Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Rustic Roots Nursery Limited

Old School Hall, Church Lane, St Athan, Barry, CF62 4PL

07896127647

The inspection visit took place on 26/01/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Rustic Roots Nursery Limited
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	33
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 is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children have opportunities to make choices and decisions and have their voice heard. They are settled and happy, interacting successfully with each other and adults. Children are interested in their play and learning and are becoming independent.

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures effectively to promote the safety and well-being of children. Their interactions are meaningful, patient and reassuring. Staff provide a range of play and learning opportunities, implementing aspects of the Curriculum for Wales successfully.

Overall, leaders provide an environment that is safe, suitable and engaging for children. They promote homely and welcoming playrooms with many authentic resources. Potential health and safety hazards were identified in the bathrooms and hallway, which has led to an area for improvement. Leaders have been pro-active in taking further action to address this.

Leaders show a sound awareness and understanding of the regulations and National Minimum Standards (NMS). They maintain accurate and up to date records and have strong self-evaluation systems in place. Leaders have acted promptly to action any recommendations as part of the inspection. Feedback from staff and parents has been very positive.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children have opportunities to make choices and decisions and have their voice heard. They decide activities and resources they want to play with. For example, choosing to play in the outdoor kitchen, ride bikes or balance on stepping stones. They decide what fruit they would like at snack time. Children express themselves verbally and non-verbally with their communication valued and acknowledged by staff. Older children positively communicate to their friends, saying *"one for me and one for you"* whilst handing out carrots in the kitchen.

Children are settled and happy at the setting. Younger children confidently explore and access equipment such as the indoor climbing equipment, gaining great pleasure and enjoyment. Children have positive relationships with each other and staff, receiving support when needed. For example, children have individual invitations to engage in activities, *"would you like to read a story or play with playdough?"* promoting a sense of belonging. Children know routines well. For example, at snack, hand washing and rest times. We regularly saw children laughing and smiling and offering hugs to staff. They recognise where they keep their own belongings and can freely access their drinks.

Children express enthusiasm and enjoyment. They successfully interact with each other and adults in line with their age and stage of development. Younger children play alongside one another, whilst older children effectively cooperate. For example, taking turns successfully to explore instruments. Children naturally use good manners and show kindness to one another. At lunch time we heard children say to one another *'good job'*, when they finished their food and *'thank you'* to the cook for their meal.

Children are interested in their play and learning. They move confidently to access resources and equipment. Children competently engage in activities such as singing, tooth brushing and gross motor play. They proudly share achievements, such as, *"look, I've peeled an orange".* Children follow their own interest and engage in mostly child led play. We saw a child express enthusiasm and interest when discovering a film camera, opening and closing the lens. Planned activities are supported by adults. For example, when exploring letters in the playdough.

Children are independent and their skills are developing well. They access the bathrooms and wash their hands, sometimes with support from staff. Older children take pride in pouring their own milk from a jug and attempt to remove yoghurt lids, independently, or with support, if needed. Older children show confidence to correctly hold a knife, stating *"the knife is sharp",* when preparing snack. They support to tidy dishes, wipe the table and clean their faces with a flannel after lunch.

Care & Development — Good

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures to promote the safety and well-being of children. The staff we spoke to at inspection, were able to explain actions they would take in a safeguarding scenario. They have a sound understanding of their role in protecting children. Staff complete mandatory training, including, the appropriate level of child protection training. Nearly all staff hold appropriate paediatric first aid and food hygiene training. Accident, incident, and medication records are complete and signed by parents, there are systems in place to review these regularly. The setting provides healthy, home cooked meals, catering for allergy or dietary needs, as required. There are suitable cleaning and hygiene practices in place. Nappy changing is undertaken following their policy. Older children use the toilet facilities independently. All children competently wash hands prior to meals, with staff monitoring practice. Staff promote safety well. For example, staff promote safety messages on school runs, such as using *'watching eyes and listening ears'* whilst crossing roads. They undertake regular checks on sleeping children and have an awareness of how to promote safe sleep practices.

Staff understand the behaviour management policy and implement positive strategies successfully; they are calm, kind and caring. Staff regularly encourage and engage children through praise. For example. *"Well done, good tidying everybody", "good boy/girl" and "good job".* Staff listen and communicate well with children and support each other in their roles. Staff ensure their interactions are meaningful, they are patient and reassuring. Staff promote and support children to share, using distraction techniques well. We heard staff say to children *"That's really good sharing, thank you",* when children share bikes outside. They offer reassurance and encouragement to children whilst undertaking activities. For example, whilst babies begin to take their first steps or when older children follow the tempo and pattern when playing musical instruments. Staff are aware of children's personalities and check in with them. For example, staff actively engaged a child to involve them in a play activity of their choice. They provide a balanced approach, playing alongside children, and allowing children to take their own lead.

