



Inspection Report

Little Acorns Day Nursery

**37 Bryn Road
Brynmill
Swansea
SA2 0AP**



Date Inspection Completed

12/12/2024

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2024.

*You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.*

About Little Acorns Day Nursery

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Kathryn Jones
Registered places	34
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	30 November 2021
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards being a bilingual service.

<u>Well-being</u>	Good
<u>Care and Development</u>	Good
<u>Environment</u>	Good
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are very happy and settled. They have an extremely strong voice with many opportunities to make choices from a wide range of engaging activities. Children enjoy their play and learning and confidently follow their own interests. They have good opportunities to develop independence and self-help skills.

Staff have a thorough understanding of their role and implement policies successfully. They consistently promote children's safety, supporting positive behaviour well. Staff meet children's needs effectively. They are calm and caring and provide a range of interesting activities to support children's learning and development.

The nursery is safe, secure, clean and well maintained. Leaders have recently made significant changes to the environment which are developing extremely well and are highly beneficial in supporting children's play opportunities. Staff also make use of the local environment such as the park and beach to further extend children's experiences.

Overall, leaders comply with regulations and often exceed the national minimum standards. They have a very strong vision for the setting and are passionate about providing a high-quality provision. Leaders work with and support staff extremely well. They work collaboratively with other agencies, and we have received excellent feedback from parents about the service they and their children receive from the nursery.

Well-being

Good

Children have a strong voice. They make purposeful choices and decisions about what they do and how they spend their time. For example, babies giggle as they roll in the ball pool or slide down the soft play ramp, older children decide they want to draw, and toddlers engage well with a large train track. Most children communicate confidently as is appropriate for their ages because they know staff will listen to them and respond, such as when suggesting which music and movement programme they want or indicating with a spoon they want more flour. Many children become confident to interact with visitors, playing roll the ball or asking questions.

Nearly all children are extremely happy, settled and cope well with separation from their parents or carers. A few who need a little support at times readily turn to staff for cuddles and reassurance knowing they will receive the attention they need. Children of all ages become very familiar with the routines of the nursery which helps them develop a sense of security and belonging and contributes to smooth transitions throughout the day.

Children behave very well in line with their ages and stages of development. Younger children play alongside each other as is appropriate whilst older children begin to play together and develop friendships. They benefit from staff who support them well to learn to share, take turns and cooperate with rules and acceptable behaviour.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and are interested and self-motivated in their play and learning. They access a wide range of opportunities within the nursery and out and about in the local area, which promote their all-round development. They follow their own interests and engage enthusiastically in activities which are both child and adult led. For example, as they build with bricks with their friends, work with a staff member to make playdough, or join in with 'tap, tap box'. Through their play and interactions children develop skills in all areas and learn to concentrate and persevere for extended periods.

Children are developing their independence and self-help skills well. They freely explore their environments making decisions about what they do and help to put things away when they have finished with them. Children begin to eat independently from a very young age and increasingly manage their own personal needs such as washing their hands and using the bathroom as they get older. They learn to do things for themselves successfully which adds to their developing confidence and self-esteem.

Care and Development

Good

Staff consistently implement the setting's policies and procedures and work effectively to keep children safe and healthy. Leaders and staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children and gave confident answers to safeguarding questions. All staff have safeguarding training which is relevant to their role. Staff record the times they and children attend the nursery. However, there were times when they had not recorded departure times and there was no system in place to record staff breaks or movements around the nursery. This means it is not always possible to track which staff are caring for which children. Since the inspection, leaders have devised a format to record this information which they will monitor. Whilst no further immediate action is needed this is an area for improvement and we expect the provider to maintain action. Staff consistently complete records for accidents, incidents and any injuries children may arrive with which they ask parents to sign. They implement effective hygiene practices and there are excellent procedures in place to manage allergies and health needs. Leaders and staff promote a healthy lifestyle. A dedicated cook prepares healthy meals and snacks daily on the premises and staff ensure all children have plenty of opportunities for physical activity and to play outside in the fresh air.

Staff interact extremely well with children of all ages. They create a calm, respectful atmosphere and act as very good role models. Staff implement a good behaviour management policy using praise, encouragement and positive strategies successfully to help children learn appropriate behaviour.

Staff meet the needs of children effectively. They provide a play-based provision which allows children to choose and lead their own play and learning. Staff are responsive to children's needs and interests. Alongside child led play they provide adult led activities which children can choose to join in with such as music and movement or singing. Staff know children well and engage meaningfully with them in their play. They take opportunities to support and extend children's learning such as naming objects to help develop vocabulary, discussing the pictures they draw or using incidental Welsh. They also allow children plenty of time to play uninterrupted and develop their own themes and interests such as in role play or when building with construction toys. Staff plan regular outings in the local area which supports children's developing understanding of their wider community and world. Staff observe children regularly and track their development. They identify next steps in children's learning and development and share these records with parents. Staff assess children's language development and are alert to children who may have additional learning needs. They work very well with parents and other agencies to promote positive outcomes for all children.

