



**Childcare Inspection Report on  
Little Acorns (Moorland and Broadmead Park) Playgroup**

**Newport East Community Centre  
Moorland Park  
Newport  
NP19 4NA**



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## **Description of the service**

Little Acorns (Moorland and Broadmead) Playgroup is privately owned but is funded by Newport City Council (NCC) Flying Start to provide 20 places for two-year-old children from the local community. The setting operates from Newport East Community Centre and provides morning and afternoon sessions during school term times. The Registered Person is also the Person in Charge and they employ a deputy to operate the setting on a daily basis.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children have fun and positively engage in activities that interest them but their choices are sometimes restricted. Some children manage their interactions appropriately. Children's health is not consistently promoted and infection control measures and food safety standards are not always followed. Staff have adequate knowledge of safeguarding and have sufficient knowledge of their roles and responsibilities regarding keeping children safe. The playroom is spacious and well resourced but the layout of the outside play areas and basic staffing levels means children cannot access all areas. The staff team are motivated but improvements to the leadership and management of the setting are required to ensure compliance. Partnerships with parents are strong and they talk very highly of the staff and setting.

### **2. Improvements**

The emergency evacuation plan is practiced more frequently enabling children to safely evacuate the premises.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

We identified several non compliances and these are outlined at the end of the report. Some practice recommendations were also identified, including children's choices, Welsh language, staffing, infection control, safeguarding, resources, observations and activity planning, records and management of the setting. These are outlined in further detail at the end of the report.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children make some choices and decisions about their play and care but this is not consistent throughout the session. Children confidently express themselves to ensure their voice is heard and listened to. They are happy in their play and enjoy attending and some children manage their behaviour appropriately. Children make suitable progress and their independence is encouraged some of the time.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children speak and express themselves appropriately. We saw children use sounds and gestures and voice their wishes and feelings to staff confidently. Children make some choices but these are not consistently promoted during the session because daily routines take precedence. We observed children freely select what activities and toys they wanted to play with at the beginning of each session. However, when a child wanted to come inside to play, the RP/PiC asked the child to go back outside. A child also cried because they wanted to remain outside playing instead of coming in for snack time. Afterwards when a child wanted to go back outside to play, they were told they had to wait until nappy changing had finished. Nevertheless, children were able to make decisions as to whether they joined in sports day races.

Children communicate their needs confidently and make some choices.

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

Children are happy and content and settle quickly on arrival. We saw children smile in response to staff's warm greetings and several children enjoyed a cwtch and then happily went off to play. During play children were comfortable to go to familiar staff and seek reassurance and comfort when needed, demonstrating the positive emotional attachments that had been nurtured.

Children are well supported during transitions and have clear bonds of affection with staff.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

Most children listen and interact well. We saw some children play co-operatively with their friends at the mud kitchen, while another took turns playing ball with a staff member. However, some children needed lots of support throughout the session to help them interact, share and manage their behaviour appropriately. Children are learning to respect the toys and resources. When a child tipped a box of toys out on the floor, with positive support and encouragement, they helped to tidy them away. The child smiled with great satisfaction when they finished and when they were given a sticker for helping, they proudly showed this to their key worker.

Most children are resilient and are sensitive to the needs of their friends but some need support to help them comply and manage their behaviour.

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

Children are active and engage in play based activities that are fun and interest them. We watched a child enjoy playing football with staff, excitedly jumping up and down and clapping their hands at every successful kick. Totally engaged and interested we observed children spending long periods in their mud kitchen play, totally engrossed in making and cooking pies. Comments from Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) parent questionnaires confirmed that their children love attending and every morning when its time to go to playgroup they “...*get really excited to leave*”. This was clearly evident when most of the children eagerly participated in various sports day races. They were immensely happy to get to the other end of the hall and into the arms of the deputy. We also observed children explore making music with the various instruments. They happily danced to their music and beamed with pride when the deputy joined in the dancing. Children’s work is valued because their pictures and art work are displayed round the room with their names included. However, in line with the Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) action plan, photographs or quotes from children are not included.

Children enjoy attending and have fun.

