



Childcare Inspection Report on

PALS Daycare

**Gnoll Primary School
Wellfield Avenue
Neath
SA11 1AQ**



Date Inspection Completed

17/12/2019

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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

PALS Day Care registered in 2012. They provide care for a maximum of 19 children aged two to 12 years. The service operates from a self-contained classroom in Gnoll Primary School, Neath. The service is overseen by the registered person Mary Rudez, who is also the person in charge on a day to day basis. The service operates Monday to Thursday from 8:00am to 6:00pm and Friday from 8:00am to 5:30pm. The service is an English language provision and promotes the use of some basic Welsh language.

Summary

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

1. Overall assessment

Children are settled, happy and enjoy their time at the service. Children are cared for by experienced and qualified staff, who are caring and respond effectively to children's needs and promote their independence well. The service offers welcoming play spaces and an outdoor area suitable for play, learning and quiet times. There is a good range of toys, resources and equipment available. Leadership and management is good. The setting has developed good links with the community, other professionals and works closely with the parents and the school.

2. Improvements

During the course of the inspection the provider has, as a result of being notified that they were non-compliant with regulations, taken prompt action to:-

- ensure that all staff recruitment information is available for each staff member.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have made recommendations, which are detailed at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children are secure, happy and valued in a service that promotes their well-being.

There is a good ethos of listening to children's views and feelings. There are good opportunities for children to play and learn in line with their age and stage of development.

Our findings

Children had a good voice and were listened to well at the service. They confidently moved from one play area to another and expressed their views quite clearly. For example, a young child asked staff to help them put their jumper on and another asked to play 'tap-tap box'. Children helped themselves to snacks and drinks and had more if they wanted. They freely helped themselves to toys, resources, looking in boxes and drawers, as these were stored at low level. Children decided where to play and had good opportunities for free flow indoor/outdoor play, as staff left the door open to allow them free choice at various times of the day. They had a good mix of free play opportunities and focussed tasks, however, when children undertook a snowman craft activity, placing a hat and scarf on the snowman, staff directed them instead of allowing children to choose where to place the items.

Children arrived happily at the service, including newer children, and went to staff or their preferred play areas. We heard one child say, "welcome" when children arrived after school. There was a very relaxed atmosphere and we saw children approach staff for support and reassurance with ease, cuddling with staff at story time or just to chat about their day at school. Older children told us that they had fun at the club and we saw that children were not in a rush to leave at the end of the day.

Nearly all children played happily together. We saw that younger children were learning to co-operate and share. For example both children responded well to the staff intervention and played nicely together, when a sharing issue arose. We saw children use their imagination to build a boat from cardboard and various resources available to them. They told us that they were pirates. Younger children enjoyed on the playdough table and decorating the Christmas tree, whilst older children enjoyed playing outdoors in the school yard. Children's achievements, craft work and good behaviour rewards were displayed on the boards, promoting a sense of belonging.

Younger children smiled and showed excitement in their facial expressions and body language as they joined in with staff to do a music and movement session. They thoroughly enjoyed being active and moving around the room. Children engaged in a good range of activities and they enjoyed free play outdoors. We saw them take part in a Christmas craft activity, role play, being creative with playdough, join in with song and story time and exploring the attached outdoor play area. We saw a good selection of natural

objects and resources such as wood and acorns for children to be creative with. We heard lots of giggling when children played in the den and when staff joined them to play the 'honey bear' game.

Children are developing well and their self help skills are greatly promoted. Children helped themselves to the toys, equipment and resources as these were arranged so that they could help themselves to them. We also saw children sit and listen to a story and answer questions with enthusiasm. We heard children say, "*it's a tree*", when a staff member pointed to it in the book. Children's independence was promoted at every opportunity, young children put their dishes in the bowl after snacks, visited the toilet, washed and dried their hands, use the tissues to wipe their noses when needed and most children put on their coats independently before going home. Staff were on hand to offer support should the need arise.

2. Care and Development

Good

Summary

Staff generally have a good awareness of the children's individual needs. They have a range of procedures in place to keep children safe and healthy. Activities are planned to help with the children's overall development. Staff are responsive to children and make them feel welcome.

Our findings

Staff have warm and caring relationships with the children. Staff provide a good variety of stimulating play opportunities for the children to promote their all-round development. They know the children well and overall meet their individual needs effectively. Leaders were trialling a new allergy method with wooden spoons and photographs to identify any children with allergies.

Staff were aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and staff gave satisfactory responses when discussing safeguarding scenarios. A child protection policy was in place and leaders had updated the policy to include the Radicalisation and Prevent Duty information. Leaders offered a healthy snack at break time, however, at lunch time children brought in their own lunch boxes or parents could opt for the meals provided by the school, which on the day of the visit was sausage, chips and beans. Leaders told us that they do not have control over the meals offered by the school. Staff are mainly effective at keeping children safe and healthy. They promote the Healthy Preschool Programme and the tooth brushing initiative but we did not see children brush their teeth at the time of the visit. Staff encouraged all children to wash their hands after play, before meals and after toilet visits.

Staff are good role models; they promote positive behaviour, and manage interactions well. They managed behavioural issues effectively and were consistent. Staff praised children for their efforts and good behaviour. For example, staff encouraged children to share and to help to tidy up. They were responsive when children wanted a cuddle or wanted to sit on their lap during story time.

