Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

St Aubin Victoria Park (Baby St Aubin)

16 Victoria Park Road East, Cardiff, CF5 1EG

02920 222240

www.staubinnurseries.co.uk

The inspection visit took place on 05/08/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	St Aubin Nurseries Limited
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	30
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Excellent
Care & Development	Excellent
Environment	Excellent
Leadership & Management	Excellent

Summary:

Children are very happy, settle quickly and thrive at the setting. The children have warm relationships with staff who know them extremely well. They have excellent opportunities to develop their skills and they thoroughly enjoy their play. All children engage in activities of their choosing and are free to develop their play independently or in collaboration with their peers and staff. They are listened to, and their views are taken into account.

Staff are well qualified, professional and have a very good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They are extremely responsive and respect the children in their care and the decisions they make. Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of children's individual needs, and this helps to ensure that those needs are well met.

Children benefit from a very well-developed environment. It is clean, spacious and well organised. Staff follow robust procedures to ensure the environment is safe and suitable. An extensive range

of toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors promote children's play very well, providing lots of varied opportunities for activities of their choosing. Resources are of a very good quality, including many natural resources, provided in suitable quantities. Resources are stored at low level enabling children to access them independently and determine their own play.

Leadership and management of the service is strong. Leadership is highly effective and pro-active, and this ensures a reliable, very high-quality service for children and parents. Leaders are committed to improving outcomes for children, reflecting on practice and planning for improvements to the service. They support staff very well, providing good development opportunities to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. Parents are very complimentary and speak highly of the staff and the care their children receive.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children have ample choice, and a strong voice in this setting. They move freely around their play spaces, making choices and decisions about what they want to play with. Children are given good opportunity to express themselves despite most of the young children being pre-verbal; staff take the time to ensure they are recognising and valuing children's gestures, moods and other non-verbal communications. They join in enthusiastically and confidently with activities because they know care staff will respect and pay attention to them. Children's likes and interests influence the activities that are provided.

Children feel safe, happy and valued at the setting. They develop warm relationships with other children and staff. Children approach care staff spontaneously to seek reassurance or support and enjoy receiving praise and recognition for their efforts. We saw children laughing and smiling as staff joined in with their play. Children are comfortable in the familiar routines and activities of the setting. They are confident to explore the play space, bringing out resources as they wish.

Children co-operate, take turns and share, and they are developing sensitivity to the emotions of others, in line with the ages and stages of development. They demonstrate a developing understanding of what is expected of them whilst they are at the setting. Children sit calmly for meals and pay good attention to staff. Children enjoy the praise they receive for positive behaviour, and they interact well with staff and other children. They are developing a sense of right and wrong, and of themselves.

Children are active, curious and excited by the play-based activities on offer to them. They are happy and confident to move between activities freely, but also sustain interest in activities of their choosing. For example, we observed a child fascinated by putting cars down a ramp. The child laughed and shrieked with enjoyment as the cars came out of the bottom of the ramp. When they ran out of cars, they began trying other objects and were curious when they did not fit or did not roll. Children benefit from a good balance of organised and free-choice play activities. We observed all children to enjoy their play and their time at the setting.

Children are encouraged to practice their independence in the setting, and they develop skills as a natural part of the routine of the day. For example, children are learning to join in and listen. Staff brought out the 'Tap Tap Box' and the young babies came around them and sat and listened. They were encouraged to pick an item out of the box, learning the 'rules' of the game, and then joining in with some of the actions to the songs, or watching and smiling as the staff sang.

Care & Development — Excellent

Children benefit from skilled and experienced staff who are committed to making a positive difference to children's experiences. Staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe and healthy. They follow clear hygiene practices such as cleaning tables before and after snack times. Staff wear aprons and gloves during nappy changing. They manage allergies effectively by following a clear and exceptionally well thought out policy, and implement individual health plans if required. Food provided is healthy and nutritious, provided in good portions, and children have a good opportunity to feed themselves and enjoy their food and their mealtimes. Staff provide children access to physical exercise and time outdoors for play is included every day. There are procedures for recording the administering of medication, accidents, incidents and existing injuries. Leaders monitor these monthly to identify any trends in accidents sustained at the nursery, and ways to minimise the risk of these happening again are recorded and acted upon. Staff speak confidently about safeguarding procedures and know that leaders will be responsive to any concerns they raise. Leaders ensure staff receive up to date training in child protection, Prevent (anti-radicalisation) and paediatric first aid, as well as training to assist them in their roles.

Staff work exceptionally well together to support and promote children's social behaviour. They are very good and positive role models for children in their care, treating each other and the children with respect and kindness. Staff take time to give clear instructions and explain what is expected, or what is about to happen, despite the young children having no speech of their own yet. They also respect the children by giving them time once they have said something to them. They are very encouraging of children's effort and praise this. Staff have a very calm manner when managing behaviour. No significant issues of behaviour management occurred during the inspection, largely due to the positive approach taken.

