



## Inspection Report

**LearnAbout Childcare (based at Gladstone Bach Childcare Unit - Gladstone Primary School)**

**Gladstone Bach Childcare Unit  
Gladstone Primary School  
Gladstone Road  
Barry  
CF62 8NA**



**Date Inspection Completed**

04/11/2024

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## About LearnAbout Childcare (based at Gladstone Bach Childcare Unit - Gladstone Primary School)

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Karen Simick
Registered places	30
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the setting's first inspection since registration
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is making efforts to promote the use of Welsh language and culture.

<u>Well-being</u>	<b>Adequate</b>
<u>Care and Development</u>	<b>Adequate</b>
<u>Environment</u>	<b>Adequate</b>
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	<b>Good</b>

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

Children communicate their wishes, and their needs are generally considered. They have opportunities to make choices, and their interests are mostly valued. Children are settled and are developing close relationships with their friends and staff. They are developing their understanding of turn taking and sharing and becoming familiar with the daily routine.

Staff mostly follow policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, safety and personal well-being. They are developing their understanding of the children's needs and development and are working hard to embed new approaches to their observation and planning processes. There are recommendations from this inspection, to improve their practice around these processes and to develop children's independence.

Leaders offer an environment which enables children to move around the premises. They ensure resources are appropriate and of a good standard and are developing their practice to maintain their environment. Leaders have risk assessments in place and there are recommendations from this inspection to develop these further as well as other aspects of the environment.

Leaders make proactive improvements to the setting. They have policies and procedures in place and ensure the setting's documentation is managed well. Leaders support their staff and have established good partnerships with several local schools and provide a reliable pick-up service to and from these partners. They also make effective use of their local community to ensure children learn about their identity.

<b>Well-being</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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Many children are confident to communicate as their needs are generally considered. They have opportunities to make their own choices such as where to play and with whom. For example, with the free flow play opportunities at the setting, children decide whether they wish to play indoors or outdoors. However, on some occasions, children's voices are often missed during busy times of the day, such as when they wait for their packed lunches to be distributed. Children can choose their play, and many enjoy exploring play areas such as the dinosaur den or the home corner.

Children happily arrive at the setting and settle in well. Older children arrive from school and immerse themselves quickly into the daily routine. Younger children are adapting to the routine and becoming more confident to do things for themselves. Some children have a clear sense of belonging and are relaxed and confident to chat. For example, they told us what they had done the previous week on holiday. A few children have formed friendship groups and enjoy being together as they play, such as completing jigsaws.

Many children interact with one another and with staff. Children who are non-verbal also make attempts to communicate by pointing or by taking a staff member's hand. Children are not phased with visitors and during our inspection visit, they were content to play alongside us and occasionally invited us into their play by offering a cup and saucer or slice of cake from the pretend birthday cake. Children hear positive interactions from the staff, and many are praised when they respond to instructions.

Overall, children show an interest in their play as they explore the many learning areas around the setting. Many children enjoy being able to engage in small group play such as playing with trains, small world or puzzles. However, with the setting's child-led approach, children do not always benefit from this and miss the support of adult interaction and intervention. Many children show enthusiasm when they experience spontaneous story times and engage well as they listen to stories and enjoy the closeness of staff members. During a full group story where children and staff took part in an active story, the majority of children engaged and responded well to specific actions.

Children are given some opportunities to develop their independence. For example, we saw how staff effectively involve children in the collective task of tidying up. Children happily collaborate to return items and resources to the areas of learning and smile when they receive praise. Older children are independent in their toileting and hand washing skills and eat their snacks and lunch with little support. The setting's low coat pegs enable children to help themselves to their coats and bags.

**Care and Development**

**Adequate**

Most staff are knowledgeable and understand their responsibilities to promote healthy lifestyles and the children's personal well-being. Staff have a clear understanding of child protection, referring to the setting's policy and flow charts. They implement appropriate hygiene practices and promote cleanliness by wearing aprons and gloves for practices such as nappy changing and food preparation. Staff ensure care and dignity during nappy changing and encourage children to wash their hands following toilet visits. Staff sanitise surfaces following activities and before mealtimes and ensure they are aware of children's specific allergies. They keep accident, incident and medication records up to date in line with regulations and ensure these include evidence of parental consents. Staff provide a menu which is adequate for the children's needs and are familiar with first aid practices. However, we found there were missed opportunities to meet aspects of children's individual needs such as wiping their noses.

Staff are kind and are involved in the busy routine of the setting. Nearly all staff work hard and are pro-active in their responsibilities to ensure the environment is safe. However, staff miss opportunities to work as one team and collaborate effectively to ensure the needs of all children are met. For example, whilst nearly all staff are committed with daily tasks, some opportunities are missed to observe and supervise children with individual needs, particularly those who require reassurance or support to resolve conflict. Many staff are observant and manage children's behaviour quickly and effectively without it having an impact on the well-being of other children. For instance, many staff offer praise and share messages regarding kind hands. However, at times, staff do not always implement effective or consistent strategies to ensure all the children are given the opportunities to develop their social skills fully. As a result, staff miss opportunities to fully communicate and work more effectively to supervise and support children in their play and learning experiences.

