



Inspection Report

Little Unicorns Daycare

Nyddfa Yard

Pengam

Blackwood

NP12 3UZ



Date Inspection Completed

03/11/2023

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About Little Unicorns Daycare

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Little Unicorns Daycare Limited
Registered places	40
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	25 October 2022
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

<u>Well-being</u>	Good
<u>Care and Development</u>	Poor
<u>Environment</u>	Adequate
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Poor

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are happy and settled. They have a good voice and can make almost all choices and decisions independently. Children develop strong relationships and express their views openly, knowing they will be listened to. They enjoy a range of interesting opportunities which spark curiosity and engagement. Children are confident in their communication with each other and with staff.

Staff engage well with children and provide care in a calm manner. They mostly keep children safe. However, they do not always ensure medication is administered and/or recorded. Hygiene practices are inconsistent. For example, in relation to hand washing before and after eating. Staff observe children and identify the next steps in their development; however, they do not record how they plan to do this.

The premises are warm, safe, and secure. There is adequate space for children to play or rest. People who run the setting ensure younger children have an adequate range of age-appropriate resources which are of suitable quality; however, older children have limited resources. On entry to the ground floor, there was a slight damp smell.

Leadership and management of the nursery is not effective. The responsible individual does not ensure they and staff consistently follow the policies and procedures in place to support the smooth and effective running of the nursery. Staff files and supervisions are not always in line with regulation. Therefore, they are non-compliant and we have issued two Area's for Improvement and a Priority Action Notice's. Recommendations are also in place and details are summarised at the end of the report.

Children have some opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play for much of their time at the nursery. They explore their environment freely and are confident to move about and play as they wish. They choose from the range of toys and resources available to them. Most are confident communicators using language or gestures as appropriate. For example, babies reach up with their arms when they want picking up or point when they want something they cannot reach.

All children are happy, relaxed and settled in the nursery. They make positive bonds with staff and engage cheerfully. All children we saw arrived happily and coped well with separating from their parents and carers, even those who were transitioning from the baby room, or had recently started at the nursery. Children sit beside their friends to eat their breakfast and are calm and relaxed in their play. A child who was tired started to cry around lunchtime, and they were comforted when cuddled by staff.

Children interact and behave appropriately for their ages and stages of development. Younger children play happily alongside each other with support from staff. We saw them playing with plastic blocks and dressing up with hats and bags. Older children are beginning to play cooperatively, and they engage well with staff. A child was playing happily in the home corner, where they 'made' staff a cup of tea, and staff thanked them as they 'drank'. Children enjoyed circle time, they had great fun doing some hand actions and clapping, and were staying engaged in their play.

Children have some opportunities to learn and develop through the activities and experiences they have access to. They choose what they do from an adequate range of toys and resources and mostly find things to play with that engage them. For example, we saw a child sitting at the book corner with a dolly, looking at books, and dancing to the nursery rhymes playing in the back ground. Children engage with planned activities. Younger children had great fun printing fireworks with cardboard tubes.

Children have some opportunities to develop their self-help skills. For example, they are encouraged to feed themselves, and help to tidy up as is appropriate for their ages and stages of development. One child was adamant they wanted to cut up their food. They proudly showed staff when they did, and were praised by staff for their efforts. Children were able to pour their drinks from a small jug into their cups, promoting their independence.

Care and Development

Poor

Staff do not always understand their responsibility to protect children. They are confident in knowing who to report to externally if they have any concerns about children, colleagues or the responsible individual. However, they do not always follow all of the other nursery's policies and procedures well in order to safeguard children. Sufficient numbers of staff have paediatric first aid training. There are suitable systems in place for managing and recording accidents. However not all incident records have been signed by the manager. Staff give children safety messages such as "*sit on your bottom please*" when a child was standing on the low level settee.

Records seen show medication recording and administration is poor. Staff have not ensured that parents requests for medication has been administered and recorded accurately. This is placing people's health and well-being at risk and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address this issue. Staff recorded allergies; however, not the signs or symptoms to look out for, or the action to take if a reaction occurs. Child record forms forwarded after the visit, now have this information in place.

The responsible individual and staff do not always follow policies and procedures relating to hygiene. For example, staff changing nappies do not wash their hands after each nappy change, nor does the child, as the policy states. They do not ensure children always wash their hands before or after eating. Staff and children with coughs did not wash their hands after coughing. Staff do not ensure there is fresh drinking water for children to access at all times. When children did have drinks they appeared thirsty.

Staff interact with children in a kind and caring manner and, overall, promote positive bonds with them. For example, during a nappy change a child was not happy, the staff chatted and reassured them saying: "*You're ok, alright darling*" and started to sing a song which soothed the child. We did not see incidents of unwanted behaviour; however, staff told us how they would manage this, in line with the policy. Staff engage with children and support them in their play. We saw children in the baby room join in with a singing session and with flash cards. Older children were listening to a story, and one child spontaneously started singing a song, which the staff joined in. Staff encourage children to use manners, and give praise and stickers when tidying up before lunch. However, staff were heard discussing children whilst completing the parent's App. Staff are inconsistent with choice at breakfast time. For example, some children were offered a choice of cereal for breakfast, and shown the boxes of what was available; whilst others were given cereal, without a choice.

