



Inspection Report

Little Acorns Playgroup

**Burnt Barn Social Club
Burnt Barn Road
Bulwark
Chepstow
NP16 5AR**



Date Inspection Completed

15/02/2022

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About Little Acorns Playgroup

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of care provided | Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care |
| Registered Person | Kelly Hornbuckle Leesa Dyte |
| Registered places | 19 |
| Language of the service | English |
| Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection | 6 December 2017 |
| Is this a Flying Start service? | |
| Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer? | No. This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service. |

Summary

Children have good opportunities to progress because there is access to a varied selection of play and learning opportunities. They are building positive relationships with their peers and have good relationships with staff who care for them. They are comfortable with the routines of the service and have regular opportunities to develop their skills.

Staff are well qualified, professional and have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They have implemented new policies and procedures in response to Covid-19 effectively. Staff monitor children's progress and understand their individual needs. They plan a wide range of activities that are stimulating and directly related to children's interests.

The playgroup operates as a pack-away service based in the local community centre. The premises are suitably maintained and secure. There are effective record keeping systems in relation to health and safety and risks identified and minimised.

Leadership and management of the service is effective and records and policies are organised and maintained to a good standard. Quality assurance processes take into account children and parents' views and leaders plan for improvement to move the service forward. Parents are appreciative of the service and receive regular updates on changes and events at the playgroup.

Well-being

Children are happy at the service. They have warm and supportive relationships with staff and actively seek out staff for reassurance and comfort. When some children were briefly unsettled, they approached staff who provided immediate reassurances. We heard children chatting to staff and saw that they enjoyed staff participating in activities. For example, during dance and movement activity, children were heard inviting staff to join in. The children are familiar with staff and feel at ease. This was demonstrated when a child laughingly commented “I like your dance moves” and the staff replied “I like your style too”. The rest of the group all laughed with them.

Children benefit from a good selection of age appropriate play and learning opportunities and are interested in the play activities available. They enjoy selecting toys and playing small musical instruments. Children value the opportunity to play freely and follow their interests, moving confidently between table top activities and the floor activities. They show pride in their achievements and we noted a child, supported by a member of staff, to write their name on their art work. Children freely contributed to decorating fishes for their ‘Under the Sea’ project. Older children used their fine motor skills to independently cut around the fish shapes they had decorated with foil and tissue paper. Younger children needed some help from staff, who were patient in holding the paper as the children attempted to cut their own shaped fishes and under water creatures.

Children have consistent opportunities to be independent, follow their interests and make decisions. Most children are confident selecting objects and choosing books without assistance. They are learning to co-operate and staff encourage their involvement in tidying resources away. They are confident to speak out and say what they want. For example, a few children did not want to join in the music and movement session.. A member of staff who was in the process of packing away the resources, noticed that the children looked unoccupied. She suggested, “Would you like some books to look at?” The children beamed smiles at the suggestion. The member of staff stopped what they were doing and sat with the children and read to them. This shows that children’s needs are a priority at the service.

Children play happily together. Younger children enjoy watching and observing others and cope well with short adult led activities such as storytelling. Older children enjoy solitary play, but equally gain pleasure in small group activities where they share resources and sit together to complete tasks. Children know the routines of the playgroup. At lunchtime, children enjoy sitting together to eat their food, it is a sociable time where both children and staff relax and chat together.

Care and Development

Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They understand that they have a duty to ensure children's well-being and safety in relation to safeguarding and their responsibility to report any concerns for children in their care. Staff are knowledgeable about how to make a referral should they be required to do so, in the absence of their safeguarding officer. However, the child protection flow chart that staff referred to was not located. They recognise the importance of infection control and their duty to follow procedures and ensure that the premises is safe and clean. In line with the protective measures, with regards to the pandemic Covid 19, there are adjustments to staff practices and cleaning routines, to ensure that children and staff remain safe. Staff follow the service's procedures to record accidents and incidents and maintain records to a good standard. Staff promote healthy eating and encourage parents to send food that is nutritious and meets the Welsh healthy eating guidelines. Snacks are nutritional and drinking water is readily available to keep children hydrated. There is a system for recording children's specific dietary requirements at the point of registration.

