Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

The Oaks Day Nursery

The Oaks Day Nursery, 289 Chester Road Oakenholt, Flint, CH6 5SE

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The inspection visits for this service took place between 28/07/2026 and 17/08/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	S G Childcare Ltd
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	49
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	Yes
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Adequate
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Adequate

Summary:

Most children are happy, settled and confident. They make independent choices about their play, communicate their needs effectively and engage well in a range of play experiences. Most interact positively with peers and practitioners, develop friendships and social skills, and show growing independence in their daily routines and self-care.

Practitioners support children's health, safety and well-being through appropriate care routines, positive interactions and a suitable range of play experiences. They understand safeguarding responsibilities and communicate regularly with parents. Activity planning, additional learning needs arrangements and Welsh language promotion are developing.

Leaders maintain a safe, welcoming environment and have strengthened fire safety, sleep arrangements and supervision practices. They provide suitable indoor and outdoor spaces and a good range of resources that support children's play and development. Leaders continue to improve the environment and promote children's sense of belonging.

Leaders are developing leadership, quality assurance and staff support arrangements following recent changes. They support practitioners' development and maintain positive partnerships with

parents and professionals. However, recruitment procedures are not yet sufficiently robust to ensure all required documentation is obtained and verified at the appropriate time.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Most children confidently make choices throughout the day and express their preferences in a variety of ways. They independently select activities and resources that interest them and move around the environment freely and confidently. Those attending Flying Start make good use of free-flow opportunities, choosing whether to play indoors or outdoors. Most communicate their needs, interests and feelings effectively through verbal and non-verbal communication. They choose what they would like to play with, express opinions about activities and make decisions about their play experiences. This supports children to develop confidence and independence.

Most children appear happy, settled and secure within the setting. They children know their peers and are developing good relationships with practitioners, which helps them feel comfortable and relaxed. Most demonstrate a strong sense of belonging because they are familiar with the setting's routines such as sleep time after lunch. Most children take pride in their achievements, for example proudly sharing their drawings and models and enjoying seeing their work displayed within the environment.

Most children interact positively with their peers and the adults around them. They happily talk about their interests and experiences while playing alongside and with others. Most are beginning to share resources, cooperate and take turns during play. For example, they share equipment in the role play area and are learning to wait patiently for opportunities to use popular resources. Many older children show an increasing awareness of the needs of others and respond positively to expectations and boundaries. Most are developing friendships and appropriate social skills.

Most children engage well in a range of play and learning experiences. They enjoy imaginative, creative, sensory and outdoor activities and explore resources with curiosity. For example, babies enthusiastically play in the ball pit, explore books with interest and join in with familiar songs and rhymes. Toddlers engage well in mark making, role play and outdoor experiences. Older children show sustained interest when playing with remote-control cars. They engage in imaginative play by carefully tucking dolls into blankets, ironing clothes and creating imaginative stories.

Most children demonstrate growing independence in their daily routines and play. They confidently access resources, make decisions about their play and help to tidy away equipment when they have finished using it. Most manage aspects of self-care appropriate to their age and stage of development, including using the toilet, washing their hands and wiping their faces after meals. Older children independently pour their own drinks and access resources to support their chosen play. These opportunities help children become increasingly confident and self-reliant.

Care & Development — Adequate

Practitioners take appropriate steps to support children's health, safety and well-being. They provide healthy meals and snacks, including fruit, milk and water, and ensure children benefit from daily opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise outdoors. Practitioners follow cleaning routines and maintain a suitably clean environment. They complete registers and accident records appropriately and generally follow the setting's policies and procedures. Risk assessments are completed and reviewed regularly and sleeping babies are monitored appropriately. Practitioners carry out personal care routines hygienically and sensitively, interacting warmly with children during nappy changing and providing reassurance when needed. Practitioners we spoke to understand the action to take if they have safeguarding concerns. They are familiar with the reporting process and the steps they would take to escalate concerns where necessary. Most practitioners have completed appropriate first aid and safeguarding training, supporting their ability to promote children's safety. However, the setting’s medication policy is not fully aligned with current guidance.

Practitioners interact positively with children throughout the day. They engage in children's play, talk to them about their interests and experiences and show patience and respect in their interactions. Practitioners provide praise and encouragement, recognising children's efforts and achievements, for example when children attempt to feed themselves, carry items independently or participate in activities. They support children to understand expectations through gentle reminders and good role modelling. Practitioners encourage children to interact socially during daily routines and mealtimes, helping to create a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere.

Practitioners provide children with a suitable range of play and learning experiences. They provide opportunities for creative, sensory, physical and imaginative play. Practitioners respond to children's interests and needs appropriately and offer support and reassurance when required. Many are becoming familiar with new planning and observation systems and have begun monitoring children's progress through observations. However, implementation is not yet consistent across the setting, with some rooms maintaining up-to-date records of planning and observations, while others are less established.

