



Childcare Inspection Report on

The Children`s Room

**13 St James Gardens
Uplands
Swansea
SA1 6DY**



Date Inspection Completed

13/01/2020

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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

The Children's Room registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in 2007. They can care for up to 47 children. The service admits children from three months to six years in age. The service operates in the Uplands area of Swansea and is open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday for 48 weeks of the year. The registered person is Elizabeth Byatt. Elizabeth Byatt, Sharon Jones and Lucy Almond are the persons in charge. English is the main language of the service with some Welsh used.

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	Good
Care and Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

1. Overall assessment

The Children's Room nursery provides very good care based on the Montessori approach to learning and development. Children have a very strong voice at this service with many opportunities to make decisions and develop independence. Staff are calm and caring and support children's learning and development in all areas very well. Leaders ensure the nursery is very well maintained and the layout, decoration and resources provided create a stimulating and comfortable place for children to play and learn. Overall, leadership is strong at this service although we have made some recommendations for further improvements.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection, the service now ensures that it gathers the views of children about their service as part of their annual quality of care review and report. They have further embedded the use of the My Montessori Child (MMC) electronic record system to support communication with parents and administrative tasks such as completing accident forms.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made recommendations to the service in relation to policies and procedures, record keeping, deployment of staff, staff supervision arrangements, risk assessments and development planning. The recommendations are detailed at the back of the report.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children have a very strong voice at this nursery. They are happy, settled and confident and enjoy their time there. Their interactions with each other are generally good and they are learning to manage their own behaviour and feelings. Children make good progress through engaging in the range of play and learning opportunities provided.

Our findings

Most children of all ages are very confident to speak and communicate as their wishes and needs are considered and they receive a meaningful response. During our visit, children made their wishes known in a variety of ways. For example, older children told staff what they wanted to do whilst a baby brought a book to a member of staff to indicate they wanted to look at it. This showed they were confident their attempts would be valued and receive a response. All children have the freedom to choose what they would like to play with from the resources and activities within their rooms. Their ideas and views are valued and extended. For example, a group of children were involved in hanging up tree decorations for Chinese New Year and were interested in what they were. They were able to explore them further and discuss what they were with a member of staff before wrapping them up to take to another room. Older children are able to decide when or if they would like their snack and can make some choices about what they eat or drink. Younger children's individual routines are respected so that mealtimes can be flexible if they are asleep.

Children of all ages are well settled. They have formed positive attachments with each other and the staff. Some of the older children told us they like coming to nursery and like the toys. At times, we saw children of all ages choose to sit on staff members laps or seek them out for a cuddle. A baby who was a little unsettled by our presence stayed close to a staff member for comfort and reassurance. All children were clearly very comfortable with the staff and have developed strong bonds with them.

Children generally behave and interact with each other very well. They play cooperatively with or alongside each other. All children receive sensitive support from staff to manage minor disputes or difficulties as is appropriate for their age. They are beginning to learn to manage their own behaviour and explore their feelings.

Children show good levels of engagement and interest in their chosen play activities. Occasionally one or two needed encouragement from staff to settle to something. Children have many opportunities to develop independence as they move freely between the rooms on their floors and choose what they want to do for extended periods during the day. Older children are encouraged to help set up for meals, spread butter on their toast and wash and dry their own cups and plates. Children concentrate well and persevere to finish the things they start. Children make good progress and develop high levels of independence.

2. Care and Development

Good

Summary

Leaders and staff keep children safe and promote a healthy life style. They are sensitive and consistent in supporting and encouraging children to learn and develop in a child-led environment. Staff plan and provide a wide range of interesting and fun activities through themes and festivals whilst also taking account what children need to learn next.

Our findings

The service has a range of suitable policies to keep children safe and healthy. Staff have received training in child protection and safeguarding which is included in their induction. Staff knew the procedures to follow if they had concerns about a child or in the event of an allegation against a leader but not all were clear about their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty. Since the inspection, leaders have informed us that a refresher of this will be included in their next staff meeting. Leaders and staff discuss any pre-existing injuries with parents and record these. Staff record accidents and any medication administered in My Montessori Child (MMC). Parents receive an alert that there is a document for them to see and sign when they collect their child. Staff follow good hygiene procedures in relation to preparing food and nappy changing. The nursery provides a range of healthy snacks in the morning and afternoon and parents provide lunches from home that are stored in a fridge. Staff monitor and record fridge temperatures although the kitchen records would benefit from being better organised. Staff probe any food they heat up to ensure it has reached the correct temperature. This temperature is recorded. The nursery takes steps to keep children safe when they leave the premises including risk assessing and taking a first aid kit with them. First aid kits are kept on each floor in the nursery. Leaders ensure they carry out regular fire drills and they record the outcomes.

Staff manage children's interactions and behaviour very well. They are patient and caring and consistently implement positive behaviour management strategies. For example, when a young child was climbing on a set of drums, a member of staff explained that these were not for climbing and re-directed the child to the baby gym. Consequently, children learn to behave well and benefit from a consistent approach. However, very occasionally staff deployment on the nursery floor does not fully support staff to do this.

Staff support children's learning well. They provide a range of interesting activities for children to choose to take part in. Staff support babies and younger children very well to develop the skills and independence they need for the nursery floor where they are introduced to the full range of Montessori resources and equipment. Children are able to make connections in their learning. For example, when we arrived children were involved in helping to decorate the nursery for Chinese New Year. Staff talked with them about Chinese New Year. Children on the pre-nursery floor were involved in a mark making activity to try to make Chinese letters. On the nursery floor, some of the Montessori resources were adapted to include Chinese New Year, such as a collection of red envelope

for children to fill with money. Children also took part in a circle time activity to hear the story of why Chinese years are named after animals although this activity would have benefitted from more adults in order to ensure all children could participate fully. Staff track children's progress through MMC and plan for individual children's needs.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

Leaders effectively ensure that the premises and equipment are safe, secure and well maintained. Children benefit from access to high quality toys, resources and equipment.