Staff provide an extremely nurturing environment in which children's play and well-being are very well promoted. All staff have a relaxed, happy and caring nature when interacting with the children. They are keen to ensure they are good facilitators of play and development. All staff spoke passionately about their desire to improve outcomes for the children. They are unwaveringly considerate of the children's enjoyment and conscious to give the young children options and choices, especially when the young children cannot express their wishes verbally. Children benefit from well-considered activities planned by staff through which they can practise a wide range of developmental skills. Staff engage excellently with small groups of children during play, meaning children can interact with them and staff can sensitively support play and development, where helpful. Staff are also skilful at allowing children to play independently. Some incidental Welsh language is included in the provision, as well as Welsh language books.

Environment — Excellent

The environment is safe and very well maintained. The entrance is secure and staff monitor locked doors to ensure only authorised access. Staff are vigilant and supervise children well at all times. They keep children safe because leaders regularly review risk assessments for all areas of the setting and any outings undertaken. Staff complete comprehensive daily safety checks of the indoor and outdoor environments to identify and eliminate any risks to children's safety. Registers of children's attendance contain the necessary information and are completed in a timely manner. Staff attendance times are recorded alongside, and it is recorded when children are offsite on walks or trips to the park. Leaders have a system in place to ensure safety certificates for the building are up to date, including electrical testing and fire safety checks. Staff and children practice fire drills monthly and these are recorded.

Leaders and staff ensure the premises provide an exceptionally rich and stimulating environment for children to play and learn. It is well maintained and in good decorative order. The environment is welcoming and child friendly. The indoor play space comprises several playrooms which staff can use in varying ways. Walking and non-walking babies are generally cared for separately so both groups can make the best of their play spaces without being hindered by the other. Sensory rooms have been developed which they make great use of for quieter activities such as story times. The playrooms are organised to promote all areas of children's development, with a very good range of resources, including real life items, natural items and books. Wall displays include the children's artwork and mark making, and photos of them and their families. Although the children are too young to recognise that their art is displayed, this still celebrates their achievements, and as they grow, their photos can give them a sense of belonging. The outdoor area has been developed to suit the young age range of children cared for at this setting, and they enjoy their time outdoors. A suitable range of equipment for the age of the children is available, such as slides, small climbing and a mud kitchen. The area has been covered by a canopy to allow the young children to access the space safely in most weathers. During the inspection, all children were given time to play outside. Regular trips to the park through the week also allow for ball games and exploring.

Leaders and staff ensure regular cleaning of toys and equipment is undertaken and resources are of excellent quality. The setting has suitable furniture and resources to support children's independence. For example, child sized tables, chairs, and low-level resource storage. A clever high-chair type arrangement has been built-in for the non-walking babies, ensuring they are sat together so that mealtimes can be made sociable and pleasant, as well as freeing up floor space for play and reducing the hazards associated with having many high-chairs in a play space. There are a suitable number of children's toilets and nappy changing facilities available, which are clean and fresh. They can access most resources freely because they are displayed for children attractively, allowing them to extend and develop their play as they wish.

Leadership & Management — Excellent

Leaders are skilled and highly experienced and manage the setting to a very high standard. They ensure a clear vision for the setting, reflected in the statement of purpose. There are clear policies and procedures which reflect the current practice, and leaders have a robust system to ensure they are reviewed regularly, are up to date, and staff are familiarised with any changes. Staff work consistently in line with these to support the smooth running of the setting. In the main, operational records contain the necessary information and records of children's information are complete. Records of existing injuries do not in all instances include sufficient detail, and wet signatures have not been sought from parents/carers on child enrolment forms, which include permissions. This was discussed and leaders put in place actions to address these during our visit. Leaders employ an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to care for the children. They have high expectations of staff and support and challenge them to do their best.

Children and parents benefit from a setting which is strongly committed to improving outcomes for children and families. Leaders compose a thorough quality of care report detailing what the setting does well and an action plan of what they want to improve. They undertake this review annually as required, and take into account the views of children, parents, staff and external agencies. As a larger childcare group, leaders were clear that any feedback for improvements or lessons learnt in one of their services would be rolled out in a way that works for each setting in the group to ensure a drive for improvements across the board. Leaders work hard to ensure they deliver high quality care.

Leaders are exceptionally effective in overseeing staff, managing their time and prioritising activities responsively to ensure that children's needs are met in a timely manner. Staff are very well organised, and the resulting relaxed care environment has a positive impact on the children's mood and their interactions. Staff confirmed they enjoy working at the setting and feel passionately about the service they provide for children and families. Leaders undertake robust recruitment procedures, ensuring that suitable staff are employed to work with children. They ensure mandatory training is kept up to date and staff benefit from extensive opportunities for additional development training. Staff receive regular supervisions and appraisals to reflect on their practice.

Positive relationships with the community are valued at this setting. Staff told us the partnerships they have built with parents are very important to the team and they are keen to ensure parents feel they can approach them at any time. Parents are very complimentary about the setting and are confident to leave their children there. Leaders ensure parents have all the information they need to make an informed choice about using this service, and on an ongoing basis; the foyer is set up to provide substantial information for parents and families, including policies and procedures, information about children's activities, and quality reviews so all information is easily accessible.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

National Minimum Standards

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.

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

Best Practice

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.

Recommendation(s)
Ensure existing injury records are clearly recorded and parents'/carers' explanations sought and recorded in full
Ensure enrolment forms and parent/carer permissions have wet signatures

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