

Overall Assessment Report 2023



Organisation details

Name

Once Upon a Time Nursery

Address

56 Railway Terrace, Llanelli, SA15 2RH

Certification expiration date

22 November 2024

PART A: INFORMATION ABOUT CARE INSPECTORATE WALES (CIW)

A professional discussion took place with the management team, Rebecca Bello (Nursery Manager), Beverley Alldridge (Nursery Owner), and Amelia Alldridge, (Deputy Manager). The most recent Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection was discussed. CIW's recommendations have been implemented and the team understand the importance of carrying out annual reviews of both their 'Quality of Care report' (QoC) and their 'Statement of Purpose' (SoP). They also recognise the importance of updating the SoP and informing CIW when relevant changes are made.

PART B: 3 IMPROVEMENT POINTS YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING ON IN THE LAST YEAR.

We (Early Years Wales) discussed last year's improvement points with the management team and found that Once Upon a Time Day Nursery is a reflective setting committed to ongoing improvement. Whilst some of these changes are still ongoing it is evident that the provider has made improvements such as:

- Making excellent links within their community
- Gaining an improved knowledge and understanding of policies and procedures across the workforce
- Applying for and being awarded grants to improve resources and the nursery environment

The setting continues to prioritise improvements where the children's needs are at the centre of all decisions made.

PART C: SECTION 1.1 ETHOS, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SERVICE

The provider understands their financial and legal responsibilities and communicates a clear statement describing their childcare service and the lines of delegation for operational management. We know this because:

- Sound financial systems are in place and the owner described how recently they have started applying for improvement grants, we were told, *"It's been life changing for a small business like us"*.
 - We viewed the operational plan that clearly showed the legal structure of this service and staff spoken to understand theirs and their colleagues' roles and responsibilities.
 - The Statement of Purpose (SoP) was clear and informative, providing staff, parents, (existing and potential), and other stakeholders with a detailed overview of the service and we saw all staff working hard to embed the aims and objectives laid out in the SoP.
-

- Once Upon a Time Day Nursery has an excellent website. It provides potential parents with all the information they need to make an informed choice about the service. For example: A video of the setting is available to view, and a recording of a radio advert is available to listen to, along with other useful information, including their most recent CIW report, all Policies and Procedures, a Parent - Setting Contract, Menus, etc.

Parents can be confident that there is a clear management structure in place and the service is well organised with excellent systems to aid the smooth running and sustainability of the service.

PART C: SECTION 1.2 MANAGING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RESPONSIVELY

The provider meets children's needs by producing, maintaining and reviewing policies and procedures including those that are in addition to legal requirements and in response to reflective analysis. We know this because:

- All staff are aware that policies and procedures are in place to safeguard the children in their care. One member of staff told us how weekly staff meetings are now used to review a particular policy and how this truly helps to embed the policy in practice. The owner explained that the policy they review may be relevant to anything that has happened that week or they simply work their way through a list. The management team read the policy and questions are asked by both staff and management, "Sometimes we use role play scenarios such as, *challenging behaviour at circle time*". We were also told that extra help can be given privately if somebody doesn't fully understand.
- There is a detailed collection of policies and procedures easily available, the website has categorised them which is really helpful for staff and parents, '*...we wanted them to be easy for staff and parents to navigate their way through and jump in and out of.*'
- We were told that these policies were purchased from National Day Nursery Association, (NDNA) in 2021 and have been amended to be personalised to the setting. We viewed the extensive 'Policy and Procedure' file that is kept by the entrance and saw a list of policies and procedures that were signed and dated at each annual review. We were told that when staff read a new or revised policy or procedure they must sign and date their own list which is kept in their staff files.

Parents can be confident that excellent systems are in place to provide guidance and support in a safe environment. Children and adults benefit from a service where policies and procedures are understood by all and put into daily practice.

PART C: SECTION 1.3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PREMISES AND A SAFE CHILDCARE ENVIRONMENT

Children receive care in a safe and secure environment where equipment and facilities support their needs. We know this because:

- CCTV cameras are positioned around the internal and external environment, the recordings of these are linked to a monitor kept in the office and we were told these are checked when something has happened such as a query from a parent, an accident, a near miss, etc.
- The main entrance is securely locked, fingerprint locks and key fobs are also used for other doors within the building, and stairgates were positioned appropriately throughout the nursery for the safety of the children.
- We were asked to sign in on arrival and saw digital registers for the children and staff in attendance.
- Once Upon a Time Day Nursery have onsite maintenance support. There are clear systems in place for staff to carry out daily and weekly safety checks, (internal and external), and the owner was able to confidently describe the

procedures they follow for any maintenance or repairs. The management team were also confident to describe how they store chemicals and how they protect children's information using a variety of data protection methods. For example, the hard copies are locked away, files on the computer are password protected, etc.

- The setting annually completes the 'Infection Prevention and Control Audit'. We viewed effective risk assessments for each area and we saw safety requirements were being recorded and met.
- The building's fixtures, fittings and play resources were in excellent condition, clean and positioned safely. We saw cleaning take place after mealtimes and viewed documentation including cleaning rotas, safety checks, accident forms, fire evacuation plans, recorded fire drills, etc., these all contribute to facilitating a safe childcare environment.

Parents can be confident their child is looked after in a safe environment where effective measures and systems are in place.

