Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Acorns Priory House

Priory House
1 Lisvane Road
Lisvane
Cardiff
CF14 0SA



Date Inspection Completed

28/02/2023

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About Acorns Priory House

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Acorns Nurseries Ltd
Registered places	90
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	21 December 2020
Is this a Flying Start 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.

Well-being	**Excellent**
Care and Development	**Excellent**
Environment	**Excellent**
Leadership and Management	**Excellent**

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

Summary

Acorns Priory House is very child focused with a strong emphasis upon children's participation and consultation. Children are very engaged in their play and benefit fully from the exciting play and extensive learning opportunities available to them. They develop very good social skills and thrive from warm relationships with the staff. They are encouraged to be as independent as possible and develop to their full potential.

Staff are appropriately qualified, motivated and professional. They understand children's developmental stages and individual needs very well, and act as warm nurturing role models. They know and implement comprehensive policies and procedures to keep children and the environment safe. They manage children's behaviour very well and plan very effectively around children's interests to keep them engaged and curious.

The nursery is maintained to a very high standard and is well managed to ensure children are cared for within a safe and nurturing environment. The resources and equipment, both inside and outside, are extensive and of a high quality. The environment is very stimulating and promotes children's play and learning exceptionally well.

Leadership and management arrangements are exceptionally good; managers are very well supported by a comprehensive management structure and are experienced, organised and dedicated to providing an excellent service.

Well-being Excellent

Children are confident communicators as their wants, moods and needs are fully considered. They have exciting opportunities to make choices and decisions about what affects them. Their opinions and interests are highly valued, acted upon and continually reviewed. For example, children enthused about having visited a garden centre with their family. As a result of this, children were given the opportunity to plant seeds and grow plants.

Children cope extremely well with separation from parents/carers because efficient daily transitions fully recognise and support individual needs and are effectively implemented. Furthermore, when transitioning from one base room to the next age group, children are accompanied by a familiar member of staff which helps them settle. Children express enthusiasm and enjoyment and have a strong sense of belonging. Photographs of children's family members are displayed for them to see and staff clearly know children's family circumstances. Interactions between children and adults are consistently enriching and children co-operate enthusiastically and feel inspired and motivated. Pre-school children knew that the magnifying glasses made things bigger and were eager to demonstrate this to us and were keen to share their objects of interests during show and tell sessions.

Children are fully engaged and consistently show respect for property and people. After playing with the puppets, a young child, without prompting, placed them back in their basket and showed us where they needed to be stored. Children are highly motivated, animated and fully invested in their play and learning. They enjoy interesting and stimulating opportunities indoors and outdoors, and can choose to relax and have quiet times as they need. Children are confident and happily demonstrated to us how they were threading pasta onto pipe cleaners and encouraged us to try.

Children are self-motivated and initiate their own play. They influence their tasks and activities because child led activities predominate. Children had suggested setting up a charity shop as a play activity they were interested in. Children brought in donations from home, set up and played shop and then concluded the activity with a trip to a local charity shop, in order to donate their own items. Allowing children to follow their own ideas and interests encourages them to feel proud and has a positive impact on their self- esteem.

Children of all ages have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills enabling them to do as much for themselves as possible. Children are encouraged to eat independently from a young age, help tidy their toys away, and grow increasingly confident using the bathroom and washing and drying their hands. Older children successfully pour their drinks at mealtimes and are able to put on their hats and coats to go outside.

Care and Development — Excellent

Nearly all staff fully understand and consistently implement the setting's policies to promote children's healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and well-being. Safeguarding is prioritised and nearly all staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children. Nearly all staff identify and effectively, manage risk. Nearly all staff understand and encourage children to eat healthily, and dedicated cooks provide healthy, nutritious, and appetising meals for children. Identified staff take on the role of dietary monitors to ensure children's dietary needs and any allergies are dealt with appropriately and safely. They update all information and ensure all staff are fully informed regarding children's dietary/allergy requirements. House keepers are employed who consistently implement robust cleaning and excellent hygiene practices. Staff ensure that all children have excellent access to a wide variety of outside play opportunities to promote children's physical development.

Nearly all staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive behaviour management strategies very effectively. They demonstrate an excellent understanding and knowledge of child development and how this affects children's behaviour. They use lots of diversion techniques such as using singing songs, reading stories and favourite toys to help young children settle. Older children are encouraged to manage their behaviour, co-operate, take turns and share. Staff act as very good role models at all times. They are consistently responsive and genuinely listen to and respect children's views. The interactions are very positive, demonstrating warmth and kindness. All staff receive regular and updated training in behaviour management to ensure that they are up to date with current childcare working practices.

