



Arolygiaeth Gofal
Cymru
Care Inspectorate
Wales

Inspection Report

Acorn Nursery Ltd trading as Little Acorns Day Nursery



37 Bryn Road, Brynmill, Swansea, SA2 0AR



01792465701



www.littleacornsswansea.co.uk

The inspection visit took place on 09/09/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Acorn Nursery Ltd
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	34
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 makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:



Well-being

Excellent



Care & Development

Good



Environment

Good



Leadership & Management

Good

Summary:

Children are confident, happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting. They communicate their needs effectively, make choices about their play and develop strong relationships with staff and peers. Children show a strong sense of belonging, cooperate well with others and engage enthusiastically in play and learning experiences.

Staff understand their responsibilities and implement policies that support children's health, safety and well-being. Positive behaviour management strategies are used consistently and interactions are warm, respectful and nurturing. Staff know children well and support their individual learning, development and additional needs effectively.

Leaders maintain a safe, secure and well-organised environment. Indoor and outdoor spaces provide a broad range of engaging play opportunities that promote independence and exploration. Resources are generally of good quality and accessible.

Leaders provide positive leadership with a clear vision for the setting. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, and information is effectively communicated to staff. Robust recruitment and professional development support continuous improvement. Leaders engage well with parents, professionals and the local community to enhance outcomes for children.

Findings:



Well-being

Excellent

Children are very confident communicators as their wants, moods and needs are considered. They enthusiastically ask questions, make requests or gestures and share their needs with staff, who respond consistently. For example, a younger child raised her hands to staff, and she was picked up and given cuddles. Children consistently have good opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play and how they spend their time. They can choose where and what to play with, whether to join in with adult led activities and are reassured when they make choices.

Children feel safe and happy as their opinions and interests are valued and consistently acted upon. They know who to go to when feeling unsure or want to raise a complaint. Children have a strong sense of belonging and have formed secure relationships with the adults around them. For instance, children excitedly greet staff members as they move around the nursery. Children are very familiar with the routines of the setting, helping staff during lunch and supporting each other to follow the routines.

Interactions between children and adults are consistently good. They receive warm and caring responses to their needs and in turn replicate this with each other. For example, after being helped by a staff member, a child copied the same mannerisms and tone with another child who needed help. Children co-operate very well for their age and stage of development. Older children happily share toys and resources with younger children, and some children are beginning to learn how to deal with disagreements.

Children are very enthusiastic and interested in their play. They spend time engaging with the toys and resources available, proudly sharing their achievements with those around them. For instance, after spending time making a picture with chalks, one child declared “*all done*”, showing their completed drawing to the children and staff in the room. Children enjoy a good range of interesting opportunities indoors and outdoors. And have freedom to safely explore their environment. Children can choose to relax and have quiet times, and this is respected.

Children take part in a variety of activities resulting in a good feeling of achievement and high self-esteem. They consistently follow their interests, and they are supported to develop their learning and play through supportive interactions with staff. For example, when a child gave staff member some soup, they were asked to describe the type of soup they had made, how they had made it and was there any other things they could include in soup. This led to an animated discussion between staff and a group of children about different types of soup. Children experience interesting age and developmentally appropriate opportunities that promote their all-round development.



Care & Development

Good

Staff understand and implement clear policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and well-being. They work consistently well to monitor and support children in their care. For example, when children were moving between indoors and outdoors, staff positioned themselves so they could monitor the children in each area and be able to support other staff if needed. Staff work well together to ensure the smooth running of the nursery and are very familiar with their roles and responsibilities. Many staff implement appropriate cleaning and hygiene practices, including when nappy changing. However, during snack time, hygiene practices were not always consistently implemented by all staff. Safeguarding is prioritised and staff understand their responsibilities to protect children. They confidently talked about action they would take if they had any child protection concerns. Staff have a clear understanding and implement purposeful steps to meet children's dietary and medical needs. There is a nursery cook, who undertakes thorough menu planning and execution of a balanced selection of meals and snacks. There are clear protocols when dealing with allergies or intolerances and changes to these are shared effectively.