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

Children progress in their learning generally well but their independent skills could be developed further. They follow their interests much of the time and happily explore different media and materials. Children showed interest in watering some of the plants in the garden and were very productive, repeatedly filling their watering can from the water tray. Children are creative in their play. We watched a child show good hand-eye co-ordination as they used a skittle as a bat and successfully hit the ball across the garden. When a child observed some ants on the floor another child told us they were going to feed them with a sand and water pie. Children with additional learning needs are well supported to help them take a full and active part in the setting. They have made progress in their learning and physical skills, with them joining friends to actively participate in sports day activities. However, children’s independence is not encouraged during daily routines. We observed staff give children the liquid soap and paper towels during hand washing. At snack time food was already served on the children’s plates, limiting them from selecting for themselves what they wanted to eat. They were also not encouraged to pour their own drinks, find their own toothbrushes or put the toothpaste on.

All children make solid progress but their independence needs to be promoted further.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Overall, staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities and the settings policies and procedures regarding health and safety. However, improvements are needed to ensure they are fully compliant with regulations and follow appropriate guidelines. Staff implement the setting's Behaviour Management Policy well, adopting realistic boundaries and a positive, fair approach. They support and nurture children's play and learning experiences appropriately but further improvements could be made to help children reach their full potential.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

Improvements are needed to keep children safe and healthy. Some staff we spoke to had a clear understanding of safeguarding issues but more training is needed to ensure knowledge is consistent, secure and fully embedded into daily practice. Daily safety checks are completed most of the time and bathroom checks are undertaken to ensure they are clean and safe for children to use. Staff help children to stay safe. They regularly practise the fire drill to learn what action to take in an emergency. Children were asked to sit on their bottoms when coming down the slide and were reminded not to stand on chairs. However, explanations were not given consistently to help children understand the dangers and the consequences of their actions. This resulted in a child falling off a chair and banging their head.

Robust measures are in place to ensure contents of the first aid box are in date and available to use when needed. Nevertheless, several improvements are needed to ensure children's health needs are fully met. The infection control audit tool was completed in April 2017 but practice has not been reviewed since, resulting in some good hygiene practices not being followed. Evidence found that staff wear gloves when preparing and supervising children's snacks and undertaking nappy changing duties. However, aprons are not used in line with the audit and the setting's health and hygiene policies and procedures. In addition, food safety standards are not consistently followed, such as labelling of food in the fridge and cupboard. Children learn to brush their teeth to promote good oral health with staff singing the tooth brush song and offering positive words of encouragement, "*Good brushing guys, well done*". Although the quantity of food available to children at snack time was small, these are nutritious. However, children's health is compromised as it was a very hot day and children did not have access to a drink at all times to ensure they kept well hydrated.

Staff are not consistent in following appropriate guidelines and the setting's policies and procedures to promote children's health and safety.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

Staff are good role models and manage children's interactions positively in line with the Behaviour Management Policy. They modelled good manners throughout the

session and positively praised the children's achievements, such as "*Yeah, you did it*" to promote their self esteem and confidence. Staff know the children well and tailor their support accordingly to manage conflicts. When a child burst out crying after being hurt, the deputy was prompt to intervene and provide age appropriate support and encouragement. The children were encouraged to explain what had happened and with sensitive support discussed how it wasn't kind to hit their friends. They talked about how they could resolve it next time and following an apology and hug, the children happily returned to their play.

Staff are consistent, fair and positive in their approach to supporting children's interactions.

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

Overall, staff promote children's learning and development well. We observed children's assessments and Foundation Phase Profiles. Each term staff highlight children's achievements but observations to support the assessments and demonstrate these skills are fully embedded are not completed. Although clear, manageable targets are identified for children with additional learning needs, evidence to show targets are being set for all children across the different areas of learning were not clear. A review of current activity planning and plans already completed for September, highlights a suitable range of interesting activities. However, these are not linked to the children's next steps and previous planning is not consistently evaluated to ensure that activities respond to, and meet children's needs. The seven journals we observed provide a lovely pictorial record of the progress children have made throughout the year. Photographs and examples of their work are nicely annotated to show the learning achieved and activities that have helped entertain and engage them. For example, mark making with shaving foam and coloured ice on lolly sticks and exploring symmetry and pattern when painting. Children's Welsh language skills could be encouraged further. Although some staff counted "*Un, dau tri*" before singing the story time song at circle time, no other Welsh was used. During story time, we heard staff use lots of questions and give children time and good support to respond. As a result, the children were totally engaged and concentrated well.

