Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Noahs Ark Nursery

Green Pastures Community Centre
158b Fidlas Road
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF14 5LZ



Date Inspection Completed

30/08/2023

About Noahs Ark Nursery

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Geoffrey Mallett
Registered places	59
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	15 February 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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Well-being	**Adequate**
Care and Development	**Adequate**
Environment	**Adequate**
Leadership and Management	**Good**

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

Summary

Children are well settled and enjoy attending the setting. They enjoy their play and are developing. They are listened to and their views are taken into account. They have opportunities to develop a wide range of skills, but their free choice is limited in some ways.

Children benefit from warm relationships with motivated staff who have a good understanding of each child and are able to meet their needs adequately. Care giving is relaxed and interactions are managed appropriately. The planning and implementation of activities does not sufficiently enrich children's play experiences.

Managers ensure the play environment is safe and secure, but the layout and resourcing of the play spaces requires further consideration to ensure children have good opportunities to engage in a variety of interesting play experiences. A safety check of the electrical systems within the building has lapsed. This is a serious matter, but it has been addressed during the course of this inspection.

Managers ensure parents and children receive a consistent, quality service which is well run, with due regard paid to the regulations and National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care. They consult with parents, staff and children in order to inform improvements to the setting. Managers undertake with staff formal supervision and appraisals. They ensure policies, procedures and records in place remain suitable and kept under review.

Well-being — Adequate

Children are confident and make decisions about what they want to play with. They join in enthusiastically with activities. They have some choice over their activities from the selection made available. We saw children choose between mark making with stencils on a table, dinosaurs, cars and small world, sand, and the outdoors. They are familiar with the daily routines and know what to expect at the setting. When they voice their preferences, this is often listened to, such as a request for a certain resource. Many children feel confident in the setting. However, they have little ownership over their play space, and adult-directed art projects and signs are displayed rather than displaying and valuing the children's own work, which can impact their sense of belonging.

Children are content and settled at the nursery. They have developed warm relationships with staff and are confident to approach them for guidance or comfort. Children settling in benefit from staff who are warm and considerate of them, providing lots of comfort and encouragement. Children form friendships in line with their age and stage of development. They play happily together or alongside each other. We saw children enjoy playing and persevering with construction toys and paper aeroplanes.

Children co-operate, take turns and share, and their behaviour is becoming guided by their sensitivity to the emotions of others. They demonstrate a good understanding of what is expected of them whilst they are at the setting. Children are well behaved for most of the time and play co-operatively with their peers. Their interactions with staff are respectful and they respond well to requests and any guidance on their behaviour. Children have developed a strong sense of right and wrong and are becoming self-disciplined.

Children find some enjoyment in their play but do not consistently concentrate on activities for an appropriate amount of time. We saw children were active and curious throughout. Babies moved freely around their play space, interacting with toys staff had laid out. Older children generally enjoyed activities provided, although we saw occasions when children drifted and were uncertain what to do. We observed very few occasions where a child created any depth of play, instead flitting between activities without being able to develop a focus.

Children are encouraged to do some things for themselves. They help staff tidy away their toys into boxes before lunch, and many older children access the toilet facilities themselves and wash their own hands. However, opportunities for developing independence skills are not sufficiently promoted, such as helping to serve at mealtimes. Managers told us they will reintroduce independence at mealtimes now that heightened infection control procedures are no longer required. Children's opportunities to follow their interests and develop their learning and play is also limited at times by the layout of play spaces and storage of resources.

Care and Development — Adequate

Staff are effective in their roles. They are clear about their responsibilities and have good knowledge of how to keep children safe and healthy. They offer balanced and nutritious meals. Staff provide access to physical exercise outdoors, and there is space indoors for large physical play. Staff know how to raise safeguarding concerns. They speak confidently about safeguarding procedures and know managers will be responsive to any concerns they raise. Staff spoke positively about the support they receive from the people who run the setting, and they are committed to on-going improvement. Staff follow procedures for recording the administering of medication, accidents, incidents and existing injuries. Staff practice fire drills with the children with sufficient regularity and this is recorded.

Staff set realistic boundaries, are good role models and use a fairly consistent approach to managing behaviour, taking into account children's age and understanding. They take a positive approach to guiding behaviour. They praise children when they behave appropriately, thereby reinforcing good behaviour. They also encourage and praise children for making a good effort. We saw children respond well to this approach.