Staff provide a range of play and learning opportunities, implementing aspects of the Curriculum for Wales. Planning loosely follows areas of development and includes children's interests. The staff recognise children's interests and build on them. Staff monitor and record children's progress through an online app, including next steps, which feeds into planning. They recognise if children have emerging needs, with systems in place to support them. Staff know the children well and have strong relationships with them. They are beginning to promote aspects of the Welsh language, introducing some basic words and phrases.

Environment — Adequate

Leaders ensure the main playroom environment and outside area is suitably safe, secure, and overall, well maintained. However, children may be at potential risk of harm due to health and safety hazards in the hallway and bathroom. With low temperatures and evidence of damp developing on walls and ceilings within the bathrooms. This is an area for improvement; we expect the provider to act. Following our visit, the provider has updated risk assessments reducing access to one bathroom, implemented temperature checks and sought further action from the building owners.

The main entrance is secure with an internal twist-lock, as well as a latch lock which is out of reach of children. There is a doorbell in situ outside of the building and visitor's passes are in place. Basic risk assessments for the building, outside area, and school runs are in place, as well as for other activities such as tooth brushing. Staff complete and record daily health, safety, and cleaning checks. They undertake fire drills regularly, at different times of day to ensure all children have an opportunity to practice the procedure. Appropriate electrical and fire safety checks remain current. Leaders have suitable cleaning routines in place.

Leaders provide a variety of opportunities for children. The large hall is sectioned into three designated areas, for the age groups of children attending. Leaders promote a natural and calming environment, which is bright and airy. Artwork is attractively shown and family photographs develop children’s sense of self-worth and belonging. An information board is available in the foyer, with thank you cards shared. The outdoor area is also sectioned in two, with safety flooring and under-cover areas, providing opportunities in all weathers. There are plentiful storage facilities, allowing for a variety of gross motor resources, as well as a range of additional activities, promoting a choice of interesting opportunities.

Leaders provide a range of developmentally appropriate play and learning resources. Much of the equipment is freely available to children, allowing them to choose their interests independently. They promote authentic resources, loose parts, and the natural world. They provide a range of learning opportunities. For example, through role play, construction play, sensory and creative activities. There are some resources and learning opportunities which promote children’s curiosity about wider society, celebrating equality and cultural awareness.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders show a sound awareness and understanding of the regulations and National Minimum Standards (NMS). They are keen to drive and embed best practice. Leaders engage positively with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and keep us up to date with any changes at the setting. Following our inspection visit, a current statement of purpose and staff training matrix has been provided.

Leaders ensure regulatory records are complete, with a range of consent forms and contracts in place. They have thorough systems to record, review and act if required. They monitor accident/incident records for patterns and evaluate school run logs. Following our inspection visit, they have further developed staff registers, to include lunch breaks. Leaders maintain the correct staff to child ratio. They have contingency plans in place, if required, to ensure ratios are maintained. Leaders review policies regularly and make the necessary adjustments. They have appropriate public liability insurances, car documents and are registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

Leaders have strong self-evaluation systems in place. They seek the views of children, parents, and other professionals. The quality-of-care report reflects on key themes, recognising what they do well, and how they can improve. Leaders have a vision for the setting, which is shared with others. They have ambition and plan to continue to grow and develop the setting.

Leaders follow recruitment processes to safeguard children with suitability checks in place. All staff have current and up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Leaders support staff, with inductions to the role, regular supervisions and appraisals. Regular team meetings take place, alongside a ‘daily huddle’ to share information within the close-knit small team. Leaders provide opportunities for staff to undertake training and continual professional development.

Leaders tell us they are forming strong partnerships. They have links with schools and the local authority. Parents are kept up to date through an online application. Verbal discussions take place at the start and end of the day. As part of the inspection process, we gained feedback from parents which was positive, including comments such as *“…the care and attention they provide is exceptional.” “Wonderful staff and creative activities for the children”* and finally *“The staff to parent communication is fantastic, the nursery is run very well and kept on top of perfectly!”.*

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.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
We found poor outcomes for children as the responsible individual does not always ensure the environment is free from unnecessary risks.	26/01/26

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)
Continue to develop the use of Welsh at the setting.

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