Staff promote children's behaviour in a positive manner and understand the behaviour management policy and the strategies contained within it. They act as good role models, treating children with care and respect. They are consistent in their responses to children and speak kindly and gently to them. Their interactions with children are positive and they demonstrate warmth when supporting children. They recognise when children are slightly unsettled and provide nurturing care. We heard staff frequently acknowledge children's achievements and praise them for their efforts.

Staff plan and support children's development effectively. There is good activity planning to ensure that play opportunities are appropriate and relevant. In addition, staff are aware of the importance of moving children's development forward and use a variety of methods to identify and record children's progress and plan for their next steps. Staff understand the importance of play and ensure that children have access to a selection of learning and play opportunities to support their development. All staff promote the use of Welsh effectively, using basic words and phrases to encourage children's understanding of the language. For example, during a group activity using a parachute the children bounced around balls wrapped in different coloured scarves. The children took turns to call out in both Welsh and English the colours of the scarves.

Environment

The premises are secure and well maintained. Visitors are required to sign in and hand sanitize on arrival at the service. There is an organised and well-managed risk assessment file, and hazards are identified and where possible eliminated. There is timely completion of key health and safety checks. Although the owners of the site regularly carry out the annual safety checks, the playgroup does not keep copies of these records. Staff follow clear evacuation procedures with children and the records they keep show that they do this routinely.

The environment is spacious, child friendly and the layout is conducive for play and learning activities. The service is a pack-away playgroup, which operates from a large room within the social club. Staff follow procedures to ensure the environment is safe and suitable, completing risk assessments and daily checks. The outdoor play area is secure and well resourced. It is well utilised, providing plenty of opportunities for children to be physically active. Recently the playgroup has replaced the grassed area with rubber matting to improve the safety of children during wet weather. This means that children can access the outdoor play area all year round.

Staff plan the layout of the playroom well, with zoned areas offering quieter activities and other areas for more energetic play. There is a reasonable standard of décor and the staff display children's artwork on pack-away display boards. The managers told us that by displaying children's work, even though these have to be stored at the end of the sessions, children develop a sense of belonging and ownership. Resources are well organised and accessible to children giving them autonomy when choosing toys.

Leadership and Management

Leadership and management of the service is good and record keeping systems are organised and well maintained. The statement of purpose provides parents with sufficient information about what the service has to offer. This means that prospective parents can make an informed decision about its suitability for their child. There is effective maintenance of daily records and records contain relevant information on children. There is a comprehensive policy file.

Management of the service is effective. There are opportunities for staff to discuss issues during formal team meetings. Individually, staff can feedback their views on their roles, responsibilities and training needs via formal one to one supervision and annual appraisal meetings. Feedback from staff during the inspection, indicate they are happy with the level of support they receive and the training matrix shows that staff have up to date core training. Staff files contained Disclosure and barring service (DBS) original records. Whilst DBS checks need to be undertaken and recorded by the service, the original document should be returned to it's owner.

Management have good systems in place to monitor and review the service. Leaders consult with children, parents, staff and stakeholders, obtaining their views before producing an annual review of quality of care report. There are positive partnerships in place. Parent told us that they feel supported and that their wishes are respected. Children with learning needs are very well supported and parents feel that they are included in decision-making. Parents told us that they are very happy with the service and their children are settled at the playgroup. They confirm that the service notifies them of changes and that generally there is very good communication from staff and management.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Ensure that original DBS checks are recorded and the original is handed back to its' owner.

R2. Ensure that the playgroup keeps evidence of the annual safety check and that this is made available on request.

R3. Ensure management check that staff are confident about child protection procedures and know how to submit child protection referrals.

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 |
|------------|---|--------|
| N/A | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this | N/A |

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Date Published 17/03/2022