



Childcare Inspection Report on

Pitter Patter Day Nursery Ltd

**2 Dulais Road
Pontardulais
Swansea
SA4 8RH**



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Description of the service

Pitter Patter Day Nursery Ltd, Pontarddulais, was registered from the current premises in December 2006. They can provide full day care for up to 73 children and cater from birth to 8 years of age. The service operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 8am to 6pm. The responsible individual (RI) is Debra Anne Jones and the person in charge (PIC) is Diane John. Care is provided mainly through the English language although Welsh is spoken by bilingual members of staff and incidental Welsh is commonly used. The service is working towards the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh language.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children have a strong voice as they are able to make their own decisions and are encouraged to speak and express themselves. Children are very secure, happy, comfortable and relaxed to spend time at Pitter Patter. They take part in a wide range of interesting and fun activities that encourage them to learn new skills or knowledge and make good progress. Children have increasing opportunities to do things for themselves so are becoming independent. Staff are effective at helping to keep children safe and healthy. On the whole, staff are positive role models for children and promote children's play, learning and development well. Leadership at this service is very good.

2. Improvements

Following this visit the responsible individual sent a revised child protection policy which made clear; the procedure to follow if an allegation were to be made about one of the leaders of the service; and that Disclosure and Disbarring Checks (DBS) are to be in place before a new staff member starts work. We found that the recommendations made that the previous inspection had been implemented. For example, more opportunities had been provided for children to do things independently and accident records had been consistently signed by parents.

The service had also made improvements through the purchase of new equipment to create more opportunities for children to do things independently, such as cereal dispensers and storage units; bought new resources including a new sensory circle/road map, fencing and ceiling fans. The kitchen had also been updated and a new door had been put in to allow older children easier access to the toilets.

3. Requirements and recommendations

No non-compliance was identified at this inspection.

We made recommendations in relation to lunchtime routines, resources and fire procedures. These can be found at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children who attend Pitter Patter Day Nursery have a strong voice as they are able to make choices and decisions and are confident to speak and express themselves. Children are able to take part in a range of fun and stimulating play and learning experiences that encourage them to develop holistically. Children are becoming more independent. The majority of children very much enjoy their time at the service.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have lots of opportunities to make choices and decisions and they are encouraged to express themselves.

Children chose how to spend their time as activities and resources were placed around the rooms which allowed them to follow their interests. At mealtimes, older children were asked to choose a drink of milk or water and whether they would like more helpings, if it was available. One child for instance said they did not want a drink and their wish was respected by staff. Older children were asked to choose a story to listen to for circle time and selected a book about the police. During a circle time activity the children sang 'Bore da' and each child was greeted in turn. They discussed starting school and what they did to celebrate St David's Day. They then discussed pancakes and why they would be making them and the children participated well in the discussion.

Children have a clear and confident voice.

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

In the main, children feel secure, comfortable and relaxed as they are familiar with the routines.

A few of the babies cried for a short time, which was to be expected as they had only recently started and were learning to deal with separation from their parents. Staff gave cuddles to reassure and comfort them. After a time, one young child was happiest sat on staff's lap, seeking comfort and closeness. Another became fascinated in a drum and the string whilst another grew more confident and began exploring the room themselves. The toddlers and pre-schoolers were very focused and interested in the activities provided showing that they were engaged and happy to take part. Whilst one child listened to music they remarked, "*I like this song!*" A few pre-schoolers initiated conversation with us showing that they felt relaxed and comfortable in others' company. A parent stated that their child's, "*Confidence has grown so much since starting.*"

Children feel very safe, happy and valued.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are developing relationships and are forming friendships.

Older children initiated conversation amongst themselves at snack time. For example, one child commented on the fruit that each of them were eating and this developed into a conversation about different foods that they liked. Others start playing peek-a-boo amongst themselves whilst waiting for their food to be served. Children played well alongside each other and with one another, depending on their age and stage of development. For example, some children took turns to build a tower from construction blocks which showed that they were co-operating well. They took great delight when the tower grew too tall and fell down which prompted them to start again. All children who returned feedback questionnaires stated that they had made friends at the nursery.

