



Childcare Inspection Report on

Little Acorns Nursery

**Community Hall
37 Cimla Common
Neath
SA11 3SU**



Date Inspection Completed

15/10/2019

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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

Little Acorns was registered in October 2009 by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). They are based in a community hall in Neath and are registered to care for a maximum of 20 children. They care for children aged between 2 and 3 years old and operate Monday to Thursday between 9am and 12pm. The registered person and the person in charge is Betty Morgan. Care is provided through the English language with some Welsh used during activities.

Summary

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

1. Overall assessment

Children are settled, happy and have opportunities to make choices about their play. Staff show care, kindness and warmth to the children. They work consistently to keep children safe and have basic systems in place to develop the children. Leaders provide a generally safe and secure environment for children to explore however some areas are in need of improvement. Leaders are manage the service adequately, however, some improvements are needed to ensure the service is fully compliant.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection, the service has completed a basic evaluation of the service including seeking parent and staff views. Staff have attended training including safeguarding and food hygiene and leaders have developed a whistle blowing policy including record sheets for staff.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have advised the registered person that improvements are needed in relation to supervision and appraisals of staff (regulation 29) and staff attendance records (regulation 30) in order to fully meet the legal requirements. Notices have not been issued on this occasion, as there was no immediate or significant impact for children using the service.

We expect the registered person to take action to rectify these and they will be followed up at the next inspection.

We have also made a number of recommendations and these are detailed at the back of the report.

1. Well-being

Adequate

Summary

Children feel sufficiently safe, happy and valued with nearly all children settling quickly into the routine. They make choices about their play. Interactions were generally positive with children responding to adult intervention in relation to behaviour or extending play. Children are interested in the activities and play on offer and develop their skills appropriately.

Our findings

Children have some opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play. For example, children chose from a variety of activities set out and could choose from a choice of drink. Children speak or express themselves as they receive a consistent response/interaction.

Children cope with separation because appropriate daily transitions support individual needs. For example, every child was enthusiastically greeted by their name and had individual attention when arriving at the service. Nearly all children came in settled and any unhappy children experienced reassurance and settled quickly. Children are content and express enjoyment. They have a sense of belonging, are beginning to form friendships and are becoming familiar with routines. Children collected jigsaws and gave them to staff during tidy up time. They smiled proudly after receiving praise.

Interactions between children and adults are positive and nearly all children co-operate well. A few children showed some negative interactions, however, they were quickly reminded of appropriate behaviour. For example, when playing with the slide, the children generally took turns, however, when they began to argue, they were quickly reminded of the correct behaviour and went back to taking turns. Children shared their toys with staff, giving them the phone to talk into and sat on staff member's laps for cuddles.

Children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. Children have freedom to safely explore their indoor environment and have many opportunities to initiate their own play. Children were quiet, settled and played for an age appropriate amount of time throughout. Children shouted "yay" after going down the slide and "wow" when stickle bricks were brought out after snack time. Nearly all of the children joined in with 'ring, a ring, a roses', jumping, singing and smiling while taking part.

Children experience a variety of age/developmentally appropriate opportunities that promote their all-round development. They have some opportunities to develop their independence skills enabling them to do some things for themselves successfully. For example, the children collected their own plate of fruit for snack time.

2. Care and Development

Adequate

Summary

Overall, staff keep children safe and healthy although there are a few areas which need improvement. They manage interactions appropriately, consistently demonstrating positive behaviour and regularly praising the children. Staff promote children's play, learning and development adequately however staff provide limited opportunities to develop children's independence.

Our findings

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and well-being. For example they placed the changing mat behind the door to ensure more privacy for the children during nappy changing. Staff implement appropriate cleaning and hygiene practices and they followed good hygiene procedures, following the services policies. Staff understand their responsibilities to protect children, consistently reminding them to keep safe, however, not all staff were confident about the correct procedure to follow if there was a child protection issue. Staff consistently reminded children about safety including sitting on the slide and not to run in the hall. They kept accident records and a first aid kit was available if needed, however, some of the contents had expired. Since the inspection, the service has audited and restocked their first aid kit.

Staff are consistently responsive, they listen and respect children's views. Their interactions are positive, demonstrating warmth and kindness. Staff are sensitive to the needs and experiences of individual children. Staff understand the behaviour management policy and generally implement positive behaviour management strategies. For instance, staff used positive comments when speaking with children including "*well done*", "*good girl/boy*" and "*we all play together/take turns*". They act as good role models at all times, consistently interacting with children and reminding them of appropriate behaviour.

Staff provide an appropriate range of play and learning activities. They asked simple questions to enhance children's play, for example "*can you find...*", "*where is...*" and "*what sound does it make*". Staff are aware of children's individual development and can discuss individual children's needs. They complete a basic assessment and recording of children's skills and development, however, there are no plans for children's next steps and reviewing their progress. Staff provide some opportunities for children to develop their independence. However, staff missed some opportunities to further develop the children's independence skills. For example, staff dried the children's hands and poured their drinks.

