Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Brighter Minds Childcare Ltd

12 Gwendoline Road, Risca, Newport, NP11 6DD

01633612845

https://www.brighterminds.uk/

The inspection visit took place on 15/10/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Brighter Minds Childcare Ltd
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	50
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	Excellent
Care & Development	Excellent
Environment	Excellent
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Children are happy, confident and independent learners who communicate exceptionally well, form strong friendships and engage enthusiastically in play. They make choices, develop valuable self-help skills and thrive in a nurturing environment where supportive staff encourage exploration, resilience and positive relationships.

Staff provide exemplary care that promotes children's well-being, safety and development. They build warm, respectful relationships and deliver rich child-led learning experiences. Skilled staff respond effectively to children's needs and interests, creating an inclusive environment where children feel secure, valued and confident to learn.

Leaders maintain a safe, secure and highly stimulating environment where children thrive. They effectively manage risks and provide well-organised spaces that promote independence. Leaders offer an abundance of high-quality resources that inspire creativity, curiosity and exploration through meaningful, child-centred learning experiences.

Leaders provide strong and effective leadership, maintaining high standards of care and continuous improvement. They support staff development and foster positive partnerships with families and the community. Leaders create a collaborative culture that helps children thrive in a welcoming, inclusive and well-managed setting.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children are enthusiastic and curious learners who enjoy making decisions about their play and learning. They communicate extremely effectively, sharing their ideas confidently and clearly expressing their preferences and needs. For example, a child was making 'soup' at the mud kitchen. They called a staff member and said *"I need more things"* before being offered a choice of leaves, sticks and lemon slices. Babies voice their needs through gesture, sound and body language. All forms of communication are valued and encouraged. Children proudly shared their names with us, asked for ours, and eagerly invited us into their play.

Children are extremely happy at the setting and clearly feel valued. They form positive and caring relationships with staff and take pleasure in spending time with their friends. Their strong understanding of the daily routines and familiarity with staff help them feel secure, settled, and confident within the setting. Children receive lots of encouragement and praise from staff when learning new skills, which gives them the confidence to play, learn and explore. For example, a child who was unsure about crossing a wooden obstacle was told *"you'll be safe holding my hand".*

Children interact very positively with one another and develop strong friendships. They work together successfully during activities, willingly sharing resources and taking turns as they play. For instance, we observed children take turns on the tricycle and others sharing tools at the clay table. Children enthusiastically invite their friends or members of staff into their play. They thoroughly enjoy sitting together during mealtimes, chatting happily and waving to one another across the table.

Children take great pleasure in their play and learning. They have access to an excellent range of age-appropriate resources both indoors and outside. This allows them to choose from stimulating and enjoyable activities. We observed children deeply engaged with water play, clay and block building. They also invent their own games using role play resources, expressing obvious enjoyment through frequent laughter and giggles. Children are enthusiastic learners who follow their own interests and remain focused for periods appropriate to their developmental stage.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills which means they are able to do many things for themselves. With positive encouragement from staff, children serve themselves at snack time and pour their own drink. They access toileting and handwashing facilities independently and follow the thoughtfully designed routines. Children make independent choices about their play throughout the day with skilled staff supporting them to be self-sufficient.

Care & Development — Excellent

Staff provide exemplary care that nurtures children's well-being and promotes their safety, health and development. They implement robust hygiene procedures throughout the nursery, with staff wearing protective clothing during events such as nappy changing and mealtimes. Staff clearly display allergy and dietary information in each base room as well as in the kitchen. They have an effective system in place to ensure that an alternative meal is made obvious through the colour of the crockery it is served on. Children's individual care preferences are readily available in the baby room so staff can meet their needs effectively with regards to sleep, comforters and feeding. All members of the nursery team are trained in paediatric first aid, which equips them to respond effectively to minor injuries. Staff promote children's privacy and dignity during personal care routines. During one nappy change, the staff member could be heard chatting warmly and reassuringly, ensuring the process was calm and dignified. Safeguarding is prioritised and staff demonstrate a confident understanding of the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care.

Staff are valuable role models and have excellent relationships with the children. They manage children's interactions exceptionally well through calm communication and positive guidance. They reinforce expectations in gentle tones when needed and use distraction methods to avoid conflict. Staff respond to children in a warm, respectful and consistent manner across all age groups. They provide meaningful praise for children's efforts which boosts their confidence and self-worth. For example, when a child had persevered in building a tower with blocks, a staff member exclaimed *"Wow! That's a really good tower, look how tall it is. Da iawn!".*

Staff are highly skilled at allowing children to take the lead in their play. They offer them space to explore independently while remaining observant and responsive. Staff identify moments where they can extend children's learning through prompts, resources or questions whilst being careful not to interrupt the flow of their play. They provide exciting, real-life experiences that begin with the children's interests. For example, when exploring pumpkins, a child shared that they like pumpkin soup. This resulted in children helping to make a shopping list, going to the shop to buy ingredients before cooking and eating the soup. Staff have weekly planning meetings where they work as a team to discuss how they can enable children's ideas, provide appropriate next steps and create rich learning experiences. This authentic child-led approach is a real strength of the setting.