Children interact well.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Children benefit from a good mix of child-led play and adult-led activities.

During the day the children spent time involved in free play and also pre-planned activities. The older children were very engaged in 'making pancakes' as part of a sensory activity. They persevered for a good length of time, scooping the flour and chickpeas using pans, spoons, mini colander and cups to make them. The older children became very animated when they were taken outside to play which showed that they loved the opportunity to spend time in the garden. During periods of free play, the older children quickly found toys that interested them. Some of the youngest children did not know what to do with the toys and resources and so were not fully engaged and stimulated. In the main, children very much enjoy their play and learning experiences.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children take part in a range of interesting and fun activities that encourage them to learn new skills or knowledge. Children have increasing opportunities to do things independently.

The toddlers and pre-schoolers washed their hands and dried them independently, putting the paper towels in the bin when they were finished. Children collected their spoons and aprons prior to eating and then scraped their own plate when they were finished and put their dirty plate in a washing up bowl. Many of the children poured themselves a drink of water from the water station or were given a cup of milk. Some of the oldest children had their coats put on for them ready for outside play, although many could have tried doing so independently. Many of the younger children were able to feed themselves, although help was provided for those who could not.

During the day, older children took part in activities that supported their development including communication, social skills, motor skills and knowledge and understanding. This variety ensured that the children remained engaged and stimulated whilst they

learned through their play. The youngest children mostly spent time sat with the toys and resources that were placed out for them.

Children develop well and have good opportunities to do things independently.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are effective at helping to keep children safe and healthy. Staff are positive role models for children. On the whole, staff promote children's play, learning and development well. Children's individual needs are appropriately met by staff.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in terms of health and safety and consistently follow the service's policies and procedures.

Staff effectively followed infection control procedures. For example, they washed hands and put on aprons and gloves prior to serving food and ensured babies washed their hands prior to eating food. When children started rubbing the table with their toothbrushes after cleaning their teeth, staff explained why it was not hygienic to do so and replaced them with new brushes to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

Healthy eating was promoted through the menu which incorporated a good range of fruit and vegetables to support children's growth. The service had been awarded a Healthy Pre-School Gold Award to reflect this.

The service had a detailed safeguarding policy, although it did not make clear the procedure that staff should follow if an allegation were to be made about the child protection officer or leaders of the service. Staff told us the correct procedure to follow if they had any concerns about a child and incident forms reflected that staff were alert to any issues that may affect children's welfare. Staff were mindful of children's safety. For example, they reminded children to sit on their chairs to avoid unnecessary accidents, ensured younger children were securely strapped into highchairs/chairs and encouraged the children to make trains as they moved between areas to remain together. However, records indicated that fire drills had been practised on an annual basis rather than a six monthly basis so a number of children and some staff would not have experienced an evacuation drill.

On the whole, staff are effective at keeping children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

In the main, staff help to create a fun and relaxed atmosphere. They effectively reinforce their expectations so that children know how to behave appropriately.

Staff reminded children how to behave and made their expectations clear. For example, staff reinforced the tooth brushing routine so that children completed the task together. They used positive language to praise the children; "*Good listening!*" Staff used praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour and sometimes gave stickers as a reward. The majority of staff engaged the children in conversation at lunch and whilst they played with the children which helped to create a social and friendly atmosphere, although this was not consistent between the different rooms.

Staff generally interact successfully with children

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

Staff promote children's development by planning for a wide variety of play and learning opportunities.

Staff used a good level of Welsh with the children to promote bilingualism and ensure that children who were first language Welsh were spoken to using their preferred language. Staff had a good knowledge of child development, gained through training and qualifications. For example, since the last inspection, a number of staff had gained either a level 5 childcare qualification or a play work qualification. In general, the quality of the planning was very good as it covered topics that were varied and interesting and provided opportunities for children to develop holistically as it covered the seven areas of learning. This ensured that the children had lots of fun whilst learning and when practising new skills. For example, staff introduced children to Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, when they made lanterns. Some areas of the nursery implemented the planning more effectively than others.