Staff provide a nurturing and caring environment in which they promote children's play and well-being appropriately. Staff have a relaxed, happy and caring nature when interacting with the children. They speak in a calm and reassuring manner, and this helps to ensure the play environment is calm and pleasant. The staff group are keen to ensure they are good play facilitators; relevant staff and managers have undertaken playwork qualifications in order to improve their understanding of play for school-aged children. They are also beginning to introduce the concepts of the New Curriculum for Wales into the setting. Staff plan a selection of activities for each day based on upcoming events and children's interests. Children are able to access these largely when adults provide them, and any other activity is then child-led from the resources available. This approach does not ensure there are always sufficient activities for children to choose from and remain well-engaged and stimulated. In response, managers told us they are enthusiastic about the ideas they intend to try out in the playrooms to better promote children's play and engagement. We heard some incidental Welsh. However, we saw few examples of the Welsh culture or multiculturalism promoted meaningfully.

Environment — Adequate

Managers and staff ensure the environment is safe and secure for children. They ask all visitors sign in and out of the building. They implement suitable risk assessments and undertake daily safety checks of the areas used by children. All staff are responsible for ensuring good hygiene throughout the day. They undertake fire drills with children regularly and record these appropriately. Managers ensure insurance certificates are up to date, as well as most routine safety checks for the building and appliances, such as an annual gas safety check and fire safety equipment. However, an electrical safety certificate for the building was not available, which is a regulatory requirement. We have not taken any action on this occasion as managers arranged for the necessary check to be completed shortly after the inspection.

Managers and staff maintain the environment appropriately and provide a welcoming, child friendly space, which is suitable for the age of the children cared for. They store many resources at low levels allowing children to access them independently, supporting their free choice. They provide child-sized tables and chairs for children to do activities. However, the indoor play spaces need further consideration to support children's play and development. We found the decoration, which filled most of all walls, cupboard doors and windows, was overwhelming and not of benefit to children. There were few examples of children's own work. The layout of the play spaces hampered children's activity. providing little free-flow and limiting play space. Managers were very open to the matter and confirmed a redevelopment of the indoor play space was imminent.

Children benefit from a good-sized outdoor play space, part of which has recently been developed into a 'secret garden' with natural resources and a story circle. However, a planning order is imposed on the nursery preventing children accessing the outdoors until 11am each day due to noise pollution, and we saw this was limiting for children and staff. As a result, the main outdoors play space has not been developed into an 'outdoor classroom' as planned, and rather children are allowed to use the space mainly for large physical activity.

Children have access to an adequate range of toys and equipment. However, the approach to the resourcing of each area of the playrooms does not ensure they are sufficiently interesting for children, allowing them to follow their interests and develop their play. In places, an overwhelming quantity of resources are stored within playrooms, meaning they are not attractive to children and are not easy to access. Managers told us this would be reviewed and a more thoughtful and purposeful approach implemented to support children to develop and extend their play themselves.

Leadership and Management Good

Managers are skilled and experienced and overall, manage the setting well. An accurate statement of purpose is in place which reflects the service provided and is kept under review. Managers ensure staff have access to clear policies and procedures, which are focused on children's needs, and staff work in line with these to support the smooth running of the setting. Operational records contain the necessary information. Children's records and contracts are suitable, but the wording of parental permission for the setting to authorised medical treatment in an emergency does not reflect the National Minimum Standard. Managers employ an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to care for the children.

Managers are committed to improving outcomes for children. They have written a comprehensive quality of care report detailing what the setting does well and an action plan of what they want to improve. Managers undertake this review annually as required, and take into account the views of children, parents, staff and outside agencies such as local authority advisory staff.

Managers are effective in overseeing staff, their time and prioritising activities responsively to ensure children's needs are met in a timely manner. We observed staff to mostly be well organised, which allowed them to remain calm whilst delivering care. Staff confirmed they enjoy working at the setting. They feel supported, knowing they can approach the people who run the setting for help or support if needed. All staff benefit from regular supervision and appraisal meetings to reflect on their practice. Managers conduct robust recruitment procedures to ensure suitable and sufficient well-qualified staff are employed to work with children.

Managers and staff value the positive relationships that have been developed with the community. Staff told us they value the relationships they have built with parents and are keen to ensure parents feel they can approach them at any time. They also spoke to us about the value they place on links they have developed with local schools and charity projects. Parents are very complimentary about the setting and they are confident to leave their children there.

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

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)
Standard 10 - Healthcare	The wording of parental permissions for the setting to authorise medical treatment in an emergency should be clarified. This permission should then be re-sought for every child

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)
Reconsider the method of planning and providing activities, the layout of the play space, and the types of resources made available, to ensure children can be interested and well-engaged
Space should be available for children to display their own work
The incorporation of the Welsh culture and of other cultures should be strengthened

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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