



Inspection Report

Melin Infants Flying Start

**Melin Infant School
Herbert Road
Melin
Neath
SA11 2DD**



Date Inspection Completed

01/03/2024

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About Melin Infants Flying Start

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Provider	Melin Infants Flying Start
Registered places	20
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	6 September 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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

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

Summary

Children are very happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting. They have a strong sense of belonging and develop positive relationships and friendships. Children have an excellent choice of play opportunities and make effective decisions about what they want to do. They are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. Children are well supported in developing independence.

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures effectively to keep children safe. They are kind towards children, providing positive interactions to ensure children feel valued and happy. Staff consistently use positive behaviour management strategies to very good effect. Staff are skilled in supporting children in their play and learning.

The environment has good indoor play space for children to move freely. People who run the setting ensure the outdoor play space is used as often as possible and is an extension of the learning environment. Children have access to a wide range of developmentally appropriate play and learning resources.

People who run the setting are organised and manage the setting well. They strive to develop the provision and are committed to ongoing improvements. They encourage an active partnership with parents and other stakeholders. They successfully embed their policies in the running of the setting.

Well-being**Excellent**

Children are happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting. They arrive with smiles on their faces and display a strong sense of belonging. Children's wishes and interests are highly valued, acted upon and continually reviewed. For example, some children choose to play outside in the wintery weather and this wish is respected. Children have a strong voice and have an excellent choice of play opportunities. Children move freely from one activity to another and are asked what they would like to do next.

Children are happy and settled. They cope well with separation. Efficient and thorough daily transitions fully recognise and support individual needs and are effectively implemented. They form positive emotional attachments with staff. Children who are unsettled are given individual, patient care and attention. For example, one child who was unsettled was offered reassuring cuddles and was checked on several times throughout the session. Children express enthusiasm and enjoyment. We saw them smile, laugh, sing and positively join in with the day's activities.

Interactions between children and staff are consistently positive and often humorous. Children laugh delightedly as a staff member puts on a funny voice during a task where they are 'digging' for the vegetables needed to make cawl. Children chatter away to staff and receive appropriate and genuine responses. They interact well with each other. Some children are beginning to take turns and share. Children are beginning to form friendships and play together.

Children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. For example, some children play for a sustained period of time with various activities outside. They have fun as they slide down a slippery slide. Children enjoy a range of interesting opportunities which spark curiosity and engagement. They have the freedom to safely explore the indoor and outdoor environment. Play is child led and children immediately start to explore the attractively laid out activities and resources upon arrival. Some children show good concentration skills and engage with activities for an age-appropriate length of time.

Children are encouraged to develop their skills of independence successfully. This is particularly evident at rolling snack time where children wash their hands prior to snack, are encouraged to serve themselves using tongs and carefully carry their drink and food over to the table. Children who decide they are not ready for a snack are supported in this decision. Children access toys and resources freely and make decisions about whether to engage in adult-led activities or free play. Children make good efforts to put on their all-weather suits, coats and wellies and are supported by staff when they need help.

Care and Development**Good**

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles, personal safety, and wellbeing. Staff spoken to have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children, and confidently answer safeguarding scenarios. Staff supervise children effectively. For example, positioning themselves well, whilst supervising children during outside play. They are aware of allergies and individual needs. Appropriate accident and incident records are in place. Staff implement thorough hygiene practices. Children are encouraged to regularly wash their hands and surfaces are routinely wiped down. Hygienic nappy changing and toileting practices are in place. Accurate records of the children and staff attendance are kept. Staff ensure children have access to daily outdoor play experiences, offering them the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air. Staff practise fire drills with children so they know what to do in an emergency. However, the timing of fire drills are not varied meaning children in the afternoon session do not get the opportunity to practise evacuating the building safely.

Staff display a good understanding of the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive strategies. They use gentle tones and positive reinforcement. They are patient with the children and allow them time to understand and problem solve. They promote positive behaviours with children. For example, staff led a turn-taking game on the trampoline, supporting children in waiting for their turn even when they sometimes found this difficult. Staff have a strong understanding and knowledge of the children's development, which reflects on how they manage children's behaviour. They frequently talk to each other about the children, offering support and ideas when children become unsettled for example. They have good relationships and communicate well with each other. Staff are consistently responsive; they genuinely listen, chatting and laughing alongside children and respect their views. Interactions are very positive, demonstrating warmth and kindness. We heard staff asking children what was wrong if they were upset and gently asking them what had made them unhappy. Providing individual and attentive care of this nature is a real strength of the staff team. They know the children well and have extensive knowledge of their needs.

