



Childcare Inspection Report on

Acorns Nurseries Limited

**University of South Wales
Treforest
Pontypridd
CF37 1DL**



Date Inspection Completed

02/09/2019

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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

Description of the service

Acorns Nurseries Limited – Treforest, is based in a self contained building on the grounds of University of South Wales, Pontypridd. The service provides full day care and is registered to accommodate 60 children under the age of 12 years. The responsible individual is Cherie Wilson and the person in charge on a daily basis is Sian Hughes.

Summary

Theme	Rating
<u>Well-being</u>	Excellent
<u>Care and Development</u>	Excellent
<u>Environment</u>	Excellent
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Excellent

1. Overall assessment

The service is welcoming, very friendly and the well-being of all children is at the heart of the service. Staff are very knowledgeable, caring and trained to identify and meet the individual needs of all children who attend. The environment exceeds expectations, particularly the outdoor forest school area. Leaders have an ambitious vision and inspire staff to share this vision and pursue it to provide the best service for children and their families.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection since registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have made one recommendation, more detail is provided at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Excellent

Summary

Children are very happy, active and express much enthusiasm and enjoyment at the service. They can confidently express their thoughts and feelings because they have formed trusting relationships with peers and staff. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their skills and are learning about socially acceptable behaviour in a non-judgemental and positive environment.

Our findings

Children experience a strong sense of belonging because they know they will be listened to and their contributions valued. Children confidently and freely voiced their likes and dislikes; older children provided input into planning of themes and activities and younger children's interests were considered when creating plans. As well as verbal communication, Makaton and picture signs were meaningfully utilised to support non-verbal and pre-verbal children to communicate their wishes. Picture timetables were often utilised for tasks but a recommendation was made to utilise them more frequently, throughout the day, to help certain children transition from one task or activity to the next.

Children are excited, extremely happy and very settled at the service. They settle well, even after periods of absence because they have formed friendships and sound, trusting relationships with staff and peers. One child sought out their favourite member of staff for cwtches following being away from the nursery for the summer holidays, which made them both very happy. Most children were comfortable to converse with new adults safe in the knowledge that consistent staff members were nearby and from time to time would glance at them for reassurance. The babies were soothed when they cried and showed attachment to the staff who cared for them. Children can see most friends of all ages because all but the baby room shared outdoor facilities and they could play together during free play activities and could move between rooms as they wished.

Children are sensitive to the needs of others and show respect for people and property. Children positively supported other children, praising them and applauding their achievements. When a child climbed the steps to the slide independently and looked for approval the children, as well as the staff, clapped and smiled which gave the child an incredible sense of achievement and self worth. All children helped put away toys and resources at the end of activities and most older children tidied away resources before selecting new ones.

Children were highly self motivated to initiate their own age appropriate, stimulating play and were greatly supported and encouraged to take part in activities of their choosing. A group of children eagerly engaged in pretend play by baking cakes and having a party for staff members, whilst other, younger, children preferred to play on their own or alongside other children. Children clearly set the rules for their own play, with some children inviting staff to play in their games whilst others only wanting staff close-by to provide occasional assistance. Nearly all children were enthusiastic to talk or show the staff and us, Care

Inspectorate Wales, what they had been creating or doing during their play. They had considerable freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor area and enjoyed interesting and varied play opportunities or chose to relax and have quiet times in areas with cushions and soft furnishings.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop, learn and become independent. Children can choose what to eat at the service, there is a healthy main meal but there are always alternatives to choose from and we saw children choosing their food at lunch time. They can access drinking water as they need it and the toilets are accessible. Older children's belongings are kept on lower clothes pegs, which allowed children to hang up and collect their coats and to put them on with very little support. All children had access to appropriate resources which allowed them to problem solve and develop creatively. The forest school area was fantastic and provided excellent experiences for children to experiment and be imaginative.

2. Care and Development

Excellent

Summary

All practitioners fully understand and consistently implement policies to promote children's well-being and personal safety. Safeguarding is prioritised and all staff are fully aware of children's individual development, actively delivering and providing care that significantly supports the individual needs of all ages and ability.

Our findings

All staff fully understand and consistently implement policies to promote children's safety and well-being. Staff realise their responsibility to protect and safeguarded children extremely well; they identified and pro-actively managed risks and balanced the positive benefits of activities against the risks they posed. They had a thorough understanding of child protection and had received training which included the "Prevent Duty" and were knowledgeable about circumstances which would require contacting the Local Authority. Reliable, daily practices for keeping children safe from harm were also implemented thoroughly, such as infection control, health and safety and equal opportunities, amongst a comprehensive list of others.

All staff are consistently responsive, they genuinely listen, respect children's views and consistently implement positive behaviour management practices. Staff understood and responded very well to individual communication techniques. They also taught children how to recognise different communication methods, supplementing language development with Makaton from a very early age and displaying signs around the nursery. This enabled everyone to communicate with each other, in the hope that it would reduce situations where a child would feel isolated or unable to communicate with others. Staff provided support to help children think through what they wanted and make decisions for themselves, for example, one child did not want to go outside because it was "too cold" even though the temperature was mild. The staff kindly discussed reasons with the child for and against going outside, the child remained certain it was too cold and decided that they would play indoors with the member of staff respecting the decision. Staff implement positive behaviour management practices, they used appropriate language and explained reasons for decisions so children could understand what the inappropriate behaviour was and know what they could do to alter their behaviour to achieve results that are more positive.

