Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Argel Family Unit

Argel Family Centre
Llansteffan Road
Johnstown
Carmarthen
SA31 3NQ

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



Date Inspection Completed

16/10/2023

About Argel Family Unit

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Provider	Carmarthenshire County Council Child Care and Play Services
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	21 June 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

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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's needs are fully considered, and their interests are highly valued. They are very happy, safe and express their contentment and enjoyment at the setting. Children are excited with their play opportunities. They engage in activities that promote their development and develop good independence skills.

Staff implement policies and procedures that fully meet the children's needs in relation to well being, safety and healthy lifestyles. They are always respectful, relaxed and very positive, demonstrating warmth, kindness and care towards children. Staff know the children well and understand their individual needs. They work exceptionally well as a team, and communication and collaboration are extremely positive.

People who run the setting have very effective measures and policies in place to ensure that everyone fully understands their responsibilities. There are excellent procedures for assessing risks and supervision of children at the setting. The environment fully meets the children's needs and is rich in opportunities for the children indoors and outdoors and resources are of exceptional high quality.

People who run the setting have a very strong vision for the setting's future and are very organised. Self-evaluation is very effective. They have extremely robust procedures to ensure suitability of staff and safeguarding is prioritised. People who run the setting have excellent partnerships with parents, carers and outside agencies.

Well-being Excellent

Children make choices confidently. Their needs are fully considered, and their opinions and interests are highly valued. They move around freely, making decisions about what affects them. Children confidently communicate with staff. They tell staff when they want more foods by saying *"More"* and using non-verbal cues such as pointing to their preferred food and drinks, and feel they are listened to as staff offer them alternative foods. For example, after a child buttered a wrap, they then decided they wanted a plain wrap which was acted upon by staff. Children choose to play indoors and outdoors according to their preference. They take part in water play, sensory play and other areas of interest such as playing in the sand pit, climbing frame and slide.

Children are very happy and feel safe with the carers who make them feel highly valued. They are constantly praised and reminded how clever they are. They are praised for pouring milk, water and buttering their wraps independently. They feel safe having formed a very strong bond and close relationships with staff. They go to staff for cuddles spontaneously and when they are feeling unwell. Children are familiar with routines within the safe ethos of the setting. Their feelings and needs are always acknowledged and prioritised. Children seek closeness of staff who are gentle, caring and offer immediate support when they need it. They play independently and know that there are staff close by if they require assistance.

Interactions between children and staff are consistently stimulating and children express their contentment and enjoyment with smiles and laughter. For example, children were excited on their arrival at the setting, and eagerly awaited the staff to give them wet weather gear. Children were happy to be praised for their *"good sharing"* when they shared the magnifying glasses with friends. Children respond positively to staff who offer continuous encouragement, explanations and understanding to children. For example, when children wanted the same water spray bottle, they expressed shrieks of laughter, as those caring for them offered alternatives to achieve their desired goals.

Children are excited and busy in their play, immersed in the opportunities that are available to them. They thoroughly enjoyed the sensory experiences and fully benefit from opportunities provided to explore, move around and discover their surroundings. Children excitedly explored the textures, glitter and paint available to them. Children eagerly used different tools to break the ice blocks to see what was inside and showed excitement when they found different animals.

Children access an extensive range of age-appropriate resources to enrich their learning and social experiences that fully promote their all-round development. They are developing their independence skills well. For instance, they manage to butter and cut their toasts as well as pour their water and milk independently.

Care and Development — Excellent

Staff consistently implement policies and procedures which promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and wellbeing. They are proactive and effectively manage risks as and when they arise. All staff are vigilant and fully committed to promoting the development of each child at the setting, whilst always ensuring their safety and wellbeing. For example, those who take children on the bus take emergency resources with them. Safeguarding is prioritised, and all staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children. Their safeguarding training is regularly updated. Staff consistently implement robust cleaning and hygiene practices. For instance, they sanitise areas before food and ensure personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn to prepare foods for children. They ensure that a variety of nutritious foods are served with care and children are always supervised and not rushed. Staff ensure that nappy changing is carried out with dignity, and they follow the settings nappy changing policy and infection prevention and control measures in practice. Medication forms and accidents are recorded, and these are well documented and signed by staff and parents. They carefully monitor children's allergies as well as individual needs. Staff follow care plans which are in place to support children with additional needs.

