. We looked at staff and children's attendance registers on selected dates, and staffing ratios were met, or

exceeded. Staff informed us that that they felt well supported in their roles and enjoyed working at the nursery. Newly appointed staff have video safeguarding training until a course is available.

There are clear processes in place and staff know who to approach if they have any issues or difficulties. Staff supervision and annual appraisals are in place, and staff receive regular supervision's however not all are dated. There is a detailed Statement of Purpose and a range of policies and procedures that are shared with parents and staff. Policies and procedures are reviewed to ensure they are up to date and relevant. We found the heating certificate was unavailable, and the Information Commissioners Office certificate seen was out of date. Satisfactory documents were forwarded after our visit.

Management of staff is very good. Staff have defined roles and responsibilities in their job descriptions. There is a suitable office and filing systems, both paper copies and on a computer system, which supports the smooth running of the service. All staff are qualified to level two, and some of the staff are qualified to level three and five. students who attend on short term work experience, are complimentary about the staff and management. Staff spoken to were happy at the nursery, and said the managers were very supportive. The nursery is compliant with the necessary child care regulations and National Minimum Standards and in many cases exceeds these standards and therefore management is very effective.

Leaders and staff communicate with parents regularly and the nursery promotes an open door policy, so that parents can feel comfortable in dropping in at any time. There is also an App so parents and staff can stay connected at all times, and we saw many children proudly having their photos taken whilst doing an activity. The responsible individual informed us that the nursery had not received any formal concerns or complaints from parents or other agencies.

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)
Standard 12 - Food and drink	Ensure fresh drinking water is freely available to children at all times.
Standard 4 - Meeting individual needs	Ensure privacy and dignity is respected during nappy changing.

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)
Ensure all documentation is dated.
Risk assess the lack of hand washing facilities when nappy changing within the play areas.

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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Date Published 12/12/2023