Staff provide suitable play and learning experiences for children but improvements to observations, assessments and activity planning and the use of Welsh are needed.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

Overall, the premises are safe and secure. Staff work hard to provide an inviting playroom that is well laid out to encourage children's independence and play experiences. The routine allows for children's indoor and outdoor play during parts of the session but access to all of the outdoor play areas is restricted, limiting their choices and interests. There is a suitable range of resources and equipment that promote children's learning. These are generally well maintained and most are available for children to use daily.

#### **Our findings**

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

Suitable measures are in place to maintain a safe environment for children. The RP is committed to providing a secure and private outdoor play space for children by routinely replacing the bamboo fencing. There is a key pad entry system on the main playroom door with a bell to alert staff of any visitors. A low-level screen and well positioned storage unit help limit children's access to the door. Staff stationed at the doorway during arrival and collection times ensures the exit is closely monitored. Sufficient risk assessments are in place that identify a number of hazards in the playroom and garden and some of the risks these pose to children. These are communicated and reviewed with staff, enabling them to provide a suitable level of supervision. A record of fire drills is kept and outlines clearly time taken to evacuate, who was present and route taken to the allocated fire point. We discussed including times when the fire drills took place to allow for easier monitoring. The log showed that fire drills are practised routinely, 11 times in 2016, 9 times in 2017 and 3 times up to April 2018. Discussions with staff showed they had sufficient knowledge of the fire procedures and their relevant roles and responsibilities.

The RP provides a suitably safe, secure environment.

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

The playroom is welcoming and child centred with integrated bathroom facilities and access to a dedicated outdoor play space. Staff work hard to set up a well organised playroom every day that gives children easy access to different play experiences. Table top activities and two large colourful rugs and cushions allow children to play comfortably. A covered outdoor play area accessed directly from the playroom also enables children to enjoy outdoor activities all year round in line with the Statement of Purpose. However, the statement also states "*...we have no restrictions to outdoor play....*" Our observations and discussions with the deputy and staff team highlighted that this is not consistent. We saw chairs put across the doors at key times to prevent children's access to the garden. We were told that children are rarely able to access all areas outside, including the climbing apparatus and grass area. We heard children and staff talk about the bug hotel and tomato plants they were growing in another part



of the garden. However, they were not able to go and explore and follow their interests.

The RP and staff team work hard to provide an inviting and warm environment for children to play but improvements are needed so that children can follow their interests and make choices about where they play.

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

Children have access to a wide range of toys and age appropriate equipment. The pack away nature of the setting enables staff to check all the resources and equipment on opening and closing and identify things that need repair. Staff alert the health and safety officer of any issues who then reports these to the provider to get the necessary repairs sorted. We discussed the need to renovate the mud kitchen as it was starting to come apart and ensure that mud is always available for the children to use. Staff also confirmed that the soap dispenser and paper towels would be made available for children to access at all times. Low-level open storage units readily encourage children's independence and learning experiences. We watched children easily access musical instruments and books. We also saw large colourful tweezers to help promote children's co-ordination and various electronic resources. Although these were not charged and available for children to use they provide valuable learning experiences.

Suitable steps are taken to ensure there are lots of resources and equipment that support children's independence and learning.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

There is insufficient oversight to ensure full compliance with regulations and National Minimum Standards (NMS). The dedicated deputy and staff team work hard to support the smooth running of the service and have established close relationships with all the parents and their families. They have occasional access to training to support their professional development but current restraints on staffing levels is impacting on children's play and learning experiences.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

The RP/PiC is committed to provide a good service but restraints on her time and budget are impacting on quality. We undertook a full review of all information held by CIW. This highlighted that no notification or change was received regarding the deputy's three month absence or that another staff member was left in daily charge of the setting. The RP/PiC told us that she visits the setting "*one or two days a week*" to undertake some record keeping and communicate expectations. Consequently, the deputy runs the setting on a daily basis, whilst also having a key worker group and responsibilities undertaken on a rota basis each session. This limits the deputy from undertaking key management responsibilities in the absence of the RP/PiC. We examined a wide selection of policies and procedures and documentation. Policies were informative and overall, procedures are well understood and implemented. A number of improvements are required to several records to ensure they are fully compliant. Children's files contained lots of information and discussions with staff showed they had good awareness of their key children's individual needs. We observed five staff files and found that all had essential documents missing to confirm their suitability. The attendance register did not show children's times of arrival and departure but a daily log included if children were absent or had appointments. During the inspection, some children left early, but their times of departure were not recorded. The latest Statement of Purpose reviewed in July 2017, contained some useful information about the setting.

