Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Little Nightingales Day Nursery

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council, Pen-y-graig Library 75-76, Tylacelyn Road, Tonypandy, CF40 1LA

07970099276

The inspection visit took place on 24/07/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Melanie Bailey, Kiera Jones
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	31
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 are settled and enjoy their time at the setting. They can make many choices about what they do and interact happily with each other and staff. Children are interested in their play and have opportunities to participate in a range of activities that support them to learn and develop well.

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures appropriately to keep children safe. They are kind towards children, providing positive interactions to ensure children feel valued and happy. Staff consistently use positive behaviour management strategies to very good effect. Staff are skilled in supporting children in their play and learning.

The environment meets the children's needs with further plans for improvement already identified. There is good indoor play space for children to move freely. Leaders are developing the outdoor play space to provide suitable opportunities for play and developing physical skills. Children have

access to a good range of developmentally appropriate play and learning resources.

Leaders have worked hard to drive improvement since the last inspection, meeting recommendations successfully. They strive to develop the provision and are committed to ongoing improvements. Leaders encourage an active partnership with parents and have engaged positively with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) during the inspection process.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children are happy and enjoy their time at this setting. They communicate well with their friends and staff. Children confidently approach staff to share ideas or ask for support. They happily approached us, CIW, as visitors to the setting, to chat and engage us in their play. Children have good opportunities to make choices such as what they want for breakfast. They choose from a range of activities and play opportunities within the familiar structure of the session.

Children are settled and cope well with separation from parents or carers. They are enthusiastic on arrival and keen to explore the activities on offer. They have formed positive bonds of attachment with staff and laugh as they play together. Children are content and tell us they like playing with the toys at the setting and spending time with their friends. Nearly all children express enthusiasm and enjoyment in their play, playing alongside each other and together. Clear friendships and bonds of affection are forming, especially with the older children in the holiday club. For example, children work collaboratively to construct a train track and build with the construction resources outside. Children feel comfortable in the environment and are familiar with the routines of the day. For example, they are helpful at tidy up time and wash their hands before snack time. Children cooperate well with staff to put on sun cream before going on their walk to the shop.

Children interact well with other children, and staff are consistently positive and children approach them easily. For example, following the dolls ‘bath’, a child took a nappy to a member of staff so they could help them dress her. Children nearly always listen to direction from staff first time, as they know what is expected of their behaviour. On the odd occasion they didn’t respond positively, it didn’t take them long to control their behaviour and say sorry to others if needed. Nearly all children happily join in circle time and listen to others as they speak and answer questions. They are enthusiastic as they talk about their aspirations, feelings and food, in both Welsh and English. Children listened to staff when they reminded them to take turns and be kind when speaking.

Children enjoy an appropriate range of play and learning opportunities that promote their all-round development. Children lead most of their play and they are enthusiastic and interested in their chosen activity. For example, children enjoy washing and dressing their dolls, making food in the play kitchen and enjoying jumping off soft play blocks to see who can land the furthest away. Some children show good concentration skills and engage with activities for an age-appropriate length of time. They answer questions confidently when they talked about their trip to the shop. They explained how they hold hands, wait for the green man at the lights and listen to staff. Children smiled as they decided they were buying strawberries for their snack. Later, children told us how they enjoyed eating them.

Care & Development — Good

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They have a solid knowledge of their safeguarding responsibilities and have an appropriate level of training in safeguarding for their role. All staff have a childcare qualification and those working in the holiday club also hold a certificate in Play work. All staff have attended paediatric first aid and food hygiene training. They follow clear hygiene procedures including regular handwashing and the wearing of aprons and gloves when nappy changing. Children's allergies and dietary requirements are clearly displayed in prominent locations in the playrooms and staff are clear regarding managing dietary requirements. Staff record accidents, incidents and existing injuries appropriately. Leaders sign off accidents and during the inspection they introduced a system to monitor these to highlight any patterns that may emerge. For example, when children are cared for in mixed age groups or outside.

Staff care for children in a kind and relaxed way. They act as good role models and respond appropriately to children's individual needs. They offer consistent encouragement and engage children in conversations regarding their interests, which boosts their confidence and self-esteem. Staff work well together to support and promote children's social behaviour. They encourage children to say 'please' and 'thank you' and provide ways for children to remove themselves from unwanted behaviour. For example, when a child is reticent to join in, they ask them to come and take a lead in the activity. Staff use effective methods such as reflection and activities about 'feelings' to reinforce positive behaviour. They count down to transitions between activities, so children are clear regarding what comes next and when it is necessary for children to take turns with specific resources.

