Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Once Upon a Time Childcare Ltd

Tonna Primary School
School Road
Tonna
Neath
SA11 3EJ



Date Inspection Completed

22/03/2023

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About Once Upon a Time Childcare Ltd

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Once Upon a Time Childcare Ltd
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is a post registration inspection.
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Well-being	**Good**
Care and Development	**Excellent**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and Management	**Good**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are confident, happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at Once Upon a Time Childcare. They have a strong sense of belonging and are developing positive relationships and friendships. Children have good choices and make effective decisions about what they want to do.

Staff consistently implement policies and promote physical activities, personal safety and wellbeing. Staff positively praise children for perseverance and good behaviour. They are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities for all with an appropriate balance of child and adult led opportunities.

There are a range of policies and risk assessments in place which are successfully implemented, thus ensuring the environment is clean, safe, and well maintained. The environment, both inside and outside, promotes children's play, learning and development. There is a good range of resources that motivate and promote curiosity.

People running the setting are organised and manage the setting well. They strive to develop the provision and are committed to ongoing improvements. They encourage an active partnership with parents and other stakeholders. They successfully embed their policies in the running of the setting. There are three recommendations at the end of this report.

Well-being — Good

Children are happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting. They have a strong voice and have a good choice of play opportunities and resources. Children move freely from one activity to another and are asked what they would like to do next. They feel comfortable and confident to tell staff what they want through verbal and non-verbal communication. For instance, during messy play children were given the opportunity to engage with the activity but also knew that they could leave at any time. They have good opportunities to make choices. For example, children are encouraged to join in with outside activities and their choice is respected if they do not want to participate.

Most children are settled and cope well with separation. Children who are upset or take time to settle are given individual, patient care and nurturing support. They have formed positive bonds of attachment with staff. Children are enthusiastic on arrival and are excited to explore the new activities on offer. They express enthusiasm and enjoyment, we saw them smile, laugh and positively engage with their friends and staff. Children happily play alongside each other and together. Clear friendships and bonds of affection are forming. Children are able to sleep if needed. However, the position of the sleeping area was in a busy part of the room. Improvements have already been put in place which will ensure children can have quiet time if needed. Children have a strong sense of belonging and are very familiar with routines, for example at teeth brushing time and changing clothes following outside play.

Interactions between children and staff are consistently positive and often humorous. Some children delighted in throwing spaghetti at staff during messy play, shrieking with excitement and belly laughing at the consequences. Interactions between children were good with some children developing empathy and showing concern for their friends. For example, one child went to check their friend was alright following a fall from their bicycle.

Children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. They enjoy a good range of interesting opportunities indoors and outdoors that promote their all-round development. We saw children enthusiastically participate in several engaging activities, as well as actively join in with songs during circle time. Children have opportunities to follow their own instincts, ideas, and interests.

Children have some opportunities to develop their independence skills. They are becoming confident at self-care, changing their clothes and putting on their shoes with varying degrees of help. They access toys they wish to play with and wash their hands independently. There are further opportunities to develop independence, at mealtimes for example.

Care and Development — Excellent

Staff implement procedures to a high standard to keep children safe and promote their development and well-being. They have a clear understanding of the safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities to keep children safe and report any concerns. Staff have a thorough understanding of children's allergies, dietary requirements, and medical needs. They are confident in recording accidents and incidents. They ensure children have access to daily outdoor play experiences, offering them the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air. Staff practise regular fire drills with children, so they know what to do in an emergency. There are in-depth, comprehensive policies in place, which are regularly reviewed.

Staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive behaviour strategies. They strive to make interactions respectful and value individual personalities. We heard staff positively praise children for perseverance and good behaviour. Staff use an array of behaviour management techniques skilfully. They are calm, kind and patient in their interactions with children. They treat children with respect and talk with them as equals, this is a real strength of the setting. Staff act as excellent role models, consistently using the language associated with good manners. We heard staff encouraging children to talk about their emotions and encouraging empathy. Staff show genuine delight in seeing children have fun with their friends and while engaging with activities. Staff are committed to settling children who are upset as quickly as they can. They talk to each other and share helpful ideas which may help. They have good relationships and communicate well with each other. This ensures children are appropriately supervised and supported throughout the day.