Staff commit to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities for all ages and abilities. Planning documentation demonstrated that staff took children's interests into account and developed learning plans utilising their likes to assist meet learning aims. All staff recognise signs to identify children who may have additional needs. They take purposeful action in a timely manner and make effective use of the support services within the nursery. For example, there are experienced specialist staff who have responsibility for areas of learning such as Special Educational Needs. This provided children with excellent, individualised and appropriate support to meet their needs as well as those of their families.

3. Environment

Excellent

Summary

Leaders prioritise childrens health, safety and welfare by ensuring comprehensive and very effective measures are in place. Children can easily access excellent quality and an extensive variety of age-appropriate furniture, toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors.

Our findings

The environment is safe, secure, and extremely well maintained indoors and outdoors. The service was in a good state of repair because it had been recently renovated and redecorated before opening. Leaders had committed to completing, consistently reviewing and acting upon comprehensive risk assessments, including fire risk assessments. These, along with emergency procedures were clearly communicated to all relevant people accessing the environment. The records kept and observations made demonstrated effective cleaning routines that reflected excellent hygiene practices and the services' very efficient infection control practices successfully minimised risks to children's health and safety. Security measures ensured the main premises and outdoor area were secure and nearly all areas prevented unauthorised access however, where this was not possible, for example the outside forest school area, there were locks on gates and a higher deployment of staff.

The suitability of the premises exceeds expectations. Leaders have ensured the atmosphere is calm, non-judgemental and provides a rich play and learning environment with extensive outdoor provisions. There was a warm, happy feel to the nursery on arrival. Indoors was light and airy, with lots of windows to enable natural light. Additionally, the windows between the rooms means children and staff are easily located within the building and children can see their favourite staff and friends, easing the worry of moving between rooms or transitioning to different areas. The premises is set across one floor with all areas accessible to all children regardless of ability. Staff effectively organise the environment so that it provides a comprehensive range of exciting play opportunities, with storage at child height allowing easy access to resources. The extensive outdoor play space is used as often as possible and the main outdoor area is an extension to the rooms utilised for care. The sensory garden provides a relaxing space for children who require time out and relaxation and the additional forest school area caters for inquisitive children who enjoy hands on learning in a natural environment.

Leaders provide a wide range of high quality resources and equipment. They ensure that all children can easily access extremely good quality and an extensive variety of age-appropriate furniture, toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors to stimulate the

children's interest and imagination. There was a weekly delivery of fresh fruit and veg for the role play areas and other sustainable resources were utilised as much as possible for example, pasta in the maths corner and toys made from natural materials. There were appropriate sized tables and chairs for children in the rooms and main hall, where lunch and snacks were provided. Babies had suitable, sterile facilities to make up their feeds and had a good range of toys to spark their interests. Staff told us that there was a regular cleaning process to keep toys and resources clean and to check that items were not broken or missing parts. If they were then they would be promptly discarded or replaced.

4. Leadership and Management

Excellent

Summary

Leaders exceed the regulations and national minimum standards. They are extremely well organised and have very effective record-keeping systems in place. The business is very well managed and there is a dedication to developing professionally and to managing a successful child care service. Partnership working is excellent.

Our findings

Leadership is purposeful and very effective. Leaders maintain and share an up to date and professional statement of purpose that accurately reflects the service provided. A comprehensive information pack is provided to parents when they first visit the service, it is utilised to gather information to ensure the service and staff have a thorough understanding of the children to be cared for and that they can best meet the children's needs. Regulations are fully complied with and the national minimum standards are consistently exceeded, demonstrating that leaders are knowledgeable about their regulatory responsibilities. Leaders regularly revise and update their policies and procedures and ensure they are implemented in practice.

Self- evaluation and planning for improvement is thorough and significant. Leaders consistently audit their service to ensure that the care they provide is appropriate and meets the needs of the children. They regularly and consistently seek and accurately keep feedback from children, their parents and the staff employed, putting into place purposeful improvements from the information they gain. There is a plan in place to continue improving the premises for example changes to the forest school area so babies can be included in events and learning through nature.

Management of staff and resources is meaningful and effective. Leaders follow timely and very robust recruitment processes to ensure the most appropriate staff join the team. Regular, meaningful supervision and appraisals are undertaken and viewed as integral to driving improvement and monitoring staff practice. It includes a performance management process and includes identifying individual training plans to motivate all practitioners to excel. Leaders consistently ensure that practitioners are deployed effectively to ensure staffing ratios are met and often exceeded and effective arrangements are in place to account for staff absences.

Leaders have developed extremely strong partnerships. Leaders ensure that all communication and engagement systems with parents are innovative and fully inclusive. They keep parents extremely well informed utilising social media and I.T programmes to provide real time feedback and track and share children's progress. Leaders work closely with health professionals, they have clear and effective procedures and protocols in place for sharing information when concerns about children's progress or development arise. These are followed consistently and all children have benefitted greatly from the action taken.

Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

Utilise pictorial support for language development and communication more frequently.

5. How we undertook this inspection

This inspection was undertaken as part of our usual schedule of inspections. One inspector visited the service for a period of approximately 6 hours and 30 minutes. During the inspection we:

- read a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice;
- spoke to children, staff, leaders/ managers and parents and;
- inspected the premises.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Cherie Wilson
Person in charge	Sian Hughes
Registered maximum number of places	60
Age range of children	6 weeks – 5 years
Opening hours	7:30am – 6:00pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This was the first inspection since registration
Dates of this inspection visit	02 September 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 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. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information:	

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