Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Swansea Students' Union

Swansea University, Singleton Park, Swansea, SA2 8PP

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The inspection visit took place on 18/11/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Swansea University Students' Union
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	38
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
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	Excellent
Care & Development	Excellent
Environment	Excellent
Leadership & Management	Excellent

Summary:

Children feel happy, safe, and valued. They have a strong voice and know that their attempts at communication are recognised by staff. Children engage enthusiastically in a wide range of play and learning experiences indoors and outdoors. They form close friendships, interact positively with staff, and develop confidence and independence through stimulating activities.

Staff consistently follow policies to ensure children's health, safety, and well-being. They promote healthy lifestyles, encourage good hygiene practices and actively manage risks. Staff understand their roles to safeguard children. Communication and behaviour management are exemplary, creating a calm, positive atmosphere. Staff use responsive planning to support learning and individual needs and regularly observe and monitor the children's progress.

The setting is safe, clean, and welcoming, with thorough risk assessments and regular safety checks completed. Indoor and outdoor spaces are thoughtfully designed to encourage

independence and exploration. Children enjoy stimulating activities supported by accessible resources, while staff create an environment that promotes choice and confident learning.

Leaders manage the setting exceptionally well, maintaining clear policies and keeping organised records. They reflect on their practice, act on feedback, and drive improvement through robust recruitment and professional development. Strong partnerships with parents and professionals foster trust and collaboration, creating a caring, well-led setting, focused on children's needs.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children communicate confidently. They take an active role in making decisions about what affects them. They feel safe and happy and trust that their opinions hold great value. Children consistently express their opinions and select activities that interest them, shaping both their play experiences and daily routines. For example, a group of children had high levels of engagement and enthusiasm during story time and therefore requested another story, helping to choose a new book and altering the morning routine. Children decide where they wish to sit at lunchtime with some choosing seats near their familiar peers. They voice their likes and dislikes and choose which extra foods they want to eat. A child, initially reluctant to sit for lunch, was given extra time to adapt and join the group through a supportive approach.

Children feel safe, happy, and valued at the setting. They show delight and enthusiasm in their play and daily routines, clearly demonstrating a strong sense of belonging. Children form close bonds with staff and confidently seek comfort or help when needed. For example, a child who hurt their hand immediately received support and reassurance. Children are familiar with routines and enjoy sharing their experiences with trusted adults. For instance, children in the toddler room eagerly told key workers about their morning activities. Staff respond warmly and show genuine interest, strengthening these affectionate relationships.

Children interact positively and show respect for people and property. They cooperate enthusiastically and demonstrate empathy, often responding sensitively to the needs of others. For example, children accept and support peers who need additional help, showing patience while staff provide comfort, ensuring the child feels included. Children show an active involvement in deciding and following rules, and they show respect and care for the resources and toys. Children play alongside and with peers, sharing resources and resolving difficulties with staff support when needed. Older children develop strong friendships, cooperating well and enjoying each other's company during play and routine activities. Nearly all children greet staff and visitors warmly, acknowledging them through waves, smiles, and friendly dialogue. Children feel comfortable, safe, and motivated to engage with others.

Children are highly motivated and fully engaged in their play and learning. The setting uses an 'in the moment' approach, allowing children to follow their interests and explore resources freely. Children enjoy their play and learning experiences and show enthusiasm in both freely chosen and adult-led activities. For example, all children joined in with the 'Grand Old Duke of York' song while preparing for lunch, singing with energy and excitement.

Children grow in confidence and independence as they freely choose activities and follow their own interests. They explore the environment, access resources, and use facilities such as toilets and

cloakrooms independently, developing important self-care skills. Children persevere with tasks and take pride in their achievements, often sharing what they have done with staff and peers.

Care & Development — Excellent

Staff fully understand and consistently implement the setting's policies and procedures to promote children's health and well-being. They carry out regular cleaning and follow excellent hygiene procedures. For example, they consistently remind children about washing their hands and set the example themselves by being consistent role models. Staff work very effectively to keep children safe; frequently moving around the different areas interacting with children or supporting them. They are fully aware of the common risks in the environment and carry out daily safety checks of areas. Staff promote safety with the children. For example, they support children as they move from indoors to outdoors, reminding them to hold on to the side as they move down the steps. They respond warmly to children's requests when they approach them. Staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children and are extremely confident in dealing with child protection concerns. Staff promote healthy eating and lifestyles by offering regular opportunities to go outdoors, ensuring water is always available, and through a range of fresh, home-cooked, healthy, balanced meals.

Staff are highly responsive to children's attempts to communicate, and value each child's efforts. They manage children's behaviour exceptionally well. Staff give clear expectations as well as an abundance of praise and encouragement. For instance, staff give out stickers and share 'WOW' moments on the app. They amend their language to suit the age and understanding of the child. As a result, on the day of the inspection, there were very few instances of behavioural issues and any minor concerns were dealt with calmly, following the settings behaviour management policy. Staff are professional and passionate about the care they provide. They interact with the children in an extremely warm and gentle manner, creating a positive, calm, and happy atmosphere throughout. Staff are consistently responsive; they genuinely listen and respect children's views.

