Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Estyn
Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Little Einsteins Academy Limited

Block B
Britannia Centre for Enterprise
Blackwood
Caerphilly
NP12 3SP

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

About Little Einsteins Academy Limited

Name of setting	Little Einsteins Academy Limited
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Little Einsteins Academy Limited
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Ian Bray
Person in charge	Stacy-Marie Bishop
Number of places	49
Age range of children	0-12
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	14
Number of children who receive funding for early education	0
Opening days / times	Monday – Friday 7.30am – 6.30pm
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
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.
Date of previous CIW inspection	21 June 2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	N/A
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	24/10/2023

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	**Good**
Learning **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	
Care and development	**Good**
Teaching and assessment **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Further develop the use of assessments and observations to plan purposeful experiences that meet the needs of all children and in particular improve their numeracy and digital skills

R2 Sharpen self-evaluation and monitoring processes to focus more closely on areas for improvement

R3 Ensure that policies and procedures match practice and meet requirements

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children make choices about how they spend their time at the setting. They choose what to play with from the plentiful resources available to them. Nearly all children move freely between different areas, transporting toys and resources to support their play. Most children are confident to approach practitioners and express themselves. They know practitioners will listen to their needs and show an interest in their ideas. For example, a child enjoys rolling a bobbin to a practitioner and shows delight as they roll it back to them.

Nearly all children are very happy, settled and confident, and enjoy attending the setting. They cope well with separation from their parents and carers. For example, children arrive with smiles on their faces, come in eagerly and settle to play quickly. They form positive emotional attachments with staff who know them well. For example, many children come to practitioners for comfort or reassurance. Most children are familiar with routines and expectations at the setting, and this adds to their sense of belonging. For example, children calmly go with practitioners to the sleep room settling peacefully to sleep.

Most children are starting to form friendships according to their age and stage of development. They play happily alongside each other and are learning to co-operate and share. For example, young children brush each other's hair and older children play happily in the 'home corner' alongside each other. Nearly all children sit calmly at the table when eating and show respect for property and people.

Most children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. They enjoy both adult led activities and free play. For example, babies and young children join in enthusiastically with the 'tap tap box' singing activity. They follow their own interests at the messy tray, handling different objects and rolling them down chutes with obvious enjoyment.

Many children are developing a good level of independence at the setting. For example, older children serve themselves at snack and mealtimes and younger children feed themselves and use cutlery independently.

Learning (only applies to three or four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They have a clear understanding of safeguarding issues and follow the setting's procedures diligently and understand their duty to report concerns. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Staff record accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries very well and share this information with parents. Leaders maintain a robust system for monitoring these records to identify patterns and trends. They pro-actively address any which are identified. Practitioners have strong systems in place to ensure children's safety when managing food allergies. A wide range of thorough risk assessments alert practitioners to emerging risks. For example, messy play activities are risk assessed. Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles, by offering a choice of healthy food at snack and mealtimes. They ensure children have access to regular and enjoyable outdoor play experiences, and the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air. Practitioners provide opportunities for children to sleep safely at the setting. For example, they check children sleeping in cots regularly and older children are never left unsupervised in the sleep area. They keep good records of fire drills carried out, including evacuation times and any improvements to the procedure that maybe needed.

Practitioners manage children's behaviour well at the setting. They are kind, gentle, and warm, setting the tone for positive interactions. They use praise and encouragement to support children. For example, practitioners regularly use phrases such as "Well done, good trying!" and "Good job!" Practitioners are clear about boundaries and gently encourage children to be kind, show respect for each other

and share resources. For example, when children want to play with the same toy, practitioners skilfully suggest another activity or toy to play with, avoiding any potential conflict.

Practitioners are nurturing, sensitive and alert to the needs of children in their care. For example, they respond quickly if a child begins to look upset. Practitioners observe the children closely to monitor their skills in different aspects. They support the children to build confidence and encourage independence and well-being. Practitioners are also alert to the support a child may need to develop a particular skill, and to support a child who may have an emerging additional learning need. They work well with parents and carers, and outside agencies to support the children in their care.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three or four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

Practitioners know their children well and have a sound understanding of child development and the importance of giving children time to explore and play. They are developing an understanding of the Curriculum for Wales. They consider the children's interests and use them as a starting point to plan experiences and activities. Practitioners provide a calm environment for children to play and learn. They have a good understanding of the importance of allowing children extended periods of uninterrupted play and how this helps children to formulate their ideas and develop their skills.

Practitioners are beginning to gather useful information on children's learning and development from observing their play. They are beginning to use these observations to assess children's progress and consider how to use their findings as they develop aspects of the provision. However, overall, practitioners do not use these observations well enough to plan future activities and experiences that will deepen and extend children's learning.