3. Environment

Adequate

Summary

Leaders and staff provide a safe and secure environment for children to explore. They undertake daily visual risk assessments, however, leaders need to regularly review the written risk assessments and keep their own record of safety certificates/testing. Leaders provide an organised and sufficiently suitable environment for children and offer appropriate toys, resources and equipment.

Our findings

Leaders ensure that the environment is generally safe, secure, and reasonably well maintained indoors. They complete satisfactory written general and fire risk assessments, however, these are not reviewed regularly. Since the inspection the leaders have confirmed that they have updated their written risk assessment. Leaders explained that a daily visual risk assessment is undertaken and any issues are resolved immediately or minimised. Records show that leaders undertake regular fire drills, including specific details of the evacuation and the fire extinguishers and fire blanket have been tested and checked. However, the PAT testing and heating certificate was not available to inspect on the day. Since the inspection leaders have confirmed that the PAT testing and electric heating has been completed.

Leaders ensure the environment has good indoor play space for children to move freely. They organise the environment appropriately so that it provides a satisfactory range of play opportunities suitable for the age ranges cared for. The premises are in the main welcoming and accessible to most with colourful displays on walls. The environment is set up and cleared away at the beginning and end of some days, depending on who else is using the hall, as the service is based in a community hall.

Leaders ensure that children can access a broad variety of good quality age-appropriate furniture, toys and equipment indoors. They offer a satisfactory range of resources including step up stools, potties and low level chairs and tables. They provide a range of resources to promote children's curiosity about the wider society, promoting equality, and learning about cultural awareness. There is no outdoor play area but leaders make alternative arrangements to take children outside.

4. Leadership and Management

Adequate

Summary

Leaders are working adequately to ensure that the service is generally well run and meets most of the regulations. They have a basic self-evaluation process in place. Leaders appropriately manage the staff and other resources, however, some areas need improvement to ensure the service is fully compliant. Leaders are developing secure relationships with parents.

Our findings

Leaders ensure they comply with many relevant regulations and national minimum standards and they have an adequate knowledge of their regulatory responsibilities. Leaders have a basic statement of purpose, which reasonably reflects the service, however, some elements were missing. For example, it did not include the arrangements to review the statement of purpose or the facilities available. Since the inspection the service has updated their statement of purpose to include the missing elements. They ensure that policies and procedures are generally implemented in practice however some policies and procedures need to be updated. For example, the safeguarding policy did not include the procedure to follow if there was an allegation made against the registered person/safeguarding officer and others included the old phone number for CIW. Since the inspection the leaders have confirmed that they have updated their health and hygiene policy. Leaders keep relevant records, however, they only seek verbal permissions from parents for taking the children on outings, no incident records are kept and there were no up to date entries on the staff registers.

Leaders seek the suggestions/comments of the parents and staff and have a basic annual self-evaluation process in place. They seek the suggestions and comments of parents through a questionnaire and collect staff feedback through discussions during staff meetings. However, they have not included detail of what they have done well or areas which need improvement.

Leaders follow a safe recruitment process to safeguard children. However, they had not notified CIW of changes of members of staff. Since the inspection, the leader has sent in a notification form of new members of staff. They have satisfactory systems in place to update suitability checks as required, however, at the time of the visit the registered person had not provided CIW with her Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate to complete the process. Since the visit, the registered person has provided an original copy of the DBS certificate and completed the process. Some staff complete mandatory training, however, not all staff have been offered training and there has been no training on Prevent duty. Although staff fill in basic annual staff appraisal forms, these are not used as part of a formal process and no written record is kept of personal targets. Leaders explained that

they regularly meet and staff commented that they are able to speak to leaders when they feel necessary. However, there is no formal staff supervision system in place.

Leaders ensure that communication and engagement systems with parents are adequate. They generally keep parents informed through verbal discussion about daily activities. Feedback from parents was positive. Leaders are developing links with relevant professionals to support children.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

Following our inspection we recommend that:

- leaders review and update their policies;
- leaders ensure that all staff are confident with the correct process to follow if there was a child protection issue;
- the registered person to send in the original copy of the DBS certificate to complete the DBS process;
- leaders ensure all staff attend mandatory training
- all staff have training for Prevent duty;
- written consent for outings from parents is recorded;
- a separate record of incidents is kept;
- staff develop planning for next steps and reviewing children's progress;
- staff ensure children are given more opportunities to develop independence;
- leaders regularly review and if necessary update the risk assessments;
- leaders develop their quality of care report; and
- leaders ensure safety/maintenance certificates are available to inspect.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. Two inspectors visited the service on 15 October 2019 for just over 4 hours.

As part of this inspection we:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice during the visit to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided;
- observed practice and completed observations using the SOFI 2 tool to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided by staff;
- carried out a visual inspection of the room/ areas that the children have access to;
- spoke to the staff and parents; and
- provided feedback to the service by telephone on 22 October 2019.

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 Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Betty Morgan
Person in charge	Betty Morgan
Registered maximum number of places	20
Age range of children	2 – 3 year olds
Opening hours	Monday – Thursday 9am – 12pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	29 February 2016
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	15 October 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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