Staff tracked children's development appropriately to ensure that they were making good progress or to identify those with any emerging needs. Staff made general observations on what they children had done and what they had achieved which were recorded beautifully in a development book for the parents. This included lots of photographs of the children enjoying and taking part in different activities. Staff also helped to organise many events to enrich the children's experience such as Christmas parties, fundraising events and trips to local places of interest.

Staff attended to children's needs by wiping children's noses, mostly responsively, and routinely assisting with the changing and toileting of children.

Staff promote children's learning and development well.

3. Environment

Summary

Leaders are effective in ensuring that children are cared for in a secure, safe and clean environment. The environment is a welcoming, friendly and stimulating environment for children. Toys and resources are in plentiful supply and are of good quality.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

Children are cared for in a secure, safe and clean environment.

Leaders ensure that the premises is regularly checked and maintained. For example, fire equipment, electrics and the gas boiler had recently been serviced and checked. Staff were kept informed of changes to risk assessments for the nursery and had signed to acknowledge that they had been informed. Leaders had undertaken regular hazard surveys to identify any issues that needed addressing to ensure children remained safe and healthy. However, during the visit a fire door between the kitchen and pre-school room was held open by a hook catch for most of the day, despite the fact that a sign on the door stated the door was to be kept shut and this was identified as an action of the nursery's fire risk assessment. This was raised during the inspection and leaders rectified this straight away. In the interest of security, leaders kept the front door locked, stair gates were in place across doorways and stairways and the external boundary had suitable fencing in place. Visitors were asked to sign a book to record their presence. Staff performed cleaning duties as part of a rota and cleaned up after food and activities when they were finished. Leaders said that staff cleaned toys and resources on a weekly basis and the majority of toys were seen to be clean and in good condition.

In the main, leaders are effective at ensuring the environment is safe.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

The premises is a welcoming and child-friendly space that is suitable for children to play, learn and relax.

The nursery is light, airy and colourful so provides a stimulating and pleasant space for children to play and relax. The rooms provided plenty of space for the children to take part in different activities, many of which had been set up on the tables for the children to choose from. The pre-school area was zoned according to the principles of the foundation phase to provide spaces for different learning experiences. For example, a mark making area had been created and also an area for math resources. Displays in the rooms reflected the themes the children had been following and these incorporated examples of the children's artwork which helped to create a sense of belonging. The garden area was a large space for the children to be active, but also have different experiences. For example, a multi-sensory resource had been created using tyres for the children to explore.

Leaders successfully ensure that the spaces are suitable for children.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

Leaders ensure that children have access to furniture, equipment and toys that are appropriate for their age, needs and developmental stage both indoors and outdoors. This included resources to encourage imagination, creativity and exploration such as dressing up clothes, craft materials and those that help to develop fine motor skills. An emphasis was placed on multi-sensory toys and activities, many of which were set up in the tuff trays for the children to play with. A dark den was also used to enhance children's senses and to provide a stimulating space to spend time. A good range of English and Welsh books were available for the children to read which encouraged creativity. Most of the toys and resources were plastic so as to be hard wearing and easy to clean, although there were few of natural materials. The outdoor space had many toys that allowed children to develop physically, such as trikes and cars. Planters had also been created which were used for the children to grow different fruit and vegetables.

Leaders successfully ensure that there is a wide range of good quality toys, resources and equipment available to enhance play and learning opportunities.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Overall, the service is very well managed. The service is compliant with the regulations and in most areas exceeds the national minimum standards. Staff and resources are effectively managed. Leaders have developed strong partnerships with parents.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders comply with the relevant regulations and national minimum standards. They maintain up to date policies, procedures and records. Some of the policies and procedures would benefit from review so that they accurately reflect practice.