Nearly all staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. They plan comprehensively around children's individual development and consistently review progress. Staff support children with additional needs exceptionally well, including children with health issues, behaviour or speech and language difficulties. A dedicated Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator ensures good communication with outside professionals and parents, to ensure the appropriate care and support is provided for children in their care. Staff encourage positive learning dispositions such as persistence, concentration and completion of tasks. They are keen to implement and embed the principles of the Curriculum for Wales and leaders are proactive in supporting them to develop these skills. The nursery is an English language setting and staff use incidental Welsh within the nursery to help promote awareness of Welsh culture and heritage.

Environment — Excellent

Leaders have comprehensive and very effective measures in place to ensure that everyone fully understands their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children. They ensure that the environment is safe, secure, and extremely well maintained indoors and outdoors. Leaders complete highly effective and comprehensive general and fire risk assessments. They effectively organise consistent cleaning routines that reflect excellent hygiene practices and successfully minimise any risks to children's health and safety.

Leaders effectively organise the environment so that it provides a comprehensive range of exciting play opportunities suitable for all the age ranges cared for. They ensure the environment has extensive indoor play space for children to move freely and explore. They make sure the environment meets all children's needs in order for them to reach their full potential and support their growing independence. Children can easily access excellent quality and a broad variety of age appropriate furniture, toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors to stimulate the their interest and imagination. Leaders ensure that any outdoor play space is used as often as possible and is an extension to the learning environment. Staff extend children's knowledge and development in the outdoors by offering an excellent range of resources which challenges and consistently stimulates children's curiosity and interest. For example, a well-developed Forest School area has been established with, for example, a bird watching den, binoculars and checklist of birds that may be spotted.

Leaders ensure equipment and resources are very well maintained and suitable for the age ranges and abilities of children cared for. They provide stimulating resources to promote children's inquisitiveness and follow the curiosity approach with real life household items, loose parts and natural resources to encourage problem solving and creativity. There are some resources celebrating wider society, equality and Welsh culture. All resources and equipment is monitored to ensure it is consistently of a high standard.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

Leaders maintain and share an up-to-date comprehensive and statement of purpose that accurately reflects the service provided. Leaders ensure they fully comply with all regulations and are very proactive in effectively promoting current best practice relevant to the children in their care. They are very knowledgeable about their regulatory responsibilities. Leaders regularly review and update their individualised polices and ensure that these are fully implemented in practice. Record keeping is of a very high standard. Leaders consistently audit records to ensure that they are accurately kept and make improvements when these are identified. Leaders regularly engage with CIW and other regulators and take responsibility to notify CIW of all significant events in a timely manner.

Leaders effectively implement continuous and meaningful self-evaluation. They regularly seek and actively implement the suggestions of children, their parents/carers, staff and other interested partners, whose comments are reflected within their annual quality of care report. For example, the report produced in August 2022 highlighted the forest school area to be used more productively and increase methods of communication between staff and parents. We saw that these identified improvements had been actioned and other developments, such as a sensory garden were being planned. They consistently respond positively to information and advice given to improve children's well-being and identified needs.

Leaders consistently follow robust recruitment processes to safeguard children. They have excellent systems in place to ensure that suitability checks are updated in a timely manner and that Disclosure and Barring Safety (DBS) checks are closely monitored. Leaders consistently implement an effective induction procedure for all staff consisting of training, mentors and proper oversight of staff knowledge and understanding of the setting's values, policies and procedures. The performance management process is very thorough and motivates all staff to excel by identifying individual training plans and areas of interest for additional training. Regular meaningful supervision and appraisals are seen as integral to their practice and drives improvement. Leaders consistently ensure that practitioners are deployed effectively to ensure staffing ratios are met and often exceeded and children's needs are fully met.

Leaders ensure that communication and engagement systems with parents enable up-to-date information to be shared promptly. For example, the capture app is used to communicate with parents in real time, sending photographs of their children and allowing parents to respond or contact the nursery. This keeps parents extremely well informed and feedback from parents to our questionnaires identified a very high level of satisfaction about the nursery and the care their children receive. Leaders have very strong links with a wide range of professionals which supports information sharing to both improve and maintain nursery standards and update on children's specific needs. Excellent community links help children foster a feeling of connection to their local community.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R.1. Maximise children's opportunities to learn about and celebrate wider society, equality and Welsh language and culture.

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. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
27	The registered person must ensure that there is at all times a sufficient number of suitably qualified, skilled and experienced persons looking after relevant children.	Achieved

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.

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