Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Acorns Llandaff

Acorns Nurseries Ltd
5 Fairwater Road
Llandaff
Cardiff
CF5 2LD



Date Inspection Completed

03/08/2022

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About Acorns Llandaff

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Acorns Nurseries Ltd
Registered places	60
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	First inspection of service
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
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	**Excellent**
Care and Development	**Good**
Environment	**Excellent**
Leadership and Management	**Excellent**

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

Summary

Children are very happy and enjoy attending the nursery. They feel very safe and secure in the care of staff. Children have excellent opportunities for play and learning and develop their independence through a range of quality experiences and play.

Staff are professional, well qualified and passionate about their roles. They implement most of the setting's policies and procedures effectively. Staff are patient, kind and caring. They support children's learning and development through a wide range of planned activities led by children's interests and developmental needs. Staff keep effective records of children's progress.

The environment is secure, clean, welcoming, and very well maintained. An extensive range of toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors promote children's play very well. People who run the setting ensure that the environment is safe and secure and promotes the health and well-being of children.

People who run the setting are highly motivated and implement policies and procedures that reflect the care provided. They use self-evaluation effectively to identify and make improvements. Parents are kept well informed and up to date about their child's experiences and development.

Well-being Excellent

Children have many choices and opportunities to make decisions about how they spend their time. Children are confident to communicate their thoughts and ideas, as they know staff will listen and show interest. For example, toddlers enthusiastically decide which songs to sing at circle time. Children express their likes and dislikes clearly and these are recorded by staff in evaluations and mind maps so that they can be reflected in future planning of play and activities.

Children are very happy at the setting and feel valued. They enjoy being in the company of other children and form friendships that help them to feel content. Children who are new to the setting soon settle with plenty of cuddles from their key worker. Children know the staff and routines very well, giving them a sense of belonging. Children confidently approach staff and give them spontaneous hugs. They receive lots of encouragement and praise from staff when learning new skills, which gives them the confidence to play, learn and explore. For example, one child delightedly said they were driving the bus to the seaside. Other children and the staff eagerly joined in on the big wooden bus and imagined what they would find at the seaside.

Children are beginning to form friendships in line with their age and stage of development. They play happily alongside each other or together. Children welcomed us warmly and were excited to chat and show their toys. One child sat at lunch, spontaneously told us that ‘these are all my friends’ and lots of chatter and giggles were heard throughout he lunch time sitting. Children learn to respect each other and the resources, learning to share and use equipment appropriately. For example, we saw a group of toddlers sharing equipment when exploring sand play outside.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. They benefit from an excellent variety of age-appropriate play and learning resources in each room and outside. They choose from a variety of exciting and enjoyable activities. We saw children delight in their play with water, sand, and wooden structures. Children are motivated to follow their own interests and sustain their play for periods suitable to their age and stage of development. Children create their own games and explore messy play activities and clearly express enjoyment through plenty of laughter and giggles.

Children develop a wide range of skills as they play. They have many opportunities to become independent. Young children are encouraged to feed themselves, with staff offering support where needed. Older children pour their own drinks and the person in charge (PIC) told us that she had re-introduced serving platters for older children to self-serve, after a temporary halt to this due to covid.

Care and Development — Good

Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. They receive regular safeguarding training and are confident to implement the setting's policies and procedures should they have concerns about a child. A wide range of healthy and nutritious foods are on offer at meal-times and drinking water is always available. The cook prepares a good variety of healthy home cooked meals for the children. Information relating to children's allergies and medical conditions is accessible to all staff, with strong systems in place to ensure children's dietary requirements are safely met. Staff record all accidents in detail and share this information with parents. Regular fire drill practices ensure staff and children are aware of how to leave the building safely. Staff undertake daily checks of their base rooms and managers take responsibility for overall risk assessments of areas. Therefore, some members of staff are not fully knowledgeable in the risk assessment process and promptly identifying potential emerging risks within the environment.

Staff are kind and caring towards the children. They are responsive and nurturing, which means children approach them with ease. Staff very work well together to support and promote children's social behaviour, being mindful of their age and stage of development. There is a comprehensive behaviour management policy, promoting positive strategies. Staff implement this skilfully, using distraction methods and lots of positive language to reinforce positive behaviour. Staff are good role models; they encourage good manners and prompt the children to say "please" and "thank you."