PART C: SECTION 1.4 STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Children's needs and experiences are enriched by staff who are competent, knowledgeable and able to progress their own continuous professional development (CPD). We know this because:

- **Once Upon a Time Day Nursery have a highly qualified staff team. Staff are encouraged to complete their Childcare, Play, Learning and Development course to the highest levels and attend training in areas of interest as well as mandatory training.** One member of staff told us how they have recently attended a Welsh training day and are looking forward to putting what they learned into practice. The Manager told us, "*When staff come back from training we encourage them to feedback to the rest of the staff to share good practice*". We viewed the training matrix that shows core training takes place and CPD opportunities are encouraged.
- Staff have opportunities to gain support and guidance from the management team. Supervisions and appraisals are carried out at least annually and space and time is given for private chats as well as 'on the spot learning'. We were told if staff are unsure or new to a particular role, they are able to swop rooms and shadow other members of the team to gain experience, advice and a different perspective from their colleagues. We suggested this could be documented as peer observations.
- **Staff's skills are utilised, there is a skills plan in place and staff are encouraged to comment on what skills they possess and would be willing to share with the children, skills shared have included yoga, sports, IT, circus skills, storytelling, and many more.**
- **Staff's wellbeing is promoted by the management team, they have access to free snacks and toiletries, a 'staff member of the week' award, teambuilding nights out/in or weekends away. There is also a jar available for all staff to contribute their ideas on 'any' topic.** These are regularly checked and discussed. Staff are encouraged to discuss any concerns and an open-door policy exists. **The owner told us there is a 'democratic' management style, whereby all staff are consulted on most decisions made, "We believe this is why we have maintained our staff, we are a very close team that work well together".**
- Future plans for a separate staffroom is ongoing. **Until this is complete the management team have created a 'protected lunch hour' for staff. Parents are aware that unless there is an emergency, children do not get picked up or dropped off in this hour. Surplus staff help to maintain ratio and staff are encouraged to take a break.**

Children benefit from care in a service where well trained and experienced staff are deployed effectively, encouraged to share their learning and training, and are supported and valued by the management team.

PART C: SECTION 2.1 PROMOTING CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE

Children's healthcare needs are identified, addressed and promoted by knowledgeable and caring staff. We know this

because:

- There are good measures in place to collect healthcare information on each child before they start attending at Once Upon a Time Day Nursery. There are also a variety of health policies, procedures and documentation in place to support individual children's healthcare needs.
- Children have the opportunity to learn about good personal hygiene and self-care. There are mirrors and wash basins at child height and we heard staff encouraging children to wash hands after using the toilet. We also heard one member of staff encouraging a child to blow their own nose, put the tissue in the bin and wash their hands.
- At the time of the observation the setting was experiencing an outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease. Procedures were followed to protect the possible spread of infection, with all parents being notified and extra cleaning taking place.
- The manager was able to confidently describe the procedure in place for children who take medication, we saw a locked cabinet contained in the kitchen area to safely store medication and viewed written records of medicine administered to children.
- **The management team have excellent links in the community including staff from NHS Wales, Flying Start Health Visitors, etc. The Manager told us that supporting parents to be aware of any health risks and helping them to make healthy lifestyle choices was of great importance. Health resources are shared with parents and health professionals are invited to Fundays where they can, "...engage with parents and cement our health care messages".**
- Children are encouraged to be physically active, we saw children and babies taking part in action songs and rhymes and were told that money was raised through a 'Paw Patrol Stroll' around the nearby community.

Children benefit from good health being promoted at Once Upon a Time Day Nursery and parents are encouraged to learn and support their child to make the best healthcare choices.

PART C: SECTION 2.2 NURTURING CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

Children are supported to feel loved, safe and respected in an environment that is free from discrimination. We know this because:

- Children happily came into nursery and were welcomed by affectionate and loving staff. We saw staff nurturing children's personalities through positive interaction and role modelling. Reward charts are used and children were routinely praised throughout the observation, with staff making encouraging comments such as, 'Well done xxx' and 'Good job, so clever'.
- Excellent measures are in place to create a sense of identity and belonging. All children are treated equally and the resources viewed support children towards understanding diversity. Parents are encouraged to share information with staff about any events/visits/holidays that their child has recently experienced. Children have their own pegs and baskets containing spare clothes, nappy's, wetwipes, etc. They are also encouraged to self-register on arrival and 2 children are chosen as special helpers, 'Helpwr Yr Dydd' and a 'Busy Bee'. All these experiences provide perfect opportunities to build on meaningful conversations and include children.
- Staff understand the importance of routine and making children aware of what comes next. **We saw staff using pictured lanyards to help the babies understand it was dinner time and we heard staff asking the babies, "Can I pick you up?" and "Can I put you in your highchair?"**
- The transitioning periods are well managed when children start at the nursery and when they move from room to room. Planned 'settling in' sessions and visits support children to build positive attachments with new care givers and allows them to spend time in their new environment. **An effective transition policy is in place and covers all types of transitioning experiences children may need support with, such as: new siblings, death of a family member, moving home, etc.**
- **Children are given the time and space to express themselves. The manager told us, "We offer a safe space here, children are told it's ok to feel whatever they may be feeling".** Children have the opportunity to use a worry log (a

light up hand that children can touch and speak to) and they practice yoga and breathing techniques. The Deputy Manager explained how a child recently came into nursery feeling angry, all he wanted to do was breathe deeply, they breathed deeply together and then the child openly discussed what was troubling them.

Parents can be confident that children are cared for in an environment where staff's positive attitudes and approaches, support them to develop and nurture their self-esteem and well-being.

PART C: SECTION 2.3 FOOD, DRINK AND HEALTHY EATING

The food and drink that is offered to children promotes their health and wellbeing. We know this because:

- Once Upon a Time Day Nursery has a designated cook, we were told that only the 'cook' or 'owