Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Acorns ONS

Government Buildings
Cardiff Road
Duffryn
Newport
NP10 8XG



Date Inspection Completed

18/05/2023

About Acorns ONS

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Acorns Nurseries Ltd
Registered places	120
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	10 May 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	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	**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 thoroughly enjoy attending the setting. They feel very safe and secure in the care of staff. Children have fun playing with their friends and staff and have a wealth of choice and opportunities to develop different skills. They develop their independence through a wide range of quality experiences.

Staff provide a warm and nurturing child-centred setting. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy and implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively. Staff support children's learning and development very well, offering an exciting range of activities led by children's interests and developmental needs.

The environment is secure, clean, welcoming, and very well organised to support children's play and learning. An excellent range of indoor and outdoor resources promote children's all-round development. Staff identify any unnecessary risks to children and eliminate them as much as possible.

People who run the setting have an excellent vision and sense of purpose which sustains improvements and promotes excellent outcomes for children. They are highly motivated and ensure robust policies, procedures, and records are in place. People who run the setting provide high quality support to staff.

Well-being Excellent

Children have many choices and opportunities to make decisions about how they spend their time. Throughout the sessions children move freely around their play areas and engage with activities that interest them. For example, during circle time, some children chose not to join the group for singing and were able to continue uninterrupted with their sand play. Children are confident to communicate their thoughts and ideas, as they know staff will listen and show interest.

Children are very happy at the setting and feel valued. They develop warm and affectionate relationships with staff and clearly enjoy being in the company of other children. Children know the staff and daily routines very well, which helps them feel extremely settled and confident in their surroundings. For example, they transition very smoothly from play time to snack and mealtimes as staff prepare them well in advance for this change. Children receive lots of encouragement and praise from staff when learning new skills, giving them the confidence to play and learn. They chat easily with staff, cheerfully engaging them in their play.

Children interact positively with their friends and staff. They are learning to be kind to their friends and to share toys and resources. Children play very happily alongside each other or together. We saw children sharing resources well during a painting activity and chatting to one another enthusiastically during their picnic role play in the outdoor area.

Children are highly motivated and engaged in their play and learning. We saw children enthusiastically take part in a wide variety of activities including matching games, riding on scooters and trikes and singing. They show very good concentration skills and join in with activities on offer to them eagerly. Children benefit from an excellent variety of age-appropriate play and learning resources. For example, pre-school children showed much curiosity and fascination as they explored the workings of an old typewriter.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence. They are provided with a variety of age-appropriate experiences to practise their self-help skills. For example, at lunch time older children pour their own drinks, and babies are given plenty of encouragement and time to practice feeding themselves. Toddlers proudly take off their own shoes before settling for a nap. Children of all ages confidently choose activities, which supports them to develop independent thinking skills and make their own decisions. Older children readily help to tidy away at the end of a play session and know where to store toys and resources.

Care and Development — Excellent

Staff have a very strong understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They have a sound knowledge of safeguarding and their responsibilities with regards to the setting's child protection procedures. Staff have attended relevant training including safeguarding and paediatric first aid. Exemplary hygiene procedures are very well established. Throughout the setting, information is clearly displayed reminding staff of hygiene requirements, cleaning checklists, fridge temperature logs and handwashing processes. Staff wear of aprons and gloves when nappy changing and when serving food. Purposeful cleaning is consistently undertaken by staff. Baskets for washing, with clear labelling and guidance for staff are placed in the communal area, 60-degree wash basket for flannels and cotton bibs and 40-degree wash basket for painting cloths, flannels, and aprons.

Staff promote healthy lifestyles and children are offered a wide choice of nutritious foods and snacks throughout the day. Staff implement robust systems to manage children's dietary requirements. Information regarding allergies and dietary needs are clearly displayed in the dining area. This includes photographs of children, different coloured crockery, and utensils according to requirements. All relevant risk assessments are extensive and annually reviewed.

Staff manage the children's interactions very well. They work in line with the setting's behaviour management policy. Examples include distraction techniques and reinforcing of high standards of behaviour. Staff expertly interact and talk purposefully with the children, making their time in the setting enjoyable. During mealtimes, staff sit with the children to encourage them to eat independently and constantly praise them. All staff are valuable role models and have excellent relationships with the children.