Staff support children's learning and development effectively. They regularly observe children's play and learning to track their progress. This informs the planning of future activities to promote children's next steps in learning and development. Some opportunities to promote a few children's learning are missed on some occasions, but overall children's learning needs are well met. Parents are regularly updated about their children's progress and development. Staff naturally promote children's learning as they play. The company employs a specific advisor to support staff in their management of children's behaviour and any individual additional learning needs a child may present with. Individual health plans are formalised.

Environment — Excellent

The environment is safe and very well maintained. The entrance is secure; locked doors ensure only authorised access. Staff keep children safe because managers regularly review risk assessments for all areas of the nursery. Registers of children's arrival and departure at the setting are complete and accurate although there were some minor errors within the staff registers, but these were easily explained and rectified by the PIC. Safety certificates are up to date including gas boiler service, electrical testing, and fire safety checks. As the nursery is over three floors, a dumb waiter has been introduced so that hot food can be transported safely and quickly throughout the building without the need for staff to carry it up and down stairs.

The environment is welcoming and child friendly. The setting has been sympathetically refurbished and decorated in calming neutral colours. Base rooms are spacious and airy allowing children space and freedom to move around as they play. The baby room is very large, well equipped and supports babies physical development very well due to the freedom they have to explore the environment. Playrooms are organised to promote all areas of children's development, with a very good range of resources, including real life items, multicultural dolls, and books. Children's artwork is displayed, which celebrates their achievements, giving them a sense of pride and belonging. The large outdoor areas have a good range of equipment suitable for the ages of the children. Large mature trees provide shelter and shade for younger children. Whilst toilets for older children are not independently accessible to them, staff promptly support children's requests to use the bathroom. The nursery has invested in technology for children and a dedicated library is full of books and comfortable seating to encourage children to look at books and develop a love for reading.

Regular cleaning of toys and equipment is undertaken and resources are of excellent quality. The setting has suitable furniture and resources to support children's independence. For example, child sized tables, chairs, low level toys storage and a variety of sleep options for babies depending on preference. There are a suitable number of children's toilets and nappy changing facilities available, which are clean and fresh. Liquid soap and hand drying facilities are easily accessible to support children's independence when washing their hands. The nursery has dedicated housekeepers that keep the nursery clean and fresh.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

People who run the setting are skilled and experienced. The PIC receives excellent support from the wider management team. There is a thorough statement of purpose and operational plan, which together provides an accurate picture of how the setting runs. Policies and procedures are of a high quality and staff implement these effectively. The PIC ensures that all documents are easily accessed and in very good order.

People who run the setting work hard to provide a quality care provision to children and their families. Being a setting that has been operating for under a year, the annual review of the service is not required yet. However, despite this, questionnaires have already been sent out to parents, and the PIC understands the need to gather and consider the views of children and staff to identify areas for development. There are systems in place that the PIC uses to monitor the service provided and she regularly reviews accidents, incidents and risk assessments. This ensures she can identify any emerging risks or improvements needed within the nursery. As the nursery employs a maintenance team these requests are dealt with very swiftly and efficiently.

Staff files are exceptionally well organised and all relevant safety checks are carried out during the recruitment process to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. All staff receive regular supervisions and annual appraisals, which enable them to identify their strengths and areas for development. There are enough qualified and experienced staff to make sure children are well cared for. All staff have up to date mandatory training and there are good opportunities for staff to receive additional training as required. Staff told us the management team are supportive and receptive to their ideas. The staff team are enthusiastic, motivated and enjoy their work.

The setting has established very good relationships with parents. Parents receive regular feedback on their child’s progress and photographs of their children playing during the day, via a digital app. Parents we spoke expressed high levels of satisfaction with the service provided and told us their children love attending and settle very quickly.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R.1. Raise awareness of staff involvement in formal risk assessment process.

R.2. Ensure staff maximise all children's learning opportunities.

R.3. Ensure staff registers are completed correctly.

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.

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