Staff understand the behaviour management policy at the setting. They consistently implement positive behaviour management strategies. For instance, they used lots of praise and reinforcements of the behaviour they wanted to see. Staff act as good role models at all times. They engage positively with the children, responding to any questions, requests or information shared with them. This is done consistently; they listen and respect children's views. They ensure that when children's choices are not able to be followed, they explain why, adapting their language to the age and stage of development. The interactions are consistently positive demonstrating warmth and kindness.

Staff are committed to providing a broad range of play and learning activities. They plan and provide interesting activities and resources. Allowing children to have flexibility and follow their interest and ideas. Staff complete a number of records, including information about a child's day. They monitor tasks and records to ensure there is a consistent implementation of the setting's policies. Staff really know their children, they can talk about their likes, dislikes and are aware of children's individual development. They plan well for the next steps and regularly review progress, keeping parents informed. Staff understand the process to follow if a child may have additional needs. They take appropriate action.



Environment

Good

Leaders have effective measures and policies in place to ensure that everyone understands their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children. They carry out annual safety testing, undertake regular fire drills and have appropriate insurances in place. Leaders complete a range of satisfactory risk assessments, which are reviewed and acted upon. For example, they have a health and safety, new and expectant mothers, students and risk benefit assessments. The range of documents and procedures ensure that the environment is safe, secure, and well maintained indoors and outdoors.

Leaders ensure the environment has extensive indoor play space for children to move freely and explore. They have made recent changes to the layout which has made a positive impact on the children's freedom and independence. Leaders and staff organise the environment well, it provides a good range of play opportunities suitable for nearly all the age ranges cared for. There is space for rest and relaxation as well as appropriate areas for personal care. However, the current arrangements for nappy changing does not fully promote children's privacy and dignity. Leaders ensure that any outdoor play space is used as often as possible and is an extension to the learning environment.

Leaders ensure that nearly all children can access good quality furniture and equipment. These support children's independence and development. For instance, there are open baskets stored at low levels and the outdoors can be adapted to suit the age range of children. There is a broad variety of age-appropriate toys and resources to stimulate the children's interest and imagination. There is a large interesting and exciting outdoor play area which is very well maintained and presents interesting opportunities for the children.



Leadership & Management

Good

There is very positive leadership at the setting. They have a strong vision for the service provided that they share with others. Leaders have an up-to-date, informative statement of purpose that reflects the service provided and gives parents a clear picture of what to expect at the setting. Leaders have a wide range of policies and documents to support the smooth running of the setting. They regularly review these policies, documents and procedures, ensuring that these are implemented in practice. Leaders and staff collect appropriate information about the children before they start, reviewing and updating any documents or information as needs change. They ensure that information is communicated to staff so that they have the most up-to-date information. Leaders have a good understanding of their responsibilities to promote the Welsh language. They are actively working towards meeting the Active Offer. Leaders engage with Care Inspectorate Wales, completing notifications of changes to staffing, updates to regulatory documents and acts upon recommendations to improve the setting.

Leaders actively implement self-evaluation. They complete an annual quality of care report which reflects upon what they do well, where changes can be made and a clear plan for improvements. As part of this reflection, they seek and implement the suggestions of children, their parents/carers, staff and other interested partners. Leaders have good processes when dealing with any concerns and implement improvements in a timely manner.

Leaders consistently follow timely and robust recruitment processes to safeguard children. Ongoing excellent, suitability checks and a strong induction procedure for all roles at the setting ensure that staff have a clear picture of their roles and responsibilities. There is a strong culture of continuous professional development, which is modelled by leaders. The performance management process is good and encourages staff to attend a range of training and to apply their learning. Regular appropriate supervisions and strong appraisals are carried out. For example, during appraisals staff are asked to reflect upon their role, where improvements can be made and what is needed to support this. Staff told us that they feel very well supported and there is good, strong teamwork. Leaders consistently deploy staff effectively to meet staffing ratios and children's needs are supported and met.

Leaders ensure that all communication and engagement systems with parents are good. They keep parents well informed through daily diaries and verbal feedback. Leaders work with a range of professional partners and have developed good links with the local community, utilising the local area through regular visits to the beach, woodland and parks. Parents told us that the setting offers and exceptional service, there is good communication and they are supportive.

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

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)
Further develop the environment so it fully promotes children's privacy and dignity.
Support all staff to maintain consistent standards of best hygiene practices around snack time.

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