Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Chou Chou's Day Nursery

Chou Chous Day Nursery, Bridge Street Newbridge, Newport, NP11 5FE

01495 243080

The inspection visit took place on 06/02/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Joanne Rees
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	75
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
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	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Children feel safe, secure and content. They express themselves well and can make choices about their activities. Their behaviour is positive, and they share warm, trusting relationships with staff. Children enjoy their play experiences and make good progress, supported by opportunities to develop independence and practise new skills.

Staff follow the setting's policies and procedures effectively to promote children's safety and well-being. They show kindness and care in their interactions, helping children feel valued and happy. Staff deliver a play-based curriculum and plan additional activities that support their all-round development.

The environment is a safe and secure space for children to play and learn. Leaders and staff manage hazards effectively. All staff ensure children feel a sense of belonging in the child friendly environment. The indoor and outdoor areas are utilised well to give children a range of different

opportunities.

Leaders are dedicated and committed to providing quality childcare. They have a good self-evaluation procedure that supports improvement. Positive relationships are developed with parents and outside agencies which benefit the children.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children have a strong voice. They make choices and decisions about what they do and how they spend their time. Babies have plenty of time to explore their environment and the range of resources available to them. Older children make purposeful choices from a good range of resources and activities. All kinds of communication are valued, and children know they will be listened to. For example, babies who are not yet verbal, voice their needs through sounds and gestures.

Children feel safe and valued. Those who need reassurance will seek out staff for comfort and cuddles. Older children know the routines of the day well which supports them in feeling secure. For example, after tidy up time, children sat at the table without prompting to wait for handwashing and snack time. Staff follow babies' individual routines to help them feel safe and settled. There is a 'Family' display in each room to share photographs of each child's family. This supports the children's sense of belonging.

Children behave well, in line with their age and stage of development. The youngest children play alongside each other and are beginning to make simple interactions. For example, one baby was putting its arms in the air, and another was smiling and copying. Older children are forming friendships and can mostly take turns and share resources. They enjoy chatting with each other at mealtimes and nearly always listen and respond to staff.

Children enjoy their play and learning. There is a good balance of free choice and adult led activities. We saw a younger child engrossed in play with a pop-up toy, saying *"where are you?!"* before pressing the button to reveal the character. We also saw older children thoroughly enjoying a matching card game with a staff member. Children learn well from the opportunities and experiences they are provided with. They take part in a range of activities that support their all-round development.

Children have good opportunities to develop their independence and receive encouragement from staff members. We saw older children use tongs to serve themselves fruit at snack time and dish up their pasta at lunchtime. Babies have space to move around the setting independently and many can settle themselves off to sleep.

Care & Development — Good

Staff follow policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy. They record their own and children's attendance times on a daily register. However, staff breaks are not currently recorded which means supervision of children during these times is unclear. Staff implement good hygiene practices in relation to nappy changing and food preparation. The setting manages children's allergies effectively, and staff are informed about individual children who have specific dietary requirements. The food provided at mealtimes is in line with the setting's menu and suitable for children of all ages. Information regarding the administration of medication is clearly recorded, with signatures obtained by parents/carers and staff. The wall-mounted first aid kit is accessible to staff members, and its contents are within the expiry dates. Staff consistently record any pre-existing injuries or accident and incidents that occur in the setting. These are regularly monitored for patterns or trends. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding and know the appropriate action to take should a concern arise. However, some staff have not maintained up-to-date mandatory safeguarding training.

Staff encourage children to be kind and polite. They sit with children during mealtimes to promote their language and social skills. Staff build warm and nurturing relationships with the children. They understand the behaviour management policy and consistently use positive reinforcement. Staff offer praise and encouragement to children for good tidying and accomplishing their goals during play. We heard a staff member exclaim, *"you're so smart!"* when a child who was drawing named all the crayon colours.

Staff are enthusiastic about supporting children's learning and play. They complete weekly observations of them and identify next steps for their development. Staff use seasons and celebrations to plan engaging learning opportunities. For example, we saw older children enjoying an activity where they used their fingers to push cotton buds into small holes in cardboard heart shapes, to develop their fine motor skills. Staff know children and their individual needs well. They naturally adjust the care and the behaviour strategies they use to suit. Staff are aware of children who have or may have additional learning needs. They communicate with parents and outside agencies when appropriate. We heard some Welsh being used during our visit, and the setting is committed to improvement. They have signed up to a programme designed to support early years settings who wish to increase their use of the Welsh language.