The person in charge had well-organised records and paperwork and had developed systems to ensure the smooth running of the service. Leaders read the service's policies and procedures on an annual basis and dated them. However, not all policies accurately reflected practice. For example, the 'Suitability of Staff' policy stated that staff may start work without a DBS if supervised by other staff. However, when discussing this with leaders they confirmed that this practice would only take place if they already held a valid DBS obtained elsewhere but the policy did not state this. Records of staff meetings showed that staff actively discussed aspects of practice that required attention which showed that leaders had a good awareness of how staff were working and actively promoted improvement. The service had valid public liability insurance. The service's record keeping was found to be well organised and diligently completed; accident and medication records had been completely. Staff said that they enjoyed working together and that it was a positive working environment. One staff member stated, "*The support I've had over the last three years have been amazing and I am proud to be part of the team.*"

Leaders have good leadership skills.

4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders have established methods to gather others' views and identify areas for improvement.

Leaders had collated the views of parents, children, staff and other external partners such as advisory staff and had received a good response rate. Their views and satisfaction levels were summarised in the report. Whilst the children's views were summarised these could have been explored further so as to be a useful tool to aid planning and development. Leaders had identified actions in the report so had a clear focus for areas that could be improved but did not reflect on actions identified in the previous report which would have been useful in evidencing the progress the service had made.

On the whole, leaders soundly self-evaluate and reflect on their service.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

Leaders ensure that children are appropriately supervised by suitable and qualified staff and keep records to reflect this.

Staffing ratios were adhered to which ensured that children were appropriately supervised. Staff updated the children's attendance register as they arrived and left the building. This ensured that records were accurate and could be relied upon in the event of an emergency evacuation. Staff clocked in and out to reflect when they were present in the building and a staff register reflected the areas that the staff were working in during the day. The staff register did not detail where relief staff or leaders provided cover during busy periods such as lunchtime however, so was not an entirely accurate record of who had cared for the children during the day. Staff files showed that leaders followed a robust recruitment process when employing new staff. Records evidenced the fact that leaders supported staff to gain additional qualifications and undertake training.

Staff manage staff and resources well.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Parents are kept informed about their child's progress and the nursery's routines using a variety of methods.

Leaders had obtained information about the children and parental consents prior to the children starting and both parties had signed contracts. Good relationships were evident between staff and parents, although verbal feedback provided by staff to parents/carers when they collected their child was brief. A few parents told us that on occasion they would have liked more detail. All parents and family members that we spoke to positively praised the nursery and its staff. Parents of younger children were given communication books that staff completed on a daily basis in addition to verbal feedback. Information boards in the porch and cloakroom area displayed details about daily and weekly activities the children would be participating in and relayed other messages. A parent commented that these were not always updated promptly and during the visit the boards displayed the menu/activities from the previous week until the afternoon. Leaders also provided regular updates and photos however, on Facebook and the 'Ourschool' app which many parents had recently downloaded to help them remain informed. For example, these mediums were used to distribute the quarterly newsletter which gave staff updates, dates to remember and forthcoming activities and events. Parents' evenings were held throughout the year so that parents could discuss their child's progress. A parent stated that, "*I receive regular feedback about my child's development and day to day activities.*"

Leaders have established good partnerships.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that:

- the fire door to the kitchen is kept closed;
- fire drills are performed every six months;
- lunch time routines are reviewed so that children transition quickly between activities;
- policies are reviewed to ensure that they reflect current practice; and
- develop the use of natural resources for children to explore.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This inspection was undertaken by two inspectors as part of the scheduled programme of inspections and took place on 4 March 2018. As part of this inspection:

- we made general observations of the interactions between the staff and the children attending the service and undertook an observation using the SOFI 2 tool;
- we held conversations with parents of children attending the service and a questionnaire was left for other parents to fill out and send to us, if they so wished. 14 completed parent questionnaires were returned.
- we spoke to staff members working for the service and reviewed the 12 completed inspection questionnaires completed by staff;
- we viewed records and documents including: the attendance register, children's contracts, policies and procedures, accident and incident records, medication records, the service's statement of purpose; and
- we performed a visual inspection of the rooms of the areas used by the service.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Debra Jones
Person in charge	Debra Jones Diane John
Registered maximum number of places	73
Age range of children	Birth to 8 years
Opening hours	8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	11 January 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	4 March 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Additional Information:	