Leadership of the setting requires some improvement to ensure compliance with regulations and NMS's.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Several systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the service. A review of the Quality of Care report highlights what is done well and identifies some areas for improvement. Feedback from termly parent questionnaires and discussions with staff and the deputy are used to help inform the review. In January 2017 the RP/PiC completed the ITERS assessment looking at specific areas around children's learning. A review of the service level agreement action plan clearly highlighted specific areas for development, including results from the ITERS assessment. Some areas identified

for improvement across all systems included, meeting the Welsh language standards, linking planning to the children's Foundation Phase Profiles, updating staff files and following food safety guidance. Evidence from discussions with the deputy and staff team and a review of records and practices found that some improvements are being made. However, progress is slow and reflection and oversight of the action plans is not consistent or sufficiently rigorous.

Systems to monitor the service and support the staff team to achieve the improvements are not sufficiently robust.

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

The dedicated staff team are friendly and approachable and work hard to implement their roles and responsibilities. We observed the deputy provide good support and encouragement throughout the session. As a result, they work well together as a team. Staff know their key children well. However, the key worker system could be strengthened, with particular emphasis around managing children's personal care, to further enhance the strong emotional attachments. The RP/PiC told us that team meetings are undertaken most terms but said that part-time staff do not always attend. She added that minutes of meetings are not always completed or available for staff to read or refer to. All staff undertake mandatory training, including first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene and occasionally access other training to support their continuing professional development. Observations showed that adult-to-child ratios are adequate, including one-to-one support for children with additional needs. However staff told us that the loss of two staff and only two working full time, including the deputy, there are not enough adults to undertake the daily routines and safely supervise all play areas. This is impacting on the quality of the children's care and limiting their choices, independence and play experiences.

Although management of staff could be strengthened, the committed staff team work well together.

#### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

Partnerships are well established and relationships with parents positive. New parents are invited to a 'Welcome' session where they meet their child's allocated key person and receive a useful handbook about the setting. We saw records, including the SoP, last inspection report and policies and procedures displayed on the parent notice board for them to access at any time. Staff support parents to complete all the necessary documentation, including written parental permissions, contracts and the child's 'All about me' document. Parents we spoke to felt well supported by staff and praised the care provided for their children. They value the termly parent consultations about their children's ongoing progress and feel their views and ideas were valued. They take an active part in the setting through parent participation events and sports day was very well attended with many taking part in parent races. Links with other professionals and agencies are strong. The RP/PiC attends meetings with other

professionals involved in the children's care and shares relevant information with local nurseries children move on to.

Partnerships with parents and other agencies are strong.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

Regulation 21 (2) Food provided for children. Drinking water was not available for children to access a drink at any time. The provider confirmed that a jug of water and cups were provided throughout the session.

### **5.2 Areas of non compliance from this inspection**

Regulation 21 (2): This is because children are not provided with access to fresh drinking water at all times.

Regulation 28 (2)(b)(ii) Part 2 of Schedule 2: This is because full and satisfactory information and documentation is not available to confirm staff's suitability.

A non compliance notice has been issued in regards to these two matters.

Regulation 31 (1) Schedule 4 and Regulation 31 (2): This is because CIW were not notified of staff changes. We did not issue non compliance on this occasion as the RP/PiC assured us that CIW will be notified of all future changes in advance of the event occurring.

Regulation 30 (1)(a) Schedule 3.6: This is because the attendance register does not show children's times of arrival and departure to show clearly who is present at any one time in the event of an emergency or safeguarding concern.

We did not issue a non compliance notice on this occasion as the deputy assured us that times of arrival and departure will be included straight away.