Environment — Good

Leaders ensure the environment is safe and well maintained. Staff lock the entrance door, and parents and visitors cannot enter the site unless authorised by a member of staff. Leaders keep a written record of all visitors to the setting. The outdoor play area is secure, ensuring children cannot leave. All required safety certificates are current, including gas, electrical and fire safety. Staff undertake daily safety checks and are risk aware throughout the day and follow procedures to minimise hazards. For example, using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when cleaning, and clearing space for babies to walk and crawl around safely. Leaders and staff complete and regularly review a wide range of risk assessments covering rooms, activities, outings, school runs and equipment. All areas of the setting are clean and clutter free. Sleep rooms provide a calm space for children to rest, with cots spaced appropriately and regular sleep checks recorded. During inspection, all rooms were warm and comfortable, and staff act promptly in the mornings to ensure rooms reach the required minimum temperature of 18 degrees Celsius. However, temperature logs do not currently record the time that rooms reach the required temperature.

Leaders have created a warm, welcoming, and well-organised environment that supports children's play, learning and development. The layout and arrangement of the premises meet's children's needs well and allows them to access resources with ease. Toilet and kitchen facilities are clean and fresh. Nappy changing facilities promote children's privacy, dignity, and respect. Clearly defined areas, both indoors and outdoors offer fun learning experiences where children can learn, explore and play imaginatively. Displays of children's photographs and their artwork give them a sense of belonging and celebrate their achievements. Bilingual displays and signage ensure children see written Welsh language.

Resources are plentiful and are readily available to support children's independence and choice. For example, there is low-level storage, children have their own named drawers to store any drawings or craft, and photographs of children next to their coat pegs to enable them to hang up their own coats. Leaders provide a good variety of suitable toys and equipment for all ages, including natural and authentic resources, sensory play equipment, role-play areas and creative opportunities. The outdoor area is well resourced with mud kitchen play, ride-on toys, a sheltered area and opportunities for physical play.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are committed and motivated to deliver good quality childcare. They have a clear vision for the setting, including plans to embed and expand Flying Start provision. Leaders ensure the setting follows regulations and National Minimum Standards. The Statement of Purpose is clear but does not refer to the provision of Flying Start places and the introduction of the new Curriculum Wales. Leaders review policies annually and staff sign to confirm they have read and understood them. However, a small number of policies do not refer to current legislation and guidance. Leaders understand their responsibilities about notifying Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) about significant events and keep in regular communication.

Leaders promote a positive ethos where staff feel valued and supported. Staff appreciate the open-door culture and the strong relationships within the team. Mandatory training is mostly up to date, and staff have opportunities to undertake other training. Recruitment processes are robust. However, outcomes for children require improvement as one outstanding staff reference is still unresolved and needs further follow-up, we expect the provider to make improvements. Leaders keep very well organised staff files, which evidence staff are suitably qualified and thorough induction processes. Leaders ensure staff levels meet the required ratios so that children are always supervised and well cared for. They complete duty rotas for daily tasks such as preparing snack and cleaning which helps with the smooth running of each day. Leaders carry out regular staff meetings to discuss current practice within the setting, any up-and-coming events and to give staff the opportunity to bond as a whole team. All staff receive an annual appraisal. Leaders and staff meet often to discuss practice and any issues, but these are not always recorded as formal supervision.

Self-evaluation processes are in place, and an annual Quality of Care report is completed. Leaders gather feedback from parents, staff, children and partner agencies. The action plan shows relevant areas for improvement, including improving planning and observations, developing Flying Start sessions, and enhancing the outdoor environment. Leaders are keen to continually improve their setting and have met all recommendations made at the last inspection.

Partnership working is strong. Leaders have positive relationships with parents and outside agencies, including speech and language and Flying Start. Parents receive regular information about their children's care and development, and staff gather comprehensive registration and "All About Me" information. The setting also makes good use of the local community through visits to the library and park.

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.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
The responsible individual had not ensured that they had obtained two references for one staff member prior to them starting work. Children may be at risk if all staff safe recruitment checks are not undertaken.	06/02/26

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)
Standard 20 - Child protection	Ensure all staff complete their mandatory safeguarding training within the expected timeframe.

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)
Staff must sign in and out for break times and lunch cover to ensure clear records of supervision.
Make a record of when rooms reach required temperature of 18 degrees Celsius.
Update policies and paperwork in line with current practice, legislation and guidance.
Ensure all supervision meetings are formally recorded.

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