Staff are sensitive to the needs and experiences of individual children, using this knowledge and understanding to support children's play and learning. They use 'in the moment' planning successfully and use this to monitor children's interests, skills and development. This confidently supports children's curiosity by allowing them endless opportunities to explore and experiment by following their own interests. Staff are highly successful in meeting the diverse requirements of children, including those with additional learning needs. They identify children who may require further support and have well-established systems in place to provide this. For example, they utilise speech and language programmes for children with potential difficulties. Staff have highly effective skills and knowledge to identify where children may need more focused development and plan appropriate play and learning opportunities, when needed. They regularly observe children to monitor and track their progress. Staff also reflect on the activities completed, make changes as required and ensure that they cover all areas of learning and development.

Environment — Excellent

People who run the setting have comprehensive measures and procedures in place to ensure that the setting is safe for children. The setting is very clean, tidy, well maintained and welcoming. Both the indoor and outdoor areas are secure and people who run the setting ensure they keep a record of visitors. Thorough and effective risk assessments and safety checks are in place. These risk assessments are kept within the individual areas of the nursery and on hand for staff to check daily. Staff undertake visual risk assessments of different areas and review the written risk assessments habitually, recording issues, taking action, and amending when needed. People who run the setting ensure that they carry out regular emergency evacuation practices and keep records of these. They work closely with the University, on which they are based, to ensure safety checks, repairs and annual testing is carried out. There are displays of important information throughout the setting, ensuring that staff are able to fully meet the needs of individual children.

The indoor environment is extremely welcoming and child centred. Staff and leaders design each area with children's needs in mind. Play and learning areas are changed regularly to maintain children's interest and extend their skills. The main playroom is bright, spacious and thoughtfully arranged to promote independence and exploration. Children move freely between areas and confidently choose where to play. They have considerable freedom to safely explore their environment. Children access the outdoors throughout the day and enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities. Staff support children to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks. For example, children climb, balance, and build, or make use of the bikes available to them.

People who run the setting and staff create an extremely stimulating and exciting play environment for the children, with a wide range of resources available. They provide quality furniture and resources that are suitable for the developmental needs of all the children. For example, there is appropriate furniture for children to sit at ease to undertake tabletop activities and eat their snacks. Staff organise resources at low level, making them easily accessible and encouraging children to make choices and follow their interests. The children's toilet and sink area can be easily accessed from the main room. This provides dignity, privacy, and the opportunity for children to be independent, whilst also allowing staff to easily supervise and support children.

Leadership & Management — Excellent

People who run the setting work closely together and manage their setting extremely well. They are dedicated and committed to providing excellent care for the children. People who run the setting are actively involved in the day-to-day running, so they have a clear knowledge and understanding of what is going on. They have clear and effective policies and procedures in place, and they ensure these are implemented well and reviewed so they reflect current practice and guidance. People who run the setting ensure paperwork is kept well organised so information can be easily found when required. Records, including children's information, are complete, so details are available when needed. The statement of purpose contains all the required information and gives parents a true reflection of the service so they can decide if it is the right care for their child.

People who run the setting reflect regularly and thoroughly on the quality of care provided. They complete a detailed quality of care report that celebrates achievements and identifies areas for development. This process includes the views of children, parents, and staff, ensuring everyone has a voice. People who run the setting have implemented all recommendations following their registration visit and have already made changes following the inspection visit. They ensure that they notify Care Inspectorate Wales of changes to the setting and complete their Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) annually.

People who run the setting follow timely and robust recruitment processes to safeguard children, ensuring staff have the necessary qualifications and experience to care for children. They have good systems in place to update suitability checks as required. People who run the setting are enthusiastic and extremely motivated, setting high expectations and leading staff effectively. Regular meaningful supervisions and annual appraisals are integral to their practice and drive improvement. These encourage staff to attend both mandatory and other training. For example, some staff have attended 'Encouraging Positive Behaviour', 'Anti-racism in the Early Years', and 'Food Allergen Awareness for Early Years'. People who run the setting encourage staff to reflect on and evaluate their training and how it can support or improve the setting. Staff feedback is extremely positive with staff stating that they feel very well supported, they understand their roles and responsibilities as these are clearly set. They work as a team in a caring environment where everyone is encouraging and value each other's dedication.

People who run the setting and staff develop positive relationships with parents/carers. They keep them up to date on their child's day, experiences and development via verbal feedback or digital messaging. This enables them to communicate easily with parents on a day-to-day basis and keep them informed of what their child has been doing. Parents speak highly of the setting, describing it as an excellent service. They say the staff and leaders are caring, kind and approachable. Parents feel they are supported, alongside the children and appreciate the detailed information shared with them. People who run the setting have very strong links with a wide range of professionals, the community, and other stakeholders. They utilise these links to support the children with any

additional needs and to maintain and develop the setting.

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)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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