



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Childcare Inspection Report on

Little Darlings

**Little Darlings
Chepstow Road
Langstone
Newport
NP18 2LU**



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Description of the service

Little Darlings Day Nursery is situated in Langstone area of Newport and was registered by CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) in December 2015. This is a privately owned nursery and the Registered Person (RP), is Caroline Smith. The nursery employs a Person in Charge (PiC), managing the service on a daily basis. The service is registered to provide childcare for a maximum of 46 children under 12 years of age.

The provision is open Monday to Friday 7.30am to 6pm throughout the year including school holidays with the exception of Bank holidays. The service offers a wrap around service for children aged between 3 months old to 11 years old. This is an English language group with the use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

Overall assessment

Outcomes for children are sound. Children are happy and settled. A range of activities and resources are provided to promote children's overall development. Parents are happy with the care that their children receive and children enjoy the time they spend at the nursery. Children are safe and overall their individual needs are met. The environment offers plenty of areas for children to play and learn. Staff are kind and caring. Leaders are proactive in implementing changes in order to improve the service.

Improvements

This is the first inspection since registering the service in December 2015.

Requirements and recommendations

Most of the nursery's record keeping is well organised. However, recommendations have been made, mainly relating to practice matters and some record keeping element of the service. This has been highlighted at the end of this report.

Well-being

Summary

Children are settled and happy. They have good relationships with their carers and are forming friendships with their peers. In the main they are able to freely choose toys and resources and staff are flexible to their individual requests. Children are becoming independent due to the wide range of free choice opportunities.

Our findings

To what extent do children have a voice?

Children speak and express themselves confidently. They participate well and are able to make choices and decisions. We saw the younger babies having their needs anticipated by staff, when they were hungry or tired for example, a baby was held by a member of staff as they were rocked to sleep. In the baby room most of the children were at the stage of babbling and learning to point. We noted that staff were in tune and understood the children non verbal cues and responded to their needs. Babies were confident and happy to approach us and sit in our laps or near us and play. Older children were able to freely move around their base rooms or their designated garden areas. We observed all the children helping themselves to the activities set out for them, or by helping themselves to other low level items. Children were involved in decision making. For example, we heard staff ask the pre-school children "what would you like to do next" or staff asked "we are making things for mothers day, do you want to join in?" Children also told us that they register themselves on arrival each day by selecting their photo/name badge and sticking this to the register board in the foyer. They told us that the staff were 'nice and had fun with them'.

Children know that their voices and opinions are listened to.

To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children feel secure, happy, comfortable and relaxed and form positive emotional attachments. We observed that many children are forming friendships with others, and show affection to the staff that care for them. They were happy and content in the nursery as they smiled and laughed taking part in activities and followed the daily routine. During circle time one of the children had remembered the Welsh word for the colour blue was 'Glas'. The children were asked what the colour of the week is and a child said 'Glas' he said that in Welsh it means 'Blue'. The child beamed, as all the Pre School group clapped and the child looked very proud when staff gave praise.

In the toddler group we noted one child was still attending the nursery under a 'settling-in' period; the child had a few tears initially but with staff distraction, started to settle. The child's key worker was aware of this and had set out toys that they liked to play with. This helped the child to feel happy and secure. We noted that the child constantly looked for reassurance from the staff member, showing that they had started to develop a positive emotional attachment to them and felt comforted by them.

New children are becoming settled and all children feel happy and secure.

How well do children interact?

Children are aware of the feelings of others and show consideration to each other. Children interacted well with one another and were happy to play by themselves or with others. In the main there was a calm atmosphere throughout the nursery and children were engaged

in activities that had been set out for them, or they happily help themselves with toys they wanted to play with. This included the outside play area or play in the ball pit room on the first floor. We noted that all the children played alongside each other and chatted easily to one another. However, there was some disruption during snack and meal times when both the toddler group and pre school groups sat in the main area downstairs for their meals. We noted that after a short period of time, the volume in the room was high as some children who had finished their food were bored because they had to wait for the other children, some of whom were slow eaters. Some children became disruptive; this was because staff were busy with handing out food or clearing up their group tables. We discussed this with the staff and management and both agreed to review this practice so that children learn to become more independent in readiness moving to school.

Children are interacting well most of the time with others; staff are beginning to look at their process to make further improvements during different parts of the day.

To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Children are engaged and interested in the activities that the nursery sets out for them, and they experience freedom to choose what and how they play. The older children told us that they enjoyed imprinting their hands in the salt dough, they told us this was to take home for their mums for Mother's Day presents. Younger children in the toddler group made flower bouquets by painting egg boxes and the babies contributed to mother day present making by doing hand and feet prints. Children also sang in Welsh after snack time and staff were heard using incidental Welsh through the day. We saw children smiled and laughed as they played in the outside play spaces with trays and chalk, sand construction play and have areas for sitting and relaxing. Children's art work was displayed around the nursery showing what activities they had been involved in. The babies had a selection of age appropriate toys on the floor, standing activity centre and musical toys within their reach which allowed them to explore and move around their room. We noted babies had a sensory area where they could learn to investigate sounds, textures and play in the light and dark. Staff were observed to be knowledgeable about individual babies needs and they encouraged all of them to be vocal and communicated with talking, laughter and smiles. However, staff played back ground music or nursery rhymes for longer periods in the main baby room. Although this can be pleasant, it can also be disruptive and can hinder children's speech and listening development . We discussed this with management and were assured that this will be reviewed.

Children enjoy their play and learning and enjoy a range of organised, free play and recreational activities.

How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children are largely motivated, self reliant and developing their all- round skills in line with their age and stage of development. Primarily this is achieved through self directed and unstructured play activities as children choose what they want to do. They are confident to go and find toys and materials without adult assistance and feed themselves at meal times, We saw that practitioners encouraged children to take off their coats after playing outside and during activities they were given time to complete tasks. When playing outside the children had opportunities to develop their gross motor skills by using the larger equipment. Children's language skills were encouraged during circle time and singing and we heard practitioners extend their language by asking them questions. Their fine motor skills and social skills were also promoted through the creative opportunities available.

Children's all-round learning and self help skills are encouraged by all practitioners.

Care and Development

Summary

Staff are kind and caring. They interact well with children and show genuine affection towards them. Overall staff help to keep children safe and are well trained. They understand and follow the service's procedures to safeguard children. Improvements need consideration to promote children's health, with regards to infection control procedures.

Our findings

How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

There are suitable policies relating to safeguarding, infection control, fire safety and the administering of medication to ensure children's health and safety is maintained. We observed nappy changing in both baby and toddlers and apron and gloves were used and changed for each child. Staff used anti-bacterial spray on the changing station after each child had been changed. However, we noted that through out the toddler and pre school, children used a communal towel to dry their hands in their base rooms. Sharing of communal towels can spread infection and cause cross contamination. This is not fully meeting the requirement of infection control. We discussed this with staff and management and both agreed to implement improvements immediately. We saw from the accident records that when a child had an accident, it was dealt with and recorded appropriately and parents were informed.

We noted the nursery had an appropriate child protection policy and we spoke to a number of staff who were aware of their responsibility and of the procedures to follow should safeguarding issues arise. We saw the training record that showed that staff who had attended recent safeguarding training also felt that the 'Prevent Duty' aspects were very informative. "Prevent" is a government strategy to help protect children and families from radicalisation and all child care providers should be familiar with its contents. All staff have suitable first aid qualification. There is appropriate information on allergens and the nursery cook had a list where children with allergies had been identified and she had a clear understanding of the alternatives she can offer them. The nursery was visited by Environmental Health in 2016 and has a food hygiene rating of 4. Food is freshly prepared on the premises and we noted that the kitchen was very clean and well maintained. There are coloured coded chopping boards to reduce the risk of cross contamination and records indicated that fridge and freezer checks are completed. There is a medication policy and the medication records we viewed were complete and relevant signatures had been obtained.