### **5.3 Recommendations for improvement**

We identified a number of practice recommendations. These included:

- The infection control audit is not consistently followed or updated resulting in some inconsistent hygiene practices and routines;
- children's choices are restricted at key times during the session meaning children cannot always choose where they play;
- basic staffing levels are impacting on key routines and on children being able to access all areas of the premises inside and outside;
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding;
- improve the use of Welsh throughout the session;
- ensure electronic resources are fully charged and available for children to use;

- improve leadership and management of the service to ensure there is clear oversight of the setting, and
- undertake regular observations to help monitor children's learning and review planning systems to ensure activities are purposeful and link to children's next steps.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was an unannounced, scheduled inspection undertaken by one inspector over two visits totalling approximately 11 hours. Evidence for this report was gathered using the following methodology:

- We reviewed information held by CIW, including the last inspection report, annual Quality of Care Review report and Statement of Purpose;
- we observed the children's play inside and outside;
- we assessed children's interactions with staff and their friends;
- we spoke to staff, the deputy, six parents and the RP;
- we examined policies and procedures, all operational records and documents, action plans and children's learning journals and assessments;
- we carried out a visual inspection of play areas and resources, and
- we reviewed feedback from two CIW parent questionnaires.

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

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Lynn Rusic
Person in charge	Lynne Rusic
Registered maximum number of places	20
Age range of children	Two year olds
Opening hours	09:15 to 11:45 and 12:30 to 15:00 each week day during school term times.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	22 September 2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	13 and 18 July 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Privately owned setting funded by flying start.
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 does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate providing a full service in Welsh as the provider operates in an area where Welsh is not the dominant language. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's ' <i>More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care</i> '.
Additional Information:	





## **Care Inspectorate Wales**

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010**

### **Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010**

## **Non Compliance Notice**

### **Childrens Day Care**

This notice sets out where your service is not compliant with the regulations. You, as the registered person, are required to take action to ensure compliance is achieved in the timescales specified.

**The issuing of this notice is a serious matter. Failure to achieve compliance will result in Care Inspectorate Wales taking action in line with its enforcement policy.**

Further advice and information is available on CSSIW's website  
[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

### **Little Acorns (Moorland and Broadmead Park) Playgroup**

Newport East Community Centre  
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NP19 4NA

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<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Our Ref: NONCO-00006395-GMVN</b>
<b>Non-compliance identified at this inspection</b>	
<b>Timescale for completion</b>	<b>14/09/18</b>
<b>Description of non-compliance/Action to be taken</b>	<b>Regulation number</b>
The provider has not ensured that there is full and satisfactory information available to confirm staff's suitability.	28 (2) (b) [ii] 28 (2) (b) [ii] Sch2.34(j) 28 (2) (b) [ii] Sch2.34(l)
<b>Evidence</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The registered person is not compliant with regulation 28 (2)(b)(ii) 33 and 34 Schedule 2 Part 2: Suitability of workers.</li> <li>- This is because full and satisfactory information was not available to confirm staff's suitability.</li> <li>- The evidence is staff files were not complete. Five staff files observed found proof of identity, references, an employment history, job description, contract of employment and evidence of induction were not consistently in place. This was raised as a recommendation at the last inspection, but has not been sufficiently addressed.</li> <li>- The impact on people using the service is they cannot be certain that staff caring for their children are suitable.</li> </ul>	

<b>Care and Development</b>	<b>Our Ref: NONCO-00006392-CDTP</b>
<b>Non-compliance identified at this inspection</b>	
<b>Timescale for completion</b>	<b>03/09/18</b>
<b>Description of non-compliance/Action to be taken</b>	
<b>Regulation number</b>	
The provider must ensure drinking water is available at all times.	21 (2)
<b>Evidence</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The registered person is not compliant with regulation 21 (2): Food provided for children.</li> <li>- This is because children did not have access to water.</li> <li>- The evidence is drinking water was not made available during the session despite it being a hot, sunny day. Children's drinks bottles were seen in the kitchen but were not used. This was raised as an issue at the last inspection but has not been addressed consistently.</li> <li>- The impact on people using the service is the children could become dehydrated.</li> </ul>	