Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Little Explorers at the Park

Llwynfedw Gardens Park
Llwynfedw Gardens
Heath
Cardiff
CF14 4NW



Date Inspection Completed

21/04/2022

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2022.
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

About Little Explorers at the Park

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Little Explorers in the Park Ltd
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	
Is this a Flying Start service?	
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No. This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service.

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

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

Summary

Children are happy and settled within the setting. They have close relationships with each other and staff, which helps them feel safe and valued. Children can make choices about how they spend their time in the environment.

Care staff are professional, appropriately qualified and enjoy their work. They are kind, caring and interact well with children. Care staff keep children safe and implement suitable routines, policies, and the majority of procedures. They plan meaningful activities in order to meet the interests of the children. However, the use of Welsh is under-developed.

The environment is suitably organised with a range of resources. There are measures in place to keep children safe. Some maintenance of the building is required as well as improvement in the monitoring and identification of hazards. Children have access to large outside areas, both open and covered for all-weather use.

Leaders ensure care staff provide a good level of care for children. They have a safe recruitment process and ensure all care staff feel valued. They make improvements where necessary to benefit the children in their care. Some documentation needs to be reviewed. The setting has positive partnerships with parents, and they speak highly of leaders, care staff and the care their children receive.

Well-being — Good

Children are confident their voices will be heard, and they have various opportunities to make choices. For example, they choose their own play activity and can also choose between indoor and outdoor activities. Children interact positively with their friends and with those caring for them. During snack time they engage in conversation and sit nicely at the table when eating their snack. For example, two children chat together, sharing their knowledge about the animals. They use good manners during snack time. They are able to wait their turn when staff serve them and use good manners.

Children are happy and settled at the setting which is very child centred, with a strong emphasis on them directing their own play and learning. For example, they arrive happy and smiling, follow a familiar routine and immediately start their activities. Many children separate easily from their parents, settle well into their groups, and have close relationships with familiar staff and children. They have positive emotional bonds with staff which helps them settle quickly. For example, one child who finds separation from parents more difficult seeks reassurance and hugs from staff. Children approached us confidently and were proud to show us their artwork.

Children have many opportunities to initiate their own play. They play confidently, generally accessing activities that interest them. For example, one child engages in role play with a pirate ship for a sustained period. Interactions between children are generally appropriate and they enjoy their play very much. With encouragement, and gentle reminders a group of children learn to share the popular building blocks. They are aware of the expectations and rules and work together to tidy the blocks before going outside.

Care and Development — Good

Overall, care staff keep children safe, by following the setting's policies and procedures. For example, policies for accidents, incidents, and medications. Many care staff are starting to understand how to identify and manage risks. They use daily check lists to ensure the environment is safe and follow Covid procedures. They practice infection control and follow an enhanced cleaning rota. Care staff have up to date training in safeguarding children, and all practitioners we spoke with were confident on the safe procedures to follow in most hypothetical safeguarding scenarios. However, some were not clear on the procedures to follow should there be an allegation against the Responsible Individual (RI). This was identified during the course of the inspection, and staff training has now been provided. Food and snacks provided are healthy and nutritious and the setting has a gold standard healthy snack award. Drinking water is provided which children access independently. The provider is aware of their responsibility to register with Environmental Health when they begin cooking meals from the premises.

Care staff have good knowledge of play-based learning and have the relevant childcare qualifications. They plan activities to develop skills and use a thematic approach allowing children to learn about and celebrate many cultures. Most practitioners support children in their play. For example, they question children on the sizes and number of objects whilst playing in the water tray. However, a minority of care staff missed opportunities to question children and develop skills during a focused activity. A key worker system is in place, but it does not include tracking children's progress and informing parents.

Care staff interact in a kind and caring manner with children. They are consistent in their approach and mindful of children's age and stage of development when managing behaviour. Care staff use soft tones to distract children who are frustrated or upset, and praise children for their efforts appropriately. Most care staff are consistently responsive; they listen and respect children's views. Care staff act as positive role models for children and clearly enjoy their jobs. Very little incidental Welsh is used by care staff.

