Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Manfords Little Lambs

1 - 2 Castle Road, Chirk, Wrexham, LL14 5BS

07809603193

The inspection visit took place on 09/12/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Vicki Mitchell, Carla Little
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	63
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 is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Adequate
Environment	Adequate
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Children have choices and some opportunities to share their needs, ideas and interests. They feel safe and content and enjoy playing alongside their friends. Children interact well and learn to follow rules and routines and to develop an understanding towards others. Children get involved in activities they enjoy and have some opportunities to self-direct their own play. They have access to activities and resources that allow them to develop and learn.

Staff keep children safe, following effective policies and procedures and having appropriate training. They promote a healthy lifestyle by offering nutritious snack and meal choices and ensuring water is available throughout the day. Staff are caring and understanding towards the children. Most become actively involved in children's play and communicate with children in a friendly manner. Staff plan some suitable activities that consider the children's interests. They use observations to support them to track children's progress and identify next steps in their learning.

Leaders have made positive changes to the environment. They ensure risk assessments are completed, and hazards are managed effectively. Both the indoor and outdoor environments are suitably maintained and provide appropriate facilities. Leaders have equipped some rooms with suitable areas of learning and resources.

Leaders are actively involved in the daily operations of the setting. They ensure records and policies and procedures are updated and reflect current practice. Leaders complete an annual quality of care assessment that reviews the care provided and considers views of others. They manage staff well, ensuring appropriate checks and training are completed to evidence staff are suitable to care for children. Positive relationships with parents and the use of the local environment benefit the children.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children have choices and make some decisions about how they spend their time. They move around their respective rooms, choosing from the activities available to them. Children have some opportunities to share their needs, ideas and interests. For example, during circle time children share what songs they would like to sing, and they ask for more food at snack and lunch time. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to give children a strong voice as their interests are not always fully considered when staff are planning activities or providing resources.

Children arrive happy and separate well from their parents showing they feel safe and content. They enjoy playing alongside their friends and actively seek out others they want to interact with. For example, they join their friends in the construction area so they can build together. Children develop a good relationship with staff, feeling relaxed and happy to approach them for comfort or support when needed. Some children know their wants, needs and moods will be considered by staff, which helps them feel valued and understood. Children develop positive self-esteem and a sense of belonging as they are familiar with routines, have consistent staff caring for them and feel comfortable in their surroundings.

Children interact well for their ages and stages of development. They learn to understand rules and follow routines well. Children develop an understanding towards others, which helps them learn to share and take turns during their play and routines. For example, children made sure others got a turn to choose from the bag during circle time.

Children get involved in a play or learning activity they enjoy. They play alongside others, alone or with staff. For example, children enjoyed inviting staff into their role play. Children keenly share their experiences with others and happily invited us into their play and talked about what they were doing. Children have some opportunities to self-direct their own play and take part in experiences that are more adult directed.

Children have access to activities and resources that allow them to develop and learn. There are some appropriate areas of learning available for children to access. For example, home corners and small world areas. They have planned activities that support their learning and development. For example, craft activities related to a specific theme or topic are arranged by staff.

Care & Development — Adequate

Staff keep children safe as they follow effective policies and procedures. They have appropriate training, so they are aware of the correct procedure to follow if they have any safeguarding concerns. Electronic registers are kept of children and staff attendance ensuring everyone can be accounted for. Staff can deal with minor accidents and incidents effectively as nearly all staff have completed first aid training and appropriate records are kept and shared with parents. Fire drills are conducted so staff and children know what to do in an emergency. However, they are not always consistent when other work is taking place, which prevents them following their usual procedures.

Staff ensure children have access to a nutritious diet with healthy meal and snack choices. This includes fruits and vegetables and only offering milk or water to drink. Drinks are made available throughout the day to ensure children remain hydrated. Staff follow effective procedures to help prevent the spread of germs, such as, cleaning tables and following an appropriate nappy changing procedure. Children have some opportunities to be active as they access outdoors where they can run around and get fresh air.

Staff show care and understanding towards the children. Most staff become actively involved in children's play. They sit at their level and communicate in a friendly manner with the children about the activity they are taking part in. For example, talking about different foods they could make in the home corner. Staff implement some effective behaviour management strategies to support and teach children about rules and encouraging them to be well mannered. For example, reminding and praising them when they say please and thank you and supporting children to share resources. Staff sit with some children during lunchtime, talking to them and making it a sociable experience. However, this is not consistent for all children.

