Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Acorns Nurseries

Alma House
Lighthouse Road
Duffryn
Newport
NP10 8TG



Date Inspection Completed

08/12/2021

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About Acorns Nurseries

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Acorns Nurseries Ltd
Registered places	48
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	14/12/17
Is this a Flying Start service?	Manual Insert No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	Working Towards. The service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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

Children settle extremely well and have lots of fun. Their opinions and interests are highly valued. Children receive exciting opportunities and make many choices about how to spend their time at the setting. They interact very well with their friends and staff, and make excellent progress in all aspects of their learning and development. Children receive warm and responsive care.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They have implemented new policies and procedures in response to Covid-19 very well. Staff are professional, passionate about their role, and provide safe and nurturing care. They plan for a wide and interesting variety of activities, which promote curiosity, play and learning. Staff keep very effective records of children's progress.

The environment is clean, welcoming and especially well organised to support children's play and learning. An excellent range of indoor and outdoor resources promotes their all-round development.

People who run the setting provide valuable support to staff. They encourage staff to develop in their role and complete additional training. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and robust. Parents are very complimentary of the setting and speak very highly of the staff and the care their children receive.

Well-being — Excellent

Children express themselves confidently and their views are considered. For example, a child asked if they could decorate their Christmas tree with coloured lights. A staff member later managed to find some, much to the child's delight. Children have many opportunities to make choices and decisions. They choose from a wide variety of exciting play experiences and are involved in activity planning. Children offer their ideas about what they should do next. We saw very young children given the time to choose which coloured paint and ribbon they would like to use to decorate their salt dough Christmas ornaments.

Children are very happy at the setting and feel valued. They enjoy being in the company of others and form positive friendships that help them to feel content. Children know the staff and routines well, giving them a sense of belonging and confidence to play and learn. Parents told us that their children have formed very strong bonds with their key carers. Children chat easily with staff engaging them in their play.

Children learn to respect each other and share spaces and resources very well. They have many opportunities to decide to play alone or with others. A group of children cooperated well as they searched the outdoor area for natural items to decorate their Christmas tree. Younger children are happy to explore their playroom, confidently picking out toys to play with.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. They benefit from an excellent variety of age appropriate play and learning resources in each room. Children are motivated to follow their own interests and sustain their play for periods suitable to their age and stage of development. They also benefit from a range of adult led activities, such as story time. We saw children settle well to listen to a story, enthusiastically joining in with familiar parts and phrases.

Children learn self-help skills and are encouraged to carry out tasks independently, which help prepare them for attending school. They have many opportunities to become independent. We saw young children encouraged to feed themselves, with staff offering support where needed. Older children wash their hands independently and use the toilet without support.

Care and Development — Excellent

Staff have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. They receive regular safeguarding training and effectively implement the setting's policy and procedures should they have concerns about a child. A varied and healthy snack/meal menu is in place. We saw children thoroughly enjoy a meal of roast beef and vegetables at lunchtime; drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff have devised a recipe book for parents detailing children's favourite meals at the setting. There are robust systems in place to manage children's food allergies and individual dietary requirements. Regular fire drill practices ensure staff and children are aware of how to leave the building safely. Staff record all accidents and incidents in detail; parents sign and receive a copy. The person in charge evaluates these records to identify emerging patterns.

Staff interact in a kind and caring manner with children. They are responsive and nurturing, which means children approach them with ease. Most staff have completed training in behaviour management. They have a very strong understanding of child development, and its impact on children's behaviour. There is a comprehensive behaviour management policy, promoting positive strategies. We saw staff implement this skilfully, using gentle tones, distraction methods and lots of praise to reinforce positive behaviour. In addition, staff work well with outside agencies to seek support in order to meet individual children's needs. Staff act as excellent role models and manage all interactions appropriately.

Staff support children's learning and development in a highly effective way. They plan an extensive range of play experiences that appeal to children's interests. Staff evaluate children's enjoyment and engagement in their play on a daily basis; they use this information to adapt and plan for further play opportunities. There is an effective system in place to monitor and track children's progress. Staff carry out regular observations of children's play to identify their stage of development and plan for their progression. Staff keep digital records of children's learning and development and share this information with parents via an app.

Environment — Excellent

The environment is very safe and provides ample space for children to play and learn. There is an extensive range of detailed risk assessments in place for all areas of the setting and activities. Effective policies and procedures help keep everyone safe during the Covid 19 pandemic. For example, more frequent cleaning/handwashing, and only allowing essential visitors into the setting. Routine maintenance checks for the building and appliances are undertaken. Registers record the times that children arrive at and leave the setting. Staff ensure only authorised persons have entry to the setting and maintain a log for any visitors.

The environment is clean and extremely well maintained. It provides bright, spacious and exciting areas for children to explore. Children are able to access toys and resources with ease, which supports their independence. They have a lovely sense of belonging because staff display children's photographs and creative work around the setting. The outdoor play area is safe and secure. It offers a wealth of play opportunities for children, including a forest school where they can explore and learn about the natural world, a vegetable patch, apparatus for climbing, water and mud area and dinosaur garden.

Regular cleaning of toys and equipment is undertaken, which is especially important during the current pandemic. Where possible children use individual equipment to prevent the spread of germs, for example their own playdough and sand trays. There is a wide range of excellent quality resources for all ages of children. Calming neutral décor, cosy areas, and softly lit lamps dotted around the setting create a very homely feel. The environment has excellent quality suitably sized furniture and resources to support children's independence. For example, child sized table and chairs and individual names coat pegs and named drawers for their belongings. There are a suitable number of children's toilets and nappy changing facilities available. Liquid soap and paper towels are easily accessible.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

Leadership and management of the setting is strong. The responsible individual is fully compliant with Regulations and consistently exceeds the National Minimum Standards. There is a clear statement of purpose providing parents with accurate information about how the setting runs. Detailed, regularly reviewed policies and procedures are in place. The responsible individual has met all recommendations made at the previous inspection.

People who run the setting value their staff. The setting have been awarded the Welsh Government small workplace health award, which recognises commitment to supporting staff's health and well-being. Staff files are of a good quality and all relevant checks are carried out to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. The staff team is enthusiastic, motivated and all enjoy their work. All staff receive regular supervisions and annual appraisals, which enable staff to identify their strengths and areas for development. There are enough qualified and experienced staff to make sure children are well cared for at all times. The setting have recently achieved the 'Wales Day Nurseries Top 20 award', via a national nursery review website.

People who run the setting plan effectively for improvement. They continually self-evaluate, and seek feedback from parents, staff and children. The quality of care report reflects this information and sets out clear actions for development. For example, '*continue to enhance the indoor and outdoor space to improve opportunities for children'.* During the inspection, the person in charge told us of plans to extend the building to develop a sensory room indoors, and a sensory garden for babies.

The setting has established excellent relationships with parents. Parents of younger children receive a written record of their child's day and parents of older children receive verbal feedback at the end of their child's session. In addition, staff share photographs and information on children's progress with parents via a digital app. Some parents told us they would like to see information about their children's development shared more regularly. All parents we spoke to said that their children were extremely happy attending the setting.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Consider further ways to share information with parents.

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	N/A

	inspection	

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.

Date Published 04/01/2022