Practitioners communicate regularly with parents/carers through daily electronic updates and have begun to identify and monitor children who may require additional support. They demonstrate an awareness of individual children's needs; however, arrangements for recording, tracking and reviewing children who may have additional needs are not yet fully embedded.

Practitioners are at the early stages of promoting the Welsh language within the setting.

Environment — Good

Leaders maintain a safe environment for children. Secure access arrangements, including locked entrances and perimeter gates, help prevent unauthorised access to the setting. Visitors sign in on arrival and leaders maintain a range of risk assessments, most of which were reviewed in May 2026. Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken action to address fire safety procedures, including improvements to fire doors, escape routes, staff training and fire-resistant fixtures such as the kitchen hatch. Leaders have strengthened arrangements for children's rest and sleep. Babies sleep in suitable cots and practitioners monitor room temperatures daily to ensure children remain comfortable. Leaders have purchased additional heaters to support consistent temperatures during colder weather. The relocation of nappy changing facilities has improved practice by enabling practitioners to change children without leaving the room and helping to maintain appropriate staffing ratios and supervision. Although the environment is suitable overall, some areas appear less well presented than others, including sections of carpeting and some internal décor. Following the inspection, leaders acted promptly to address these areas and have provided evidence that carpets had been cleaned and several rooms redecorated.

Leaders continue to improve the environment and provide welcoming spaces that support children's play and learning. Since the last inspection, they have purchased additional resources, including storage furniture, water/sand trays, cushions and role-play materials. Leaders make appropriate use of indoor and outdoor space, ensuring all age groups have daily opportunities to play outdoors. Babies access a dedicated outdoor area adjoining their room, toddlers benefit from free-flow access to their own outdoor space, and pre-school children make regular use of the wider outdoor environment. The baby room has recently been redecorated and includes a cosy sleep area, sensory resources and age-appropriate equipment. In the pre-school room, leaders encourage children to independently select resources and engage in activities that promote curiosity and learning. Displays of children's artwork, achievements and photographs of their families contribute to a welcoming environment and help children develop a sense of belonging.

Leaders provide a suitable range of resources and equipment that support children's interests and developmental needs. Children independently access developmentally appropriate toys and materials throughout the setting. Leaders maintain effective systems for cleaning toys and resources, with practitioners following and recording daily cleaning routines. There is a balance of natural and manufactured resources, including an increasing range of loose-parts materials. Leaders continue to develop multicultural resources and activities appropriately, helping children learn about diversity and the wider world.

Leadership & Management — Adequate

Leaders are developing their leadership and management arrangements following recent changes within the setting. The person in charge has been in post for a short period and is developing her understanding of the regulations and National Minimum Standards. Through discussion, she demonstrates enthusiasm for her role and a positive approach to developing the service.
Leaders have reviewed and updated policies and procedures and have submitted required notifications appropriately. They are beginning to establish a shared vision for the setting and practitioners generally describe management as approachable and supportive. Following a period of staff changes, leaders are continuing to develop team-working arrangements and are working towards placing greater emphasis on practitioner well-being and a positive workplace culture

The quality of care review celebrates the setting's strengths and identifies targets for development. Leaders have started to gather the views of parents, practitioners and partner agencies to help inform improvements and demonstrate a willingness to reflect on feedback. Following the previous inspection, leaders have made significant improvements to the environment, resources and communication systems. Given the recent period of increased inspection activity and the improvements made, there has not yet been sufficient opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of leaders' own quality assurance arrangements and how these support ongoing improvement over time.

Leaders provide practitioners with appropriate support and opportunities for professional development. They have recently introduced supervision arrangements, which include discussions about practice and targets for development. Leaders promote access to relevant training opportunities to enhance practice and improve outcomes for children. Children's records contain the required information and support practitioners to develop an appropriate understanding of each child's individual needs. However, practitioners' files showed that some required recruitment checks had not been completed before they commenced employment. Although the missing documentation was provided following the inspection, this demonstrates that recruitment systems are not yet sufficiently robust to ensure all required checks are completed at the appropriate time.

Leaders maintain appropriate partnerships with parents and professionals. Communication with families is effective and parents value the information shared through the setting's electronic application. Leaders engage appropriately with external agencies and are receptive to advice and guidance, using this to support improvements within the setting. Parents we spoke with during the inspection spoke positively about the care provided and reported improvements in communication, resources and leadership. They described practitioners as approachable and supportive and said their children were happy and settled. These partnerships contribute positively to children's experiences and support the ongoing development of the service.

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)
Standard 13 (Day Care) - Suitable Person	Ensure all required recruitment documentation is obtained and retained before staff commence employment at the setting.
Standard 11 - Medication	Review the medication policy to ensure it is in line with current guidance.
Standard 22 - Environment	Build on the improvements made to the environment by addressing the area of flaking paint on the external wall of the outdoor play area.

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)
Develop opportunities for children to experience and use the Welsh language in their daily play and routines.

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