Appropriate measures are being taken to ensure the health and safety of children and improvements identified are given importance.

How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff know the children very well and provide a nurturing and caring environment that promotes children's behaviour. We observed staff promoting positive behaviour. We heard "Good listener, good boy/girl" whilst a child was sitting at snack time, staff prompted them "can you say please?". We saw staff encouraging a young child who was initially completing a puzzle with a small group of children to sit down to play with a puzzle. When the child ran off taking some pieces with him he was asked to "come and sit down" he was helped onto a chair, and we heard "well done good listening". Staff in the pre school were heard saying

“no thank you, we need to be nice to our friends” and “We are not shouting at our friends are we? Kind voices”.

Overall staff are good role models; they interact positively with children and promote good behaviour.

How well do practitioners promote children’s play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

Staff provide a nurturing and caring environment that meets children’s individual needs; they know the children well. There is a nurturing and relaxed atmosphere in the nursery. The care provided is responsive and children are treated with respect. Planning and assessments in each age group is beginning to be undertaken to identify the individual needs of children. We saw practitioners sit and participate in activities with children, for example, circle time, group story reading and it was evident that the children enjoyed being involved. Practitioners were familiar with the needs of the children in their care and they have begun to develop records that showed children’s progress. However, the assessment records we viewed in the toddler and baby age groups showed that they were limited because they were brief in description of what staff observed and did not highlight the milestones of the curriculum of the age group. The pre school group records were stronger and beginning to take shape. We saw that the pre school leader followed the principles of the Foundation Phase and the observations were being described well. The room leader had taken regard to what we discussed and by the second day of the inspection had made positive changes to the way she would formulate the template in the future. However, children’s next steps in learning were not consistently recorded. This can limit parents from being able to fully contribute in their child’s progress in a meaningful way. We discussed this with the staff and management and they agreed to implement improvements immediately.

Staff are beginning to plan and develop their methods to provide appropriate support to enhance children’s well-being and development.

Environment

Summary

Staff provide access to a safe, secure and well-maintained environment. The children have access to a selection of large indoor and out door areas that provide a range of play opportunities. The nursery is stocked with a good range of toys and resources.

Our findings

How well do Staff ensure the safety of the environment?

Staff have arrangements in place to ensure that the environment is safe, clean and secure. They ensure that the entrance to the building was locked and a buzzer/intercom was sited at the front door. We noted that the front door into the nursery area was safe and securely locked, and parents were met at the door by staff members. We were asked to sign an electronic visitor's log and were told that all staff, parents and children were expected to follow the same format. This is a fairly new system and helps to maintain a safe and secure environment for all who are on site.

Leaders completed daily visual risk assessments and recorded these on a tick list. We saw maintenance records and annual written risk assessments that showed that Appliance Testing was valid. Fire extinguishers had been serviced in 2016 and fire drills had been logged, with the last one taking place in February 2017. The rooms were seen to be clean and well maintained, and the nursery had valid insurance cover. The service has registered with the Food Standards Agency, and was awarded a 4 rating.

Leaders and staff ensure that the environment is clean and safe and have systems in place to identify and deal with safety issues.

How well does staff ensure the suitability of the environment?

Children benefit from well-resourced environment that has plenty of space to play. The nursery provided areas that were well decorated and contained a suitable variety of toys and activities. We saw low level toilets and sinks were available for the children in each base room to use and wash their hands. All areas were set out in line with the National Minimum Standards (NMS) to allow free movement, and this included a good out door play spaces for the toddlers and pre school children. We were told that the babies who were based on the first floor shared the out door play area with the toddlers. The outdoor areas were partly undercover to provide respite from the sun or rain. Inside the nursery the babies had two separate rooms which were used for sleeping. We were told that each child had a cot assigned to them each day and that bedding was cleaned and changed once the child left for the week. Staff set out their base room rooms to include low chairs, tables and carpet areas for appropriate activities. Each groups had good, clean and safe toys resources and equipment for children to use.

