Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Early Learners Day Nursery

Tots Corner
13 Dyserth Road
Rhyl
LL18 4DW



Date Inspection Completed

30/08/2023

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About Early Learners Day Nursery

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Early Learners Ltd
Registered places	43
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	30 August 2023
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

As this was a focused inspection, we have not considered the themes of care and development, environment, and leadership and management in full.

Children are happy and settled. They participate well and are encouraged to express their opinions. They interact appropriately with their peers and others. Most are engaged in their play and learning, and they are given appropriate opportunities to develop their independence.

Many appropriate policies are followed at the setting which keep children healthy and safe. Staff are caring and meet most children's individual needs by supporting them appropriately. Leaders have made improvements since the last inspection in relation to behaviour management.

Leaders have improved health and safety measures including the security of the building. They have improved the quality of toys and equipment. The cleanliness of the setting has improved, and the toddler/pre-school room has been re-decorated which makes the environment look clean and fresh.

Leaders are engaging appropriately with Care Inspectorate Wales. They have addressed all non-compliance issues previously identified.

Well-being

Most children participate well and are encouraged to express their opinions and contribute to ideas. They decide which songs are sung and which stories are read. When they are hungry, children help themselves to a snack, as food is set out on a table for them to come and go as they please. Children decide which toys they want to play with, and their ideas are valued when they ask to paint pictures of their own choice during painting activities.

Children are settled and feel secure and happy. Babies smile at those around them, and older children enjoy involving the staff in their play. This shows they have positive emotional attachments with those who look after them. Most children are familiar with the routine which gives them a sense of security. Babies know they nap after lunch and older children know they wash their hands before mealtimes.

Children interact appropriately with their peers and others. They are learning to express what they need. For example, they negotiate with others when they want to read a storybook that another child is using. Friendships have formed with children gravitating towards their friends to complete tasks. They follow instructions and share resources appropriately. With a few reminders, children take care of the equipment and toys. Babies smile and give good eye contact when staff engage with them.

Most children are engaged in their play and learning. They enjoy being busy in the building blocks and playing with the vehicles. They also enjoy having quieter moments when sharing books with friends. Babies like to explore their surroundings and giggle as they hit wooden spoons against the metal saucepans and make dinner in the role-play kitchen. Children concentrate well during adult led activities as they select shapes for their Christmas Wreath.

Children are encouraged and supported to do things themselves. Pre-school children often use the toilet independently and are learning to ask for help when they need assistance. Children pour their own drinks at mealtimes which was a recommendation at the previous inspection. Resources are accessible which enables children to lead their own play.

Care and Development

As this was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full.

There are many suitable policies at the setting, and most are followed which keep children safe and healthy. Staff supervise children appropriately and attendance records show staffing levels meet the required adult: child ratios. However, the mobile phone policy is not consistently followed as some staff keep their mobile phone in their bags and others have them in their pockets throughout the day. Accident and incident forms are completed appropriately with staff sharing a copy with the parents and asking them to sign at collection time. Fresh drinking water is offered to children at specific times throughout the day. Staff provide water if a child asks for a drink in between these times. However, drinks are not as readily available as they could be. The food menu is displayed near the main entrance and if menu choices change unexpectedly, leaders communicate this to parents via the setting's online platform.

Staff are caring and kind and mostly speak to children in a gentle, calm manner. Staff meet most children's individual needs by supporting them appropriately, helping them use the toilet, wiping most noses and offering a suitable range of activities which help children acquire skills.

Since the last inspection, staff have revisited the behaviour policy and all staff have been booked on to behaviour management training. During our visit, the majority of staff managed children's behaviour appropriately, using child friendly language, clear explanations and distraction techniques but this is not consistent across the whole setting.

Environment

As this was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full.

Since the last inspection, health and safety measures have improved. All previously identified hazards in the environment have either been removed or new systems have been put in place to minimise risks. Recommendations from the Fire and Rescue Service regarding escape route precautions, have been acknowledged and planned into the diary. New risk assessments have been written and shared with staff for various aspects of the setting. However, some risk assessments contain limited information and are not as effective as others. For example, 'toys and equipment' is identified as a risk, but it does not specify which toys or what the risks are. The risk assessment for the fire pit was sent to us after the inspection and contained suitable measures to keep children safe. However, leaders do not ask for written parental consent before children toast marshmallows or use sparklers.

Leaders have improved the security of the building. The main entrance is secure with the door locked at all times. Staff told us the garden area gate is now padlocked during outdoor play. However, children did not play outdoors during our visit, so we did not see the padlock in use. The new security measures have been added to the setting's risk assessments and staff are familiar with the changes.

Since the last inspection, the quality of toys and equipment have improved. The majority of toys are now in an appropriate condition. Nearly all broken toys/equipment have been removed. The role-play kitchen unit is still in use which we highlighted as an issue at the last inspection. But an email confirmed it is going to be replaced with a new one which is due to be dispatched on 5 December 2023. Many new resources have been bought to improve children's experiences. For example, books, sensory boards, construction, and role-play food. There is a new feeding chair in the baby room. Leaders have a maintenance log to record and monitor the progress of any future repair work.

Since the last inspection, leaders have made improvements to the cleanliness and decoration of the nursery. Most areas, including resources, are now clean. The pre-school/toddler room has been re-painted including the woodwork. Wooden screens in need of painting have been removed. The flooring has been replaced in all rooms. Cleaning rotas help staff know which cleaning routines need to be completed at the setting.

Leadership and Management

As this was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full.

Leaders are currently engaging appropriately with the Care Inspectorate Wales. They understand the importance of meeting regulations and National Minimum Standards. Since the last inspection, leaders have worked on the recommendations and made improvements. They have addressed all non-compliance issues previously identified.

Leaders observe staff practice informally when working alongside them. However, leaders do not build in opportunities to formally observe individual staff. These observations would be beneficial as they can be used to celebrate strengths and drive improvement. Leaders have plans to improve the setting further to fulfil their overall vision and understand there is more work to be done.

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
20	Ensure leaders consistently promote and make proper provision for the care, welfare and treatment of children.	Achieved
25	The registered person must ensure that unnecessary risks to the health and safety of children are identified and so as far as possible eliminated.	Achieved
37	The registered person must ensure the premises is secure from unauthorised access, suitability furnished/equipped, clean and reasonability decorated.	Achieved

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

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 12 - Food and drink	To ensure children have easier access to fresh drinking water in between meal times.
Standard 24 - Safety	Ensure the recent recommendations made by the Fire and Rescue Service are complied with.

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.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
To ensure the mobile phone policy is followed by all staff.
To ensure all risk assessments have sufficient detail to effectively support staff in managing potential risks at the setting. Ensure written parental consent is gained prior to children taking part in higher risk activities associated with the fire pit.
Plan regular opportunities for leaders to observe staff in order to celebrate strengths and drive improvement. Use these opportunities to support supervision and appraisal discussions.

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