Environment — Adequate

The area is spacious and provides children with suitable areas to play, learn, eat, and relax. Leaders ensure that any outdoor play space is used as often as possible. Outside, there is a large covered area which is utilised most of the year as an extension to the inside area. The setting also has the use of a large sports area which is enclosed and used for physical activity. Leaders ensure children's development is encouraged with access to toys and equipment. Resources are labelled and sufficiently organised. Overall, the environment provides a welcoming, child friendly space. Children's sense of identity and belonging is promoted where possible. As this is a shared community facility no permanent children's displays are allowed. Their artwork is shown on removable hanging displays and their achievements take pride of place during the day.

Leaders organise the environment well. Play based activities are set up purposefully and promote children's independence. There are areas for small world play, reading, fine and gross motor skills development and children move freely between them. Other stored resources are rotated to give children a varied range of activities. Recycled materials provide the opportunity for children to develop their imaginative play. For example, children use natural materials such as pinecones and sticks in a 'sorting' activity. These imaginative resources as well as the range of equipment facilitate the play and learning opportunities.

Leaders ensure that the environment is generally safe and secure. They have risk assessments in place, but some are missing potential hazards specific to the setting. For example, the transport for children and the use of hand dryers have not been risk assessed. Fire drills are practiced regularly and recorded correctly. Staff complete registers for children and those caring for them effectively. Safety and insurance certificates are valid, and the relevant electrical checks are in place. Care staff are responsible for ensuring good hygiene throughout the day.

The setting is based in a public hall, which is used by other members of the community outside of the setting's hours. Leaders implement regular safety checks to ensure that they reduce or eliminate risks. They complete checks when opening and closing the setting. However, some potential hazards have not been identified. For example, children currently have access to the toilet's store cupboard and toilet brushes. There are an appropriate number of toilets, which are easily accessible to the children. Some areas of the environment require improvement and maintenance. These areas include the outdoor privacy screen, nappy changing facilities and preventing children's access to the kitchen area.

Leadership and Management — Good

Leaders are very enthusiastic and work hard to build a strong team and good partnerships. They have plans to develop the setting and communicate their vision well. This includes engaging with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and notifying us of significant events. There are suitable policies and procedures in place and records are kept. However, some policies need to be reviewed, and ensured that they are fully implemented in practice.

Leaders reflect on the practice at the setting, and they value the contributions of care staff in this process. They follow a safe, robust, and timely recruitment process. Care staff have opportunities to offer their views in one-to-one appraisal and supervision, or at any time they feel it necessary. Leaders create a positive ethos whereby children and care staff feel valued. Care staff told us that leaders who run the setting listen to their concerns, and they feel valued. Leaders ensure care staff complete mandatory qualifications, as a minimum, and many have additional training.

Leaders who run the setting complete the annual quality of care review. They seek the views of the care staff, parents, and children on the setting. They are committed to improvement and have fully embraced their first full inspection as an integral part of their self-evaluation and improvement planning. Leaders set high expectations and actively encourage their team. They are committed to the training and development of their staff so that they can deliver the best experiences for children.

The setting has developed good links in the community over a relatively short period of time. For example, they raise money for local charities. Partnerships with parents are effective. Comprehensive information about the settings policies and procedures is shared. Parents are very complimentary of the setting and speak very highly of the care staff and the care their children receive. They feel that they are well-informed and told us that they felt the setting is supporting their children’s well-being and social skills.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Develop opportunities for the use of Welsh.

R2. Develop care staff's skills to promote children's learning.

R3. Monitor the maintenance of the building to ensure issues are identified and the environment is free of hazards.

R4. Ensure all risk assessments are fit for purpose.

R5. Review policies and ensure procedures are followed.

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

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.

Date Published 10/06/2022