Environment — Excellent

Leaders ensure staff are aware of potential risks and take appropriate action to maintain a safe environment for children. Access to the premises is secure, with external doors kept locked and the outdoor area enclosed. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken to identify and manage hazards, and these are reviewed and updated as necessary. Daily safety checks are carried out before children arrive to ensure the premises and equipment remain fit for use. Accurate attendance records for children and visitors are maintained so that everyone on site can be always accounted for. Leaders also ensure the environment is kept in good repair and implement effective cleaning procedures to reduce risks to children's health and well-being. They make sure that safety and maintenance checks are carried out without delay. Leaders conduct fire drills on a regular basis so staff and children understand how to respond in an emergency.

The setting is housed within two buildings, with a shared outdoor area at the rear. The whole environment is designed with children's independence in mind with different age groups cared for in spaces that best meet their needs. For example, the baby room is upstairs with a built-in kitchen and separate sleep room. Older children are downstairs with free-flow access to the outdoors. Leaders ensure that these spaces are used creatively to ensure children flourish and are stimulated to learn and explore. The environment is extremely inviting and welcoming. Each room has been developed exceptionally well, to create different areas for children to freely access. The spacious, well-resourced outside area is accessible to children throughout the day. It includes a dedicated, enclosed space where babies can access outdoor play safely. Staff place resources at child level to encourage children to follow their interests and make independent choices. Toileting and handwashing areas are conveniently located within each base room, supporting children's independence while allowing staff to supervise and assist as needed. Sleep mats allow for children to nap safely and comfortably during the day.

Leaders ensure the environment offers rich, authentic opportunities for children to be creative, develop physical skills, and grow in independence. An abundance of high-quality resources both indoors and out, create open-ended learning opportunities. Natural resources and materials provoke curiosity in children and they use real-life objects to inspire learning and play. For example, we saw one child pour dry pasta into a large saucepan before adding carrots, conkers and pine cones. *"I'm making pasta. Big pasta!"* Outside, we saw children bathe their baby dolls in stainless steel baths, collecting water and pouring it in. Leaders provide a range of resources that reflect a diverse society.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are committed to providing the best care possible for children. They have a clear vision for the setting and this is shared with staff and families. Leaders are well organised. They ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed regularly so they are reflective of the most current legislation and guidance. Leaders have a strong understanding of the regulations and ensure they keep Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) up to date with any significant events or changes. The statement of purpose is well written and reflective of what the setting offers. It provides parents/carers with the information they need to make an informed choice about the provision. Leaders ensure children's contracts are in place with all relevant information and permissions before they begin at the setting.

Leaders have effective systems in place for evaluating their service which include gathering feedback from families and staff. Room leaders and staff members complete room improvement plans which feed into the overall setting improvement plan. Leaders identify strategic priorities, aims and goals for the year. For example, 'embed children's voice into planning and daily practice'. This particular priority was observed in practice during the inspection visit, highlighting the success of their system. Leaders submit a quality of care review to CIW on an annual basis.

Leaders are committed to staff's professional development and ensure nearly all staff are up to date with mandatory training. However, a very small number did not have the appropriate safeguarding certificate relevant to their role. Leaders ensure all staff hold current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates and have a robust system in place to check their status on an annual basis. Leaders conduct regular supervisions with staff to identify training needs and share information. They have recently implemented a new appraisal system to further support staff development and performance management. Leaders provide planning and preparation time within the working week so staff can update learning journals, prepare activities or write reports. Staff files demonstrate that safe recruitment takes place at the setting, however evidence of the induction process was not available on the day. Staff feel valued by leaders, and we received extremely positive feedback both during and after our visit. The whole team are a happy, dedicated staff who speak highly of each other and work very well together.

Leaders and staff have established many strong partnerships. They have developed positive relationships with their families who are encouraged to attend termly 'parent and children together sessions'. Staff provide parents/carers with progress updates, photographs and reminders via a secure app and share verbal feedback at the end of the session. Leaders show they are committed to community links and utilise much of their local area to support children's interests. For example, visits to the train station, library, allotments and local food bank. Parents and carers are extremely complimentary about the setting, with one sharing, *"I know that my child is thriving in this setting"*. Another fed back that *"the staff have helped my child feel happy, comfortable and welcome".*

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 20 - Safeguarding	Ensure all staff have completed safeguarding training relevant to their role.
Standard 13 (Day Care) - Suitable Person	Ensure the new annual appraisal system is fully embedded in practice and that staff files contain evidence of completed induction processes.

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