Staff plan some suitable activities that consider the children's interests and next steps in their learning. However, this is not always done effectively to ensure the activities support children to follow their interests. Some resources and activities are freely available and promote children's learning and development. Staff observe children and keep appropriate records to track children's progress and identify next steps in their learning. Staff identify children with additional learning needs (ALN) and have an appropriate system in place to ensure they are providing appropriate care, including working with parents.

Environment — Adequate

The setting is secure from unauthorised access and visitors are recorded. Children are prevented from leaving unsupervised as external doors are locked and there are secure gates and fencing surrounding the outside areas. Risk assessments are in place, so hazards are identified and managed appropriately. Regular checks on the environment help to ensure no new hazards have arisen. Improvements have been made to the environment, so it is now appropriately maintained. Leaders make sure there is an effective cleaning routine, which helps keep the nursery clean and tidy. They ensure all fire equipment is serviced and building safety checks are completed and documented correctly.

Both the indoor and outdoor areas are suitably maintained. Leaders ensure children and staff have access to facilities including toilets and hand washing areas. Indoors, the rooms offer sufficient play spaces, which are appropriately decorated. The room used by older children includes some learning areas, such as role play and an inviting play kitchen. However, similar areas are limited in other parts of the setting, which restrict children's ability to explore freely and make their own choices. Improvements have been made to the outdoor areas to make them safer for children. These are now more inviting space where children can develop skills as they climb, balance and be physically active.

Leaders have equipped some areas with suitable resources that are of a good quality. For example, babies had access to toys that encouraged them to pull themselves up and begin to walk. Some areas of learning are inspiring and inviting for children. For example, the home corner in the room used by older children was equipped with authentic resources that the children enjoyed using to recreate real life experiences. However, this was not consistent throughout the setting, to ensure children are supported to develop practical life skills and enhance their imaginative play scenarios. There are a lot of plastic and manmade resources in the rooms, rather than the focus being on natural materials. This restricts opportunities to spark children's curiosity and encourage exploration. Staff provide some opportunities to develop cultural awareness through books and dolls, which promote diversity and inclusivity.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are actively involved in the daily operations of the setting, which gives them a good understanding of the care and support provided to children. There is a clear statement of purpose that reflects the care provided. It gives parents the information they need to decide if it is the right care for their child. Policies and procedures are updated regularly and contain all the required information. Leaders have listened and responded well to advice given during their last inspection, which has led to improvements being made. Leaders keep comprehensive, up-to-date records, including children's files, and ensure all necessary legal documents are in order.

Leaders complete a purposeful annual quality of care assessment. They consider what has gone well and review the service they provide, gathering views of parents as part of the process. For example, they have identified improving their knowledge of the Welsh curriculum as a possible area to develop. We saw some evidence of this beginning to be implemented at the setting.

Leaders make sure staff are comfortable to raise any issues and concerns with them. Staff confirmed they were happy at the setting and felt supported in their role. Leaders follow appropriate recruitment procedures and staff files contained the information needed to evidence they are suitable to care for children. Leaders ensure they meet mandatory training requirements for staff, including safeguarding and first aid. Staff are deployed effectively to consistently maintain the required adult-to-child ratios and ensure children are sufficiently supervised.

Leaders develop good relationships with parents. They gather all relevant information before children start at the setting to enable them to support individual needs effectively. Leaders keep parents informed about their children through a variety of methods including verbal feedback and electronically. The local environment is used to give children a range of experiences this includes local litter picking and visits to places of interest. Visitors to the setting enhance opportunities for children. For example, they enjoyed welcoming the local police to the setting, learning about what they do and sitting in the police car.

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)
Standard 24 - Safety	To ensure fire drills are conducted regularly and alternative procedures are in place when the usual fire evacuation procedures are unable to be followed.
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	To ensure children are inspired to play and learn as their interests are always considered when planning activities and resources.

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)
Introduce more free access to resources that inspire children and help them develop their curiosity, creativity and problem solving skills.
To ensure all children have positive interactions during lunchtimes.

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