Staff are committed to providing a good range of play and learning activities. We saw staff supporting and extending children's understanding in their play and learning. For example, during a Welsh Cake activity, children were introduced to new vocabulary and phrases. Staff asked open questions to further engage children with the activity prompting children to remember when they had previously made pancakes in a similar way. There is a good balance of adult led and activities that children can independently access. Staff have a sound understanding of when to interact and when to let play unfold. For example, staff bring out musical instruments and let the children play along to nursery rhymes and songs in their own way. Staff support and provide for children with additional needs and show awareness of the need to provide a flexible environment and routine for children with such requirements. Staff consistently use incidental Welsh throughout the day to very good effect.

Environment

Good

People who run the setting have comprehensive policies in place and ensure the environment is suitably safe, secure, and well maintained. Staff complete effective and accurate general risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed, and any identified hazards are swiftly addressed. The setting is clean, tidy, well maintained and welcoming. Thorough cleaning routines are in place which ensure that the environment is well managed in terms of infection prevention and control. The premises both inside and outside are secure, and an appropriate system is in place to record any visitors to the setting.

People who run the setting make certain the environment has good indoor play space which children freely explore. They ensure the environment meets the children's needs. The playroom is bright, welcoming and accessible. The children benefit from colourful displays which celebrate Wales and serve as reminders of trips they have previously enjoyed. Children's work is displayed which further strengthens their connection to the space. The room is divided into interesting areas which support children in their play and learning. Children have opportunities for role-play in a well-resourced home corner and a comfy area allows children the opportunity to explore and engage with books. People who run the setting ensure that the outdoor play space is used often. Although the area is small in size, careful consideration has been given to its layout and children are provided with interesting and varied resources and play equipment.

People who run the setting provide a wide range of resources, allowing children variety and choice. They provide diverse resources for all ages and stages of development. For example, through multi-sensory activities, physical and musical activities. They provide stimulating resources and show an understanding of the new curriculum. For example, providing real life items in the home corner. Children can access toys and resources easily, as they are stored at low level or within their reach. The service promotes diversity and equality and provides a range of toys representative of different cultures. A variety of festivals are celebrated.

Leadership and Management

Good

People who run the setting are effective in the way they manage and operate the service and are committed to ongoing improvements. They have a strong vision that they share effectively with others and have engaged positively with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) during the inspection process. They update the setting's policies and ensure staff implement these in practice. People who run the setting maintain and share an up-to-date effective statement of purpose that accurately reflects the service provided and meets the National Minimum Standards and regulations. People who run the setting display a commitment to ongoing training and improvement.

People who run the setting ensure that documentation is generally well organised and easily accessible. At the time of our visit, not all the required statutory information was held within each staff file. This was quickly rectified, and staff files are now complete and hold the requisite information. There are strong procedures in place for self-evaluation of the setting. The quality-of-care review is a purposeful and thorough document which strives to include the views and opinions of children and parents using the service. It clearly identifies strengths of the service and prioritises areas for improvement. The people who run the setting implement safe recruitment procedures to safeguard children. They carry out regular appraisals and supervisions providing support and an opportunity to discuss any issues which may arise.

People who run the setting have developed meaningful and positive relationships with parents and carers. There are effective systems in place to keep parents well informed about their child's time at the setting. Thorough verbal handovers are exchanged between staff and parents at the start and end of sessions. This is a real strength of the service. Parents we spoke to on the day of our visit were extremely positive about the setting highlighting good communication and supportive staff as particular strengths. Feedback received from children on the day of our visit was very positive. One child commented that they had had a nice day and that they had laughed a lot. The people who run the setting have positive relationships with a range of professionals and other stakeholders.

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
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

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
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N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
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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)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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)
Vary the times of fire drills to ensure children in both sessions are included.

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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