Interactions between staff and children are always respectful, relaxed and very positive, demonstrating warmth, kindness and care. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and take every opportunity to enhance interactions through careful, consistent responses. They genuinely listen and respect children's views, frequently offering praise and encouragement. They are excellent role models for children, prompting them to say 'please' and 'thank you' at snack times. Staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement distraction techniques successfully to ensure children learn to share in the most sensitive way to have no impact on children's feelings and emotions. They are skilful in their understanding of knowing when and how to comfort children. A child was seen being hugged closely by a member of staff when they were unwell.

Staff know the children well and understand their individual needs, demonstrating that they care deeply for them. They work exceptionally well as a team, and communication and collaboration are extremely effective, which positively impacts on the children. Staff are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning opportunities. Observations are recorded effectively, and staff confidently speak about the progress of the children. Staff are confident when working with children with additional learning needs and they thrive for the best outcomes for children, continuously reviewing the planning of activities and resources according to their needs.

Environment — Excellent

People who run the setting have very effective measures and policies in place to ensure that everyone fully understands their responsibilities. They ensure the environment is safe, secure and very well maintained both indoors and outdoors. People who run the setting ensure that all aspects of children's experiences are safe and provide new learning skills which are carefully considered. They ensure that detailed risk assessments are in place for long term and day-to-day practices of the indoor and outdoor areas, as well as outings. They complete a daily risk assessment of the indoor and outdoor play space. People who run the setting keep a comprehensive fire management file which is up to date with effective fire risk assessments and fire drills. Premises maintenance checks are regularly updated. They keep the premises secure indoors with an electronic security system and the outdoors is secure. People who run the setting keep a record of visitors to the setting and identification badges are checked on arrival.

People who run the setting ensure the indoors is very welcoming, open, and clean with different areas offering purposeful, rich opportunities for new learning experiences. For example, sensory, crafts, physical play and areas which enhance children's curiosity. They offer a large open space at the rear and side of the setting which is safe and provides excellent opportunities for further physical and exploration experiences. People who run the setting told us about their plans to further develop the area which is currently under construction. The outdoor area provides additional experiences for children to safely learn new skills. For example, climbing, sand play, sensory play, gardening and tuff tray natural resources obtained from a nature walk in the local area. The indoor space is a spacious area which provides purposeful opportunities for children to rest, explore and play creatively. There are suitably sized tables and chairs for dining and tabletop activities. Toileting areas have aides for children to develop their personal independence skills. Children's craft and artwork are celebrated giving a strong sense of achievement and belonging to children.

People who run the setting provide high quality furniture resources both indoors and outdoors which stimulate children's curiosity and interests. They enable children to develop new skills through the range of excellent equipment that offers opportunities for exciting experiences. They promote equality and cultural awareness through their practices. In addition to the open outdoor spaces, the sheltered outdoor space provides extra resources to further enhance the experiences for children. The outdoor play area is successfully organised for the children nearly all of the time and children can therefore choose to play indoors or outdoors as they wish in a free-flow learning environment.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

People who run the setting have a very strong vision for the setting's future and are very organised. They ensure all policies and procedures, and relevant documentation are in place, reviewed regularly and stored confidentially. People who run the setting are very knowledgeable about their regulatory responsibilities. They ensure all documentation is organised and reviewed regularly. They keep detailed records of children, and these include the required relevant information. People running the setting are working towards providing the 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language.

People who run the setting annually review their quality of care through feedback from children, parents, staff and outside agencies. They work closely with families and other professionals, responding to their feedback with new initiatives, programmes practices and approaches. These additions ensure that the experiences that children receive are continuously reviewed and reflected upon, creating targets for the future running of the setting successfully.

People who run the setting support their team very well. They ensure that staff files are correct and keep comprehensive evidence of the extensive training completed for individual professional development. People who run the setting ensure robust staff recruitment and induction processes are in place and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are current and valid. They ensure the team's success is achieved through effective staff appraisals and supervisions, which are documented in the staff files and have a positive impact on staff wellbeing, development and training opportunities. People who run the setting effectively promote current best practice which is relevant to the children in their care. They demonstrate how all staff contribute towards the ethos and values and that the team works hard to achieve their goals to improve the setting.

People who run the setting have a well-established relationship with a wide range of professionals, local authority, and other stakeholders. They develop partnerships with the families within the community. People who run the setting share pictures and development of children with parents and carers through a webform app. Parents told us that staff are wonderful and welcoming, and leadership and management have been amazing. They feel their children are happy and have noticed an improvement in their children's ability to socialise and communicate since attending the setting. They said, *"I couldn't be more happy or confident leaving my child in their care; they go above and beyond to ensure they are looked after, and they enjoy every day 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)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this 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.

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