Environment

Good

Leaders ensure they care for children in premises that are safe and secure inside and outside. They ensure the front door is locked and they record visitors to the nursery. They have put in place comprehensive risk assessments which they add to as needed. Staff, including kitchen staff, complete detailed daily safety and cleaning checks. Safety features such as stair gates and radiator covers are in place and leaders confirmed all maintenance checks for the building and relevant appliances are up to date. Leaders instigate and record fire evacuation drills every six months and there is an external fire escape for the upper floors. The nursery is clean and well maintained and provides a warm and comfortable environment for children to play and learn.

The playrooms are light, bright and very inviting. Over the course of the last year leaders have secured grant funding to extensively develop the nursery environment. They have used this effectively to combine rooms on the floors used by the children who have moved on from the baby room. This has had a hugely beneficial impact on the children's free flow play opportunities. Leaders told us they are hoping to secure further funding to also combine the two rooms used by babies into one larger room. All rooms have ample space for children to move around and play freely. The layouts provide them with areas to explore and to access toys and resources independently. The layout of the nursery floor was not as well progressed at the time of the inspection visit as the building work had only very recently been completed. However, since our visit, leaders and staff have provided photographs of further extensive development of this floor so that children have even better independent access to play experiences. There is easy access to toilets for older children and well-placed nappy changing facilities that allow staff to ensure children's privacy is respected. Space for children to rest or sleep undisturbed is well provided for.

Leaders provide children with a large outdoor play area which they access directly from the nursery floor. The outdoor area gives children of all ages further extensive opportunities for learning and development across a range of skills. For example, there are spaces for children to be physically active, to garden and to explore materials such as sand, water, and mud. There are separate areas to ensure babies and younger children can play safely. A substantial canopy over part of the garden means children can play outside in most weathers. Staff ensure they make good use of local parks and the beach to further extend children's outdoor experiences.

Leaders create a stimulating, interesting and often exciting play environment. They provide a broad and plentiful range of resources, furniture and equipment which are suitable for the children using them. Resources include many natural materials and those that children can use flexibly and imaginatively along with those that support diversity and cultural awareness. Staff ensure they are clean and well maintained.

Leadership and Management

Good

The registered person has an excellent vision for her nursery and is passionate about her work. She is a very good role model and works extremely well with other leaders and staff to provide high-quality childcare which is focused on outcomes for children. Leaders have developed a very good range of useful policies and procedures and promptly made minor amendments to one or two during the inspection process. There is a detailed statement of purpose which accurately reflects the nursery and provides useful information for parents. Overall, required paperwork is in place, completed well and monitored successfully.

The registered person is highly reflective, recognises the importance of self-evaluation and planning for improvement and welcomes any ideas to improve practice. She carries out a thorough quality of care review annually. She seeks the views of children, parents, and staff to contribute to this and help evaluate the impact of what they do. She uses her review to identify relevant areas for improvement and works through these. For example, increasing Welsh provision is a current target. The registered person has developed a Welsh Language policy and is committing to undertake the bronze Welsh Promise. She is supporting staff to develop their Welsh language skills and increase the use of Welsh within the nursery. Connecting the two playrooms on each floor is also an on-going improvement.

Leaders implement appropriate recruitment procedures to safeguard children and ensure staff are suitable. Staff are well qualified, and leaders ensure they keep up to date with mandatory checks and training such as Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks, safeguarding and food hygiene training. Leaders support staff extremely well with induction training, mentoring systems for new and training staff, annual appraisals, and regular purposeful check in and supervision meetings underpinned by peer observations. They encourage a culture of continuous professional development. Staff we spoke to told us they enjoy working at the nursery and feel well supported. Leaders deploy staff well to ensure they meet staffing ratios and as a result always meet children's needs effectively.

Leaders and staff establish strong partnership working with outside agencies such as local authority advisers and speech and language professionals. They are working with a national early years organisation towards their accreditation award and have won awards for aspects of their provision such as enabling environments and food and nutrition. They work well with Care Inspectorate Wales. The registered person has developed an informative website for the nursery. Leaders and staff develop excellent relationships with parents. They gather all the information needed to meet children's individual needs before they start at the setting, although the consent for emergency medical treatment was not specific enough. Since the inspection visit, leaders have updated this consent. Staff keep parents informed about their children's day, and their progress through a variety of means such as verbal feedback at handovers, periodic progress reports and emails. Parents and carers we spoke to were highly complimentary of the service they and their children receive and we received numerous feedback questionnaires following the inspection visit which all gave excellent reviews of the nursery

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
30	The provider must monitor the completion of registers for children and staff to ensure they	New

	provide an accurate record of which adults are caring for which children.	
30	The setting's records were incomplete	Achieved

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
Ensure policies and procedures are kept up to date with the most recent guidance and legislation.

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.

Was this report helpful?

We want to hear your views and experiences of reading our inspection reports. This will help us understand whether our reports provide clear and valuable information to you.

To share your views on our reports please visit the following link to complete a short survey:

- [Inspection report survey](#)

If you wish to provide general feedback about a service, please visit our [Feedback surveys page](#).

Date Published 10/01/2025