The nursery provides plenty of space and a good range of age appropriate equipment, toys and facilities for all age groups of children to play or rest.

How well do staff ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

Resources and equipment are of an appropriate standard. There is a suitable range of toys and learning materials for children across the age ranges. We noted that babies had an appropriate amount of soft toys and musical toys which were in good condition. There were

suitable cultural resources in play rooms. We noted that management actively invited staff feedback and suggestions. We saw that suggestions had been made and ideas discussed. In the pre-school room there was limited storage for children to store their own belongings such as the drawings and examples of work they had completed that they may want to take home. We noted colourful wall displays including the use of Welsh words and phrases were displayed all around the nursery.

Staff ensure that there toys and equipment are of a suitable standard but some improvements could be made in relation to creative resources and storage facilities.

Leadership and Management

Summary

The management have begun to build a strong team and the aims of the service are clear. The service is suitably run and internally monitored. Staff feel well supported and the nursery has sound links with parents and the community. There is a thorough and robust vetting process before staff start work and sound record keeping. Records and documents are generally well organised with some further development is required.

Our findings

How effective is leadership?

The Registered Person (RP) and Person in Charge (PiC) have a sound understanding of the regulations and provide an accurate picture of the service that they provide. They have an understanding of what needs to be in place to effectively run the service. Both the RP, who plays an active role in the daily running of the nursery and the PiC have developed well written documentation to support the smooth running of the nursery and drive up good practice. We saw that the statement of purpose, in conjunction with the Parent's/Carers Handbook sets out the overall aims and objectives of the service. We were shown suitable written policies which were reviewed annually, including equal opportunities and social networking, nutrition/healthy eating, and parental involvement policies. There was also a settling in/admissions policy based on individual needs which stated that the settling in would end once a firm relationship is formed with the key worker. We asked staff about the confidentiality policy, which they were also very familiar with. They told us that information was on a "need to know basis, never discussed with other people, staff or children, unless it was a disclosure, then staff told us they would have to say it can't be kept confidential" in case a referral was later required to be made to safeguarding.

Policies and procedures are maintained and reviewed as and when required and we viewed the policy file which indicated that policies are clearly written and amended. There was an up to date Public Liability Certificate. Although daily registers for both staff and children are clearly recorded on the online computerised systems. The hard copy which would be taken by staff in case of emergency evacuation was not consistent. On viewing the daily records, we noted that on occasions staff in each base room did not always sign children out when they left the nursery at the end of the day. Nor did they record who was working in each room including their times of arrival and departures. This can have an impact on the safe evacuation of the building as the emergency services would not have an accurate record of who is present at the service. We discussed this with the PiC and the RP and they agreed to improve the matter. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are up to date for the existing staffer group. We noted that management value their staff; they have staff meetings and staff supervisions are carried out regularly. All staff spoken to during the inspection told us that they felt well supported personally and professionally by the management and they were actively encouraged to enhance their qualifications and skills by going on further training.

Management continue to develop effective leadership for the service.

How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

We noted that management are continually striving to make improvements to their service and to drive up quality. We noted the service had completed its Quality of care Review for 2016; these included the views of parents and children and the improvements since registration in 2015. Questionnaires for parents and children were well designed.

Management were aware that this process will be incorporated into the annual SASS report and that this will need to be completed on line and submitted to CSSIW within a specified date. The management told us that practitioners are regularly consulted through the process of staff supervision and also through staff meetings to help identify improvements in the nursery. Parents spoken to during the inspection told us that *“I have noted a good improvement since the new owner has been established, we know that she is around most days and she is approachable. This gives me confidence in case I need to share a concern”*. Other parents spoke to said *“my child has settled well and I am happy leaving him here, staff are so nice and kind”* and *“when I have dropped my child off, I leave here happy in knowing he will be cared for by staff who know what to do and are interested in their jobs”*.