Our findings

The nursery operates over five floors in a Victorian terrace house. The children are cared for on three of the floors. The premises are light and welcoming. The front door is kept locked, and has a bell to request access, and staff open the door for parents and visitors. Leaders and staff routinely record visitors to the nursery. Leaders and staff carry out daily checks on all areas of the environment. Leaders carry out monthly checks on nursery systems such as emergency lighting and contents of first aid kits. Since the inspection, leaders have confirmed that they now also include a monthly check that medication such as auto injectors are in date. Risk assessments are in place although the nursery does not routinely risk assess some specific activities provided for children such as playing with water or foam. Fire risk assessments and emergency procedures are in place.

Leaders and staff organise the environment very well. It provides a good range of play opportunities for the ages and needs of all the children. Leaders ensure that all floors are equipped with high quality, age appropriate resources and equipment, many of which are made from natural materials. Resources and equipment are organised to ensure there is plenty of space for children to move about and play. Children can move freely between the rooms on their floor. Stair gates are in place at the top and bottom of each staircase to allow this to happen safely. The exception to this is the staircase on the ground floor from the nursery. This is a deliberate choice that has been risk assessed and is to help the older children learn the boundaries of the nursery. The nursery is decorated throughout in neutral colours that help produce a calm and relaxing environment for children to spend time in.

All areas of the nursery are exceptionally clean and well maintained which helps to minimise any risks to children's health and safety. The nursery has a secure outdoor garden that children can access from one of the nursery floor rooms. We did not see this area in use during the inspection due to poor weather condition. Leaders told us that they have plans to develop the outdoor area to make some of it more accessible during all weathers. The garden is also home to two freely roaming pet rabbits. They are well looked after and there is a suitable pet policy in place.

4. Leadership and Management

Good

Summary

Leadership and management at the nursery is generally strong. Leaders have a clear vision for the service that they share effectively with staff. They review their service annually and seek the views of others. Leaders and staff develop good relationships with parents.

Our findings

Leaders are very proactive and consistently visible in the nursery. They operate the service in line with regulations and national minimum standards, often exceeding these. They have all of the required documentation and records required. Leaders have suitable policies and procedures in place to support the smooth running of the service although they need to make minor amendments in several to ensure they accurately reflect current working practice. For example, the child protection policy is not always consistent in the use of some terminology and the fire policy does not detail changed procedures in relation to the use of MMC. Leaders ensure that staffing ratios are met and they maintain accurate staff rotas. However, they do not ensure that all staff always sign in or out of the nursery in line with their procedures which means they do not always have an accurate historical record of who has looked after the children at some specific times. They have an up-to-date statement of purpose in place that reflects the service provided. Records are generally well organised and all relevant insurances, maintenance checks, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and mandatory training are up-to-date. Leaders now keep many records on MMC as they are striving to be as paperless as possible.

Leaders review the quality of their care annually and include the views of children, staff and parents. However, they do not always develop clear action plans in relation to the report that they can monitor against targets.

Overall, leaders follow good recruitment processes. However, one of the student files viewed did not contain two references. We also found that leaders are not always ensuring that they have seen proof of staff identity. For example, when checking DBS certificates through the update service. Since the inspection, leaders have advised us that confirmation of having seen proof of identity is now part of their recruitment checklist. Leaders set high expectations, they actively encourage their staff and hold regular staff meeting. Annual appraisals are carried out which include checks on aspects of practice such as safeguarding knowledge. However, they do not ensure that all staff have regular supervision meetings. All the staff we spoke to said they love working at the service and feel well supported.

Leaders and staff develop good partnerships with parents. There is a contract in place for each child and they gather information about preferences and individual needs as well as obtaining a range of relevant permissions. Children's attendance is recorded on MMC. Staff

keep parents informed of their child's progress through MMC as well as through daily verbal feedback, Facebook, emails and periodic parents' evenings.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommend that leaders should:

- Consider developing a more formal risk/benefit assessment approach relating to children's activities;
- ensure all policies and procedures are in line with current practice;
- ensure there is an accurate record of when all staff are present in the nursery;
- ensure deployment of staff on the nursery floor is effective at all times;
- ensure two references are always sought for students;
- ensure you have proof of identity for all staff;
- further develop arrangements for staff supervision meetings; and
- use the quality of care report to develop action plans that better identify areas they would like to develop or improve.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This inspection was part of the scheduled programme of inspections. One inspector undertook the inspection on 13 January 2020 and was at the service for approximately nine hours. As part of the inspection we:

- Considered information held, or received, by CIW;
- made general observations of the interactions between the staff and the children attending the service that day;
- spoke to leaders, including the responsible person, and staff;
- spoke to the children who attended the service that day;
- performed a visual inspection of the premises;
- viewed records and documents including: children's contracts, staff records, policies and procedures, the statement of purpose, the quality of care report, accident, incident and medication records, children's and staff attendance records;
- left questionnaires for parents and staff to complete if they wished; and
- gave feedback by phone on 15 January 2020.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:
www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Elizabeth Byatt
Person in charge	Sharon Jones Lucy Almond Elizabeth Byatt
Registered maximum number of places	47
Age range of children	3 months to 6 years
Opening hours	8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	7 March 2017
Dates of this inspection visit	13 January 2020
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 ' <i>More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care</i> '.
Additional Information:	

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