Staff provide a range of activities that most children are interested in. They effectively develop these using children's ideas and interests to ensure children's engagement. For example, during an activity 'in the hairdressers' staff sit and allow children to style their hair and children enjoy having their hair brushed and clips put in their hair. Staff engage skilfully with children during activities and play, asking open questions to encourage children to think and try to resolve things themselves. Staff monitor younger children's progress through identification of next steps and plan well to help them to reach their goals. Staff have an appropriate understanding of how to meet the needs of children requiring additional support. Staff introduce the Welsh language effectively through play and activities and are committed to promoting the Welsh language and culture at the setting.

Environment — Good

Leaders have useful policies in place to ensure the environment is safe, secure, and appropriately maintained and staff operate these well. Leaders maintain a range of risk assessments that identify and minimise most risks in the environment and for many activities. Staff complete daily checklists, as well as on-going visual checks but these have not always been effective in dealing with potential hazards such as broken cupboard locks in the playroom and storage of materials on the stairs. Leaders have taken steps to improve the ongoing risk assessment process. Leaders operate suitable cleaning routines which ensure the environment is well managed in terms of infection prevention and control. In the main, staff are confident in operating emergency procedures and practice the fire evacuation procedure regularly with nursery children. However, they had not undertaken the evacuation procedure with the holiday club. Leaders liaise closely with the owners of the building to ensure the premises are well maintained and safety checks including fire and electrical systems are undertaken.

Leaders ensure the environment is suitable and welcoming for children. They operate the nursey upstairs and have recently adapted the downstairs to expand the setting to provide holiday care for older children. Staff set up areas to provide interesting spaces where children can access activities that promote their all-round development. They sanitise tables to provide areas for children to sit and eat their meals and snacks. Children can easily access the toilet and hand-washing facilities downstairs and plans are in place to further improve these facilities. Upstairs there are spacious child size toilets and nappy changing facilities. Leaders have improved the upstairs outside space, but children cannot always use this area as there is no protection from the sun. Leaders are in the process of arranging for a canopy to be installed. Leaders provide a small outdoor area that they have renovated for children attending the holiday club. Children sleep in facilities that are agreed with parents, and these include cots in a space off the baby area. On occasions, when numbers of children attending are lower, children may be cared for in mixed age groups. Leaders outlined how they monitor and manage this to ensure children receive safe and appropriate care.

Leaders have invested in equipment and resources to ensure they are plentiful and are of good quality and meet the needs of the children. Staff set up areas to stimulate and promote children's curiosity, with some natural and 'real life' resources such as pots and pans in the play kitchen area. They change the focus of some areas such as the tuff tray regularly, to sustain interest. For example, filling it with water and providing towels for children to wash the dolls. Leaders include some resources and experiences that promote learning about Wales and other cultures, but they recognise that this is an area they can improve. Staff set up the outside with activities such as construction resources, messy play, mark making, balancing, growing and role play to enhance children's experiences. They ensure that children are active by going for local walks and participating in children's yoga sessions.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders have a vision for the setting which is based on the well-being of children and needs of the community. They outline this clearly in the statement of purpose. Overall, leaders are effective in the way they manage and operate the setting and are committed to ongoing improvements. They update the setting's policies and procedures and ensure staff implement these in practice. Leaders use an electronic app to communicate with staff and discuss policies at regular team meetings. Leaders have good oversight of daily records and store them securely. They are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and have policies in place to show how they comply with data protection laws.

Leaders recognise the importance of self-evaluation and review the quality of their care annually. They seek the views of parents, children, staff and other stakeholders and use these to help inform their review. Leaders produce a report of the review which offers some evaluation of the nursery and identifies relevant areas they would like to improve. From this, they develop an action plan with smaller targets to achieve their goals. Leaders have worked hard to sustain improvements and meet the recommendations from the last inspection. They offer childcare places for the Flying Start scheme which has also driven improvements. Leaders are receptive to feedback and welcome ideas or suggestions to improve their practice.

Leaders implement robust recruitment procedures to safeguard children and to ensure staff have the necessary qualifications and experience to provide good quality care. Staff complete all mandatory training and staff files evidenced that suitability checks for staff are up to date. Leaders support staff effectively through regular supervision and appraisal. Staff tell us they find these useful and leaders are supportive of additional training for staff to enhance and develop their practice. Leaders deploy staff effectively to ensure they maintain ratios throughout the day and as a result, meet children's needs. Staff we spoke to said they are happy at the setting and can express their views. This is further supported by surveys received by CIW.

Leaders have developed 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. They keep them up to date using an electronic app and thorough verbal handovers. As part of the inspection process, we received some feedback from parents, which was positive. Leaders work with the Flying Start team to provide a service for children who are eligible to receive funding. They also access other professionals for support with matters such as speech and language and supporting children to transition to their chosen school. Leaders develop links with the community and go on visits with children to places such as the local shops.

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)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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)
Further risk assess the environment to ensure children can only access age appropriate resources at all times.
Further develop the environment to promote the Welsh culture.
Further develop opportunities for children to access outside areas regularly and improve free flow play between inside and outside environments.
Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of improvements already made as a result of this inspection.

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