Staff joined in with children's play and we heard lots of laughter, such as when they created a jumping board from 'loose parts' and a staff member supported the younger children to safely jump off the board. Staff played games with the older children or sat and chatted to them about their interests and hobbies. Staff promoted children's development by constantly chatting to them about what they were doing, about what they wanted to do next or just generally chatting about their school day. Staff encouraged children's independence fully, for example they encouraged children to serve themselves at snack and pour their own drinks, to select their own resources and to collect and hang their coats and bags. Staff worked well as a team and they communicated successfully to meet children needs.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

Leaders ensure that the playrooms are light, airy and welcoming. Children had good free-flow access to an enclosed outside play area. Leaders ensured that children have a varied and good range of age appropriate resources and toys. The environment is child centred, safe and well maintained.

Our findings

The entrance to the service was secure from unauthorised access. Staff ensured that the gates to the outdoor areas were secure and there is fencing surrounding the areas. A record of any visitors to the service was kept. Leaders had completed and reviewed risk assessments. These were general assessments relating to slips, trips, falls and burns and not specific to the risks identified in each area used. Records evidenced annual tests for heating and electrical equipment and that staff carried out fire drills to keep children and visitors safe, however, leaders were not always consistent in recording the number of children present during fire drills.

The indoor and outdoor play areas were welcoming and provided a good stimulating environment for play, learning and development. There was plenty of space and facilities to meet the children's needs, including various areas for quiet time, circle time, table top play, floor play and messy play in line with the principles of the Foundation Phase. The premises promoted independence well, for example children could freely and independently visit the toilet when needed. Children had good opportunities for free flow access to the outdoor area, staff at various times of the day, left the door open so that children could choose whether to play indoors or outdoors. Resources were stored at low level so that children could access them easily and we saw that staff rotated resources to sustain children's interests. There is a suitable outdoor play area, which leaders had resourced appropriately with toys, equipment and experimental areas such as the mud kitchen and planting areas.

Children had access to a good range of good quality toys and materials that suited their needs and interests, however, only low level table and chairs were available. There was a variety of natural and recycled resources for children to use their imagination. All areas, equipment, furniture and toys were clean and in good condition. However, the 'walking bus rope' was marked and soiled. We saw that staff ensured that children reflected on and celebrated different cultures and identities. For example, there were different resources representing different cultures and traditions. Staff told us that they had celebrated various festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter and the Rugby World Cup. Staff used some basic Welsh language and we saw a staff member, on one occasion, use sign language.

4. Leadership and Management

Good

Summary

The leadership at the service is effective. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities, which means that the service runs smoothly on a day to day basis. All required records, policies and procedures and nearly all staff recruitment information was in place. The service has good partnerships between parents, the school, the local community and other agencies.

Our findings

Leaders are mainly organised and the service is well run. Leaders had a statement of purpose in place which clearly reflected the service provided. However, some national minimum standard information was missing. There was a range of policies and procedures, which leaders had reviewed and which were available for parents. Children's records sampled were in order but some records had not been fully completed. For example, some forms did not contain emergency contact numbers and signatures where required. Prior to the publication of this report, the registered person confirmed to CIW that an audit of children's records had taken place to ensure that all information was completed. The systems to monitor the development of children were effective. Staff completed and monitored development trackers, updating them when children achieved their goals and targets. A children's attendance register was completed and a staff register was in place, however, leaders did not always ensure that the staff register was fully completed and the children's register did not indicate the age range of the children. Leaders told us that they had registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) to safely record and store electronic information.

Leaders had an effective self-evaluation system to identifying areas for improvement. They obtained feedback via questionnaires. A quality of care report has been produced and leaders had identified areas for improvement. They agreed to forward a copy of the report to CIW.

Leaders had a relatively robust recruitment process. Staff files sampled mostly contained the required information to meet regulations. However, three of the five files did not contain a birth certificate and one file did not have two references. Prior to the publication of this report, the registered person confirmed that staff files had been audited and now held all the required information to fully meet regulations. Staff supervision and appraisals had taken place and staff told us that they felt well supported and had regular opportunities to discuss issues and attend training to support their personal development. Nearly all staff were qualified to the required levels and held the required core training certificates in first aid, child protection and food hygiene. Training records showed that the leaders also

provided regular training for staff. For example speech and language, Prevent, signalong, understanding special educational needs and autism awareness.

Leaders provided parents with verbal and written information about their child's development. We heard staff and parents share information at collection time. There is good partnership working, the service invites the parents to support the service by volunteering or fundraising. The service has good links with other agencies such as the health visitor, the local authority and the emergency services. There is also very good partnerships with the school and they have various outings to the local community, such as visits to the library and parks.

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 provider should:

- Ensure that children's craft work is self-directed;
- refer to Welsh Government's publication of Food and Nutrition for Childcare Providers, for advice on providing healthy food and drinks;
- consider revising the risk assessments to clearly identify specific risks in each room/area;
- ensure that the number of children present during the fire drill practices are always recorded;
- deep clean or replace the walking bus rope;
- ensure that age appropriate tables and chairs are available for older children;
- ensure that the national minimum standards information is included in the services statement of purpose;
- ensure that the staff register is fully completed at all times and to consider incorporating the age range of the children onto the children's register and;
- provide a copy of the quality of care report to CIW.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

One inspector visited the service on 13 and 17 December 2019 for approximately 7 hours.

We:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice;
- completed a premises inspection;
- spoke to some children and staff and
- provided detailed telephone feedback to the registered person on 14 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	Mary Rudez
Person in charge	Mary Rudez
Registered maximum number of places	19
Age range of children	2 to 12 years
Opening hours	8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Thursday and 8:00am to 5:30pm Friday.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	28 February and 2 March 2017
Dates of this inspection visits	13 and 17 December 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Flying start places are offered.
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. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area and there is no intention of becoming a bilingual service. Basic Welsh and signage is used. 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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