Staff extensively promote children's learning and development. A wide range of well-planned activities are offered, including using building blocks to create buildings, painting both indoors and outdoors and role playing. Staff engage skilfully with children during activities and play. Parents are actively encouraged to share photographs of home activities which supports the settling in process. Children's progress is tracked through observations and used to plan for the next stages of learning.

Staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. They plan extensively around children's individual development. Staff offer excellent support to children with any additional needs. The setting benefits from a dedicated Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo). The ALNCo maintains excellent communication with outside professionals and parents. This ensures the appropriate care and support is provided for children attending. High-quality and detailed records are kept of all these meetings which note guidance offered and discussions.

Environment — Excellent

The environment is exceptionally safe. All areas of the premises are secure and welcoming for the children. The main entrance has good security in place including a bell and a small waiting area. All visitors are expected to sign in and out of the setting. Fire drills are practised frequently, and people who run the setting maintain detailed records to ensure that all staff and children can evacuate the building in the event of an emergency. Smoke alarms are tested weekly; however, a written record of testing is not maintained. All rooms are bright, airy, and decorated with light, calming colours. The setting has ensured that any unnecessary risks to children have been identified and eliminated. People who run the setting complete daily checks of the premises and all maintenance checks for the building and appliances are up to date.

All rooms are set up with specific areas which invite and entice children to play. For example, small kitchen area for role playing, a dressing up area, a table for activities and a comfortable sofa. Furniture, equipment, toys, and materials are of a high quality and include recycled items. In each room, there is a family tree display and a display board for children's work. This gives children a lovely sense of belonging and celebrates their achievements. There are many multicultural resources including puzzles, games, dolls, photographs, and books. The environment is organised to meet all children's needs enabling them to reach their full potential and support their growing independence. Resources are stored in low level drawers with photographs and bilingual labelling which means children can choose and access resources with ease. The outside play area is extremely secure and welcoming for the children. This area offers challenges, risks, and opportunities to experiment and play safely on a mix of tarmac and grass surfaces. For example, we saw children painting, playing on bikes and various wooden furniture such as a mud kitchen, slide, a wigwam, and a planting area.

There is ample space for the children's needs to be met fully. Extensive use is made of all the environment including the communal area which is used for various activities. Examples include painting and art activities and for the children to eat their snacks and lunch in small groups. The setting has appropriate toilet facilities for the staff and children. There are also sufficient nappy changing facilities available throughout including specific nappy changing rooms. These are extremely well resourced with all items required, guidance on specific children with allergies, procedure guidance and hygiene guidance.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

Leadership and management of the setting is exemplary. There is a clear statement of purpose providing parents with full and accurate information about how the setting runs. People who run the setting are dedicated and motivated to continually improve upon the service they offer. They manage the setting in line with the regulations and above the National Minimum Standards. Policies and procedures are of high quality and implemented by staff in practice.

People who run the setting work very hard to provide a quality care provision to children and their families. The staff team are enthusiastic, motivated and enjoy their work. People who run the setting maintain a very well organised environment and all documents are easily accessed and in very good order. Staff files are of excellent quality and all relevant checks carried out to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff receive highly effective supervisions and annual appraisals, which enable them to identify their strengths and areas for development, continually improving their practice. New staff are very well supported during their probation with a thorough induction process. The setting has achieved an award in promoting staff's health and wellbeing which demonstrates staff are highly valued and very well supported in their role. The number of qualified staff exceeds the national minimum standard requirement ensuring children are always well cared for. Staff have very good opportunities to receive additional training as required. For example, promoting positive behaviour, exemplary practice with two year olds and essential core deaf awareness training.

People who run the setting monitor the quality of service and plan for improvements very effectively. They regularly seek feedback from parents, children, staff, and outside agencies. This information is used to write an annual quality of care report and draw up a detailed action plan to address any areas of development. The report includes very positive feedback from parents. which demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the service provided. For example, ‘’*I'm really pleased with the nursery; the staff are lovely, and my child is happy and well stimulated. I would highly recommend it to others*."

The setting has established strong and positive relationships with parents. Parents receive frequent feedback on their child's progress via daily verbal feedback, parents' evenings, and newsletters. In addition, staff use a digital app to communicate with parents in real time, which also allows parents to respond or contact the nursery. Staff send photographs of their children at play, observational notes on their development using the app. This keeps parents extremely well informed. Beneficial partnerships are developed with local authority advisers and support agencies such as speech and language. Such strong partnerships help promote excellent outcomes for children.

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 24 - Safety	Maintain a record of smoke alarm testing.

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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