Children's development planning is mostly effective and there are some purposeful, appropriate or interesting play opportunities for children. Staff have put in place individual observations which record children's next steps. For example, to get a child to be more familiar with different textures, to crawl, or grasping paint brushes by focussing on fine motor skills; however, it does not say how this is going to be achieved. Staff promote the Welsh language effectively throughout the day.

Environment**Adequate**

Overall, the responsible individual ensures the environment is suitably safe and secure for children. They record visitors to the setting, lock external doors, and a member of staff mans the desk by the front door throughout the day. Safety gates are in place in the play areas and hallways. A fire blanket is wall mounted in the kitchen and first aid kits are available. The nursery is suitably clean, tidy, well maintained and welcoming. On entry to the ground floor, there was a slight damp smell.

The responsible individual arranges for regular maintenance checks and has adequate risk assessments for all areas of the premises. These identify issues such as items being removed from the outside area and a loose radiator. However, the kitchen door leading off the two–three year olds playroom slams shut this had not been identified as a risk. . The responsible individual ensures they carry out and record regular emergency evacuation practices. The fire safety log book contains a fire alarm and fire extinguisher weekly check list, which were last completed 9 Aug; however, the year is not recorded. A satisfactory annual gas certificate was forwarded after our visit.

The nursery is organised into three sperate base areas. The first floor consists of the baby room, sleep room, staff toilet and staff room/office. The ground floor consists of an out of school area for over three year old's, a play room for two-three year olds, the kitchen and child size toilets. There is an enclosed outside area which was not seen at this inspection. The space is used effectively to aid the transition of children under the age of two years. Only the baby room and two-three area were in use during this inspection. Each area is adequate and bright and provides suitable space for children to move around and play. The layout of rooms enables children to choose resources independently. However, some of the resources are well used, and worn. Older children attending after school have limited resources that are suitable for their age group, and this includes furniture and toilets. Although there were a few dolls with different skin tones, we did not see resources or displays which suitably promote cultural awareness, the Welsh language or equal opportunities.

Leadership and Management

Poor

The responsible individual has two people in charge on a day-to-day basis. The statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect the current persons in charge. Staff turnover is high. Staffing on the day of inspection was above the required adult to child ratio, and on other dates was within ratio. A dedicated cook ensures staffing is maintained throughout snack and meal times. Detailed attendance registers were kept for children and staff.

The leaders have an adequate range of policies and procedures in place to support the smooth running of the nursery. However, the responsible individual does not ensure that all staff follow these consistently. The safe guarding policy refers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), however, the name of the DSL is not recorded for staff to know who to discuss any issues with. The leader spoken to at the visit was unsure if the service was registered with The Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

The responsible individual does not have sufficient oversight of some aspects of practice to ensure outcomes for children are always adequately provided for. During this inspection, we have issued one Priority Action Notice's and two Area's for Improvement, and the provider must take immediate action to address this issue. The leaders do not always ensure staff files contain the required information to ensure safe recruitment Staff had not received regular supervision, or appraisals.

The responsible individual develops good partnerships with parents. One parent's complaint had been logged, and the action taken to try and resolve the issue was recorded. We saw positive feedback comments from parents in the quality of care review. However, children's views are not evaluated in detail. The responsible individual has a contract for each child and collects a range of relevant information and permissions. However, the manager had not signed them all. Leaders and staff keep parents informed about their child's time at nursery in a variety of ways including verbally and through an App. One parent we spoke to stated they were very happy, their child had settled and developed well, and the staff were lovely.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
26	The provider must ensure that medication is administered safely and recorded accurately.	New

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
15	The statement of purpose must be updated to reflect who is in charge of the service on a daily basis.	New
28	The provider must undertake robust recruitment checks prior to the member of staff commencing employment at the service.	New

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.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 12 - Food and drink	Ensure fresh drinking water is freely available to children at all times. Ensure breakfast choices are consistent.
Standard 10 - Healthcare	Ensure staff are aware of the importance of good hygiene practice in order to prevent the spread of infection.
Standard 23 - Equipment	Ensure older children have access to equipment, and resources that are appropriate and suitable for their needs.
Standard 24 - Safety	Fix the kitchen door to ensure it does not slam shut.
Standard 18 - Quality assurance	Ensure children's views are evaluated in more detail within the quality of care review.
Standard 13 (Day Care) - Suitable Person	Ensure all paid staff receive regular one-to-one supervision and receive a formal appraisal at least once a year.

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.

Best Practice

Recommendation(s)

- Ensure all incident records and children's contracts are signed by managers.
- Record how children's next steps in their development will be achieved.
- Ensure all staff are aware, and follow all policies and procedures relating to the service.
- Consider if registering with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) is required.

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

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