Staff are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities with an appropriate balance of child and adult-led opportunities. Staff play alongside children, looking for opportunities to extend learning and discussion. We saw staff share sustained thinking with children as they sought to find solutions for a 'broken' train track. We saw children engage in an exceptional session of messy play. Staff ensure all children engage with the session at a level they are comfortable with. Children were encouraged to investigate the messy play resources carefully at first, using their senses. Children squeal with delight as they explore the messy resources further. Staff manage the activity expertly as they all begin to get very messy. Staff are quick to seize moments which children initiate, and then motivate and inspire them to explore their curiosity and play. Staff involve children in the planning of activities and children provide the starting point and ideas on which planning evolves.

Staff recognise when children may have additional needs. They take purposeful action and make effective use of the support available. Staff provide tailored, considered and patient care. They ensure children are supported in the creation of a space in which they can play. Most staff use incidental Welsh throughout the day.

Environment	**Good**

People who run the setting have comprehensive policies in place and ensure the environment is suitably safe, secure and well maintained. Staff complete effective and accurate general risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed. Any identified hazards are swiftly addressed. During our visit we identified an area which had not been adequately assessed, namely a missing finger guard on an external door. Swift action was taken to address this potential hazard. Staff effectively organise consistent cleaning routines that reflect robust hygiene practices. Their effective infection control practices successfully minimise any risk to children's health and safety.

People who run the setting make certain the environment has very good indoor play space, which children freely explore. They ensure the environment meets most of the children's needs and enables them to reach their full potential. The playroom is divided into interesting areas which support children in their play and learning. Children have opportunities for role-play in the shop corner and there are interesting multi-sensory resources and activities which promote curiosity. The children benefit from seeing their work in colourful displays which strengthens their connection to the space. People who run the setting ensure the outdoor play space is used often. Careful consideration and planning of the outside area, as well as interesting and varied resources and play equipment, challenge and stimulate children's curiosity and interest. Planned changes to create an improved cloakroom and staffroom will have a positive impact on the children and staff.

People who run the setting provide a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources, in sufficient quantity, to ensure children have good variety and choice. They provide stimulating resources for all stages of development and show an understanding of the new curriculum. For example, in providing innovative 'loose parts' play resources which the children enthusiastically explore. Children can access toys and resources easily, as they are set up at low level or within their reach. Appropriate resources are available for older children who access the setting after school. Diversity is encouraged through engaging with activities related to a variety of different celebrations from varied cultures.

Leadership and Management — Good

People who run the setting are effective in the way they manage and operate the service and are committed to ongoing improvements. They have a strong vision that they share effectively with others and have engaged positively with Care Inspectorate Wales during the inspection process. They update the setting's policies and ensure staff implement these in practice. People who run the setting maintain and share an up-to-date effective statement of purpose that accurately reflects the service provided and meets the National Minimum Standards.

People who run the setting have procedures in place for self-evaluation of the service. They have completed a reflective quality of care review which details improvements made and considered targets to drive improvement. For example, to provide an all-weather shelter for outside play and to develop the corridor area enabling younger children to access the toilet facilities independently. The people who run the setting implement safe recruitment procedures to safeguard children. They carry out annual appraisals and regular supervisions providing support and an opportunity to check in with their staff. People who run the setting ensure staff receive training and keep them up to date with new initiatives to further their professional development, which ensures the service continues to improve. For example, they have identified the new curriculum as an area for future training and some members of staff have completed training in this area. Staff told us*, "I know I can always talk to my manager when I need to. My manager always listens to me, and I know she cares about the team. Everyone feels part of the team".*

People who run the setting have developed meaningful and positive relationships with parents and carers. There are effective systems in place to keep parents well informed about their child's time at the setting. Questionnaires completed by people who use the service are very positive. Parents told us, *"A really good and well-run service. Our (child) has been really happy there and the staff are very friendly and supportive. Very approachable and flexible with contact methods to suit our needs."* Parents we spoke to on the day of our visit were extremely positive about the setting highlighting good communication and a supportive settling in period as particular strengths. The people who run the setting have positive relationships with a range of professionals and other stakeholders.

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)
Standard 22 - Environment	To further enhance the sleeping / rest area.
Standard 8 - Nurture and well-being	Further develop opportunities to enhance children's independence.

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.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
Further develop the use of Welsh within the setting.

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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