Staff ensure that quality assurance is implemented and consider ways to improve and move the service forward.

How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

The recruitment processes are robust. Each member of staff has a completed file in place which contains all the required information. This ensures that suitable staff members are in place to care for the children. The management ensure that there is a robust staff recruitment process. We saw a sample of staff files which contained all the required checks to make sure staff were suitable to care for the children. We noted that staff supervisions took place every six months and allowed leaders and staff to discuss all aspects of the nursery. Records demonstrated that staff had valid child protection, first aid training and food hygiene certificates. We saw overall that staff were deployed effectively to allow them to undertake duties without compromising the staffing ratios. The room leaders follow a theme every term, which they plan as a team. We saw a ‘Staff Handbook’ which was given to them when they start employment. When asked, it was apparent that staff were aware of their duties and what responsibilities they held. A newly employed member of was able to confidently tell us that they had completed the induction for new staff. When asked about evacuation, we were told that the nursery had ensured that she was involved in an actual Fire Drill so that she knew what to do in case of a real evacuation. Staff were confident about their role regarding child protection and confidently spoke of the way they would be expected to raise their concerns to management. This demonstrates that staff have robust process to follow and have a good understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities.

The leaders manage staff and resources effectively.

How effective are partnerships?

We noted that management and staff enjoy good relationships with parents and carers and with each other. The nursery keeps parents well informed about children’s general well-being and day to day routines for their children.

Room leaders told us that they hold regular discussions with parents to promote good relationships. We spoke to parents; all were positive, and told us that they had seen improvements, in their child such as potty training. All four parents confirmed that the nursery was brilliant and they wouldn't go anywhere else. We saw the online record in the form of a daily diary which was emailed to parents each day. The key worker included information on how the child ate, slept, and what activities they had been involved in. The nursery provides regular newsletters for parents where they inform them of themes, closure dates, and staff changes. We saw an informative 'Parents/Carers Handbook' which was given to parents when their child starts at the nursery.

The service maintains effective links with practitioners and parents to ensure that children's welfare is promoted.

Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

None

Recommendations for improvement

In order to further develop the service and improve outcomes for children we discussed the following matters with the RP and PiC. they should:

- Formalise children's individual records to include observation and assessment to consistently evaluate and record children's next steps in order for parents to be fully informed of their child's progress;
- improve daily registers so that they accurately record when children and staff are on and off site in a timely manner for evacuation purposes;
- minimise background music and nursery rhymes in the baby room so that young children are able to hear normal environmental sounds, particularly human speech in order to help them develop their own speech and hearing;
- improve the management of children's behaviour during busy periods of the day, such as snack and meal times so that some children are not left waiting for others to finish their food before play can resume, and
- remove communal towels in the toileting areas to prevent spread of cross contamination

How we undertook this inspection

We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We looked at what we already knew about the service, including notifications and changes since the service was first registered;
- the inspection was carried out by one inspector and took place over two visits;
- we observed activities and interactions between the practitioners and children;
- we sampled documentation and records, which included the statement of purpose, policies and procedures, records of accidents, incidents and complaints;
- we viewed operational plans, records of attendance and records of medication administered;
- we viewed all parts of the premises, looked at maintenance records, risk assessments and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place.

Our findings were fed back to the RP, PiC and practitioners at the end of the inspection and all recommendations discussed in full.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website www.cssiw.org.uk

About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Caroline Smith
Registered maximum number of places	46
Age range of children	3 months old to 11 years old
Opening hours	Monday to Friday 7.30am to 6pm including school holidays. With the exception of Bank Holidays.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	First inspection since registration in December 2015.
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	20 and 22 March 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	NO
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	The service does not provide the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh Language. An 'Active Offer' means providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. This is part of the Welsh language Policy to develop and strengthen Welsh language in services.
Additional Information: None	