Practitioners are good role models and support children to develop their language skills through caring and encouraging interactions. There are worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills, for example when making observational drawings of pumpkins. Practitioners model the use of the Welsh language well. They encourage children to join in singing a range of Welsh songs and rhymes. They use incidental Welsh appropriately to give instructions, greet children and congratulate them when they have done well.

Practitioners encourage children to take calculated risks in their play and challenge themselves physically, supporting them to develop resilience, independence and confidence. For example, practitioners encourage children to be confident and careful when swinging on tyres in the woodland area. Practitioners provide suitable experiences and ask appropriate questions to support children to gain a mathematical understanding of size and shape, for example when discussing which spoon is the largest when pouring water into jugs. However, practitioners do not plan well enough to ensure a range of activities which help the children build on their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding over time. In addition they do not

provide suitable opportunities or resources for children to develop their digital skills during their time at the setting.

Practitioners encourage children to develop a sense of awe and wonder through their visits to the woodland area. They encourage children to take care of the environment, for example by scooping up leaves and planting bulbs to observe how they grow. Practitioners make good use of their locality and visit places near the setting to support children develop a secure sense of belonging. For example, they visit local farms to collect milk and visit local attractions. Planned activities support children to develop an understanding of the celebrations and traditions of Wales and those of other cultures.

Environment: Good

The environment is safe and secure. External doors are always locked, and practitioners allow only authorised access to the setting. They ensure that a record of all visitors is maintained. Useful risk assessments for nearly all areas and activities at the setting are in place and followed by practitioners. They complete effective daily safety checks of the environment to identify and, where possible, eliminate any risks to children's safety. Suitably placed gates prevent children accessing unsuitable areas, for example storage areas outside. Routine safety checks for the building and certificates are in place. Fire and security equipment is regularly checked.

The indoor environment is very welcoming and child friendly and provides ample space for children to play and learn. For example, base rooms provide light, space and interesting areas for children to explore. They are organised in an effective manner to stimulate children's curiosity and development. For example, areas such as the 'home corner' and the messy activity tray are set up attractively and invite them to play. Toys and activities are at children's height enabling them to access what they want to play with freely. When they are taken outside, children can access varied and attractive outdoor spaces to play and learn. For example, 'the woods' provide opportunities to engage with the natural environment whilst the slide and play area give opportunities to take appropriate risks and experience physical challenges. Toilets and nappy changing facilities are clean, organised and suitable in number. The setting has sufficient areas for children to sleep and rest safely.

The setting has a large quantity of high-quality toys and play resources, which supports children's development and choice. For example, there is a mix of natural and man-made materials with many attractive wooden resources. Real life and multi-cultural items promote children's awareness of equality and cultural diversity. Staff follow robust systems to regularly check toys, equipment and resources to ensure that they are clean and in good condition.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have created a warm and welcoming ethos at the setting. They have a clear vision for the setting that places the well-being of the children and the staff at the centre of their work. They have developed a strong sense of teamwork and as a result staff are happy and effective in their roles.

Leaders are beginning to make good use of a range of information in their self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. They support practitioners to reflect and evaluate the effectiveness of their practice and how this positively impacts on children and their development. However, leaders do not identify well enough the areas for improvement within the setting and put plans in place to address these. The statement of purpose is clear and provides an accurate picture of the setting, allowing parents to make informed decisions about the suitability of the setting for their child. Generally, the setting has effective policies in place. However, leaders do not always ensure that all policies and procedures match practice and meet requirements.

Leaders ensure that staff have clear job descriptions that contain all relevant information relating to their roles and responsibilities. Leaders ensure that safe recruitment procedures are in place and that there are a suitable number of practitioners with the appropriate qualifications and experience. Leaders support practitioners by providing regular appraisal and supervision. Leaders make effective use of grants and other funding to improve the setting. For example, these have had a positive impact in enhancing the environment to develop children's mark making and investigative skill.

Leaders work well with parents and carers and keep them suitably informed of their child's progress and development. They hold beneficial opportunities for parents and carers to visit the setting and meet other families. This supports transition as children move through the setting and deepens relationships with practitioners.

Leaders have developed strong links with a range of partners, including the local advisory teacher to support and enhance children's learning and development. There are beneficial opportunities for practitioners to improve their skills and develop a greater understanding of effective early years practice through accessing a wide range of professional learning opportunities. Leaders make good use of peer support to help them in their improvement journey. Leaders work closely with the local authority early years team to ensure that those children with additional learning needs are well supported and that their needs are met.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (http://careinspectorate.wales) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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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.

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Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

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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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