Many staff are aware of the children's abilities and refer to the '*invitations to play*' posters which are displayed in the main room. Staff keep basic observations and complete daily diaries for children which record their day, in terms of eating, toileting and play experiences. Staff are developing their process to plan for children's next steps, but this is in its very early stages. They are eager to progress and improve their practice. Staff positively enhance activities, such as in the creative area, by recognising children's interests and spontaneously supporting children to develop their understanding of colours in English and in Welsh. Staff also encourage children to attempt more challenging jigsaws leading to a sense of pride and increased confidence when they complete the puzzles. However, with limited planned and purposeful activities, and without embedded planning practices, many opportunities to support all children in their next steps of learning are missed. Similarly, staff miss opportunities to further enhance the children's independence with their self-serve skills during mealtimes, to enable them to confidently enjoy their food and drinks.

## Environment

## Adequate

Leaders work hard to develop the environment and ensure a high level of security. They offer an environment which is safe, and access to the premises is not permitted unless a

staff member opens the external gate and main door. Leaders ensure all staff wear security lanyards and are vigilant in their practice around children arriving and exiting the setting. Leaders understand the regulatory requirements regarding the safety of the premises and ensure these are in place. For example, there are measures and policies in place to ensure the premises is serviced annually and complies with building and fire requirements. Visitors sign in and out of the setting, are greeted professionally and provided with information around fire exits and drills. Leaders and staff invite parents to wait for their children in the main lobby area which also offers up to date information around policies, procedures and appropriate certificates. Leaders keep comprehensive risk assessments for generic hazards, but did not have purposeful risk assessments in place for specific outings and activities. They keep a fire file which is regularly reviewed and includes evidence of relevant checks and drills as well as a fully equipped fire grab bag in the event of having to evacuate the setting in an emergency. Leaders keep daily signing in sheets and daily risk assessment checks on a clip board which is easily accessible to all staff for updating when required.

Leaders provide a self-contained and modern premises with ongoing exciting development plans for the outdoor area. However, some of the indoor areas are cluttered resulting in children not having the best experiences to fully explore all resources. Leaders provide an open plan area which offers some space to move around the areas of learning. Leaders have created an environment using high-quality furniture, creating portioned areas for rest and play as well as areas for seating. There are large doors which open out on to a small sheltered outdoor play area, which overlooks a further larger play area which is currently undergoing significant development. Leaders told us of their plans to introduce an enclosed forest area as well as a vegetable and sensory garden making effective use of grant money to enhance children's experiences further. Whilst the indoor environment is modern and new, we found some areas were not utilised to their full potential. Leaders provide a purpose-built toilet area, nappy changing area and kitchen where meals are prepared on the premises. A small office provides space for the setting's documentation to be stored securely.

Leaders provide a range of quality furniture and resources. However, during our inspection visit, we found leaders had not utilised fully the resources they had to ensure areas of learning were inviting. We found some areas of learning to be sparse such as the home corner, whilst plentiful resources are available in storage boxes. Similarly, in the outdoors, we found resources such as water, sand and construction resources are not maintained leading to good quality equipment becoming adequate.

## **Leadership and Management**

**Good**

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting and are excited about the potential of this service. They share a statement of purpose which reflects the current service. The setting's policies and procedures are mostly in line with National Minimum Standards. Leaders understand their regulatory responsibilities and ensure documents are reviewed at least

annually. Their paperwork is well organised and stored safely such as children's files. Leaders manage staff to children's ratios correctly in line with requirements and keep records to support this information. Other regulatory requirements such as insurance and Disclosure and Barring Service certificate checks are all up to date. During the inspection visit, leaders updated the staff signing in register to ensure all staff signed in and out of the setting. Children's signing in registers are up to date.

Leaders review the quality of their care and prepare an annual report which reflects the views of those who use the service. Their report is detailed and outlines future targets and areas they wish to improve.

Leaders work closely with their staff and ensure consistent support is provided for them to develop in their roles. They keep comprehensive files on all staff members which includes relevant documentation. We saw evidence of annual appraisals and ongoing regular supervisions. Staff told us they enjoy their work, roles and responsibilities. Staff said they appreciate opportunities provided to them to continue their professional development such as progressing from level two to level three qualifications and in their play work. Leaders ensure mandatory training is up to date such as paediatric first aid and food hygiene.

Leaders have good partnerships with several schools in the immediate area and ensure reliable school pick up services for parents. They work closely with local authority professionals and with many umbrella organisations and take on board the advice, guidance and support provided to them. Leaders ensure staff work closely with the community so that purposeful outings are planned such as trips to local cafes and a nearby residential home. They make full use of the grounds which offer further opportunities for safe play within open outdoor classroom areas during times when the adjoining school is closed. Parents told us their children have settled well, and they appreciate the support provided by staff, who are always approachable.

Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	What each means
<b>New</b>	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
<b>Reviewed</b>	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.
<b>Not Achieved</b>	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
<b>Achieved</b>	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.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	
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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 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Ensure the setting's child led approach is balanced with support, adult interaction and intervention in order to support children in all aspects of their development.
Standard 4 - Meeting individual needs	Ensure staff support children with their individual needs such as their self care.
Standard 8 - Nurture and well-being	Ensure staff are supported to work collaboratively and communicate effectively to ensure children's needs are recognised and met.
Standard 9 - Behaviour	Ensure staff are supported to implement effective and consistent strategies to develop children's behaviour and social skills.
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Ensure what children do is observed and recorded to help plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development.
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Ensure further opportunities are provided for children to develop their independence skills, particularly during mealtimes.
Standard 24 - Safety	Ensure risk assessments are purposeful and specific to outings and activities.
Standard 22 - Environment	Ensure the environment and its resources are organised and maintained so that areas of learning are purposeful, respected and utilised to their full potential.

Ratings	What the ratings mean
<b>Excellent</b>	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.
<b>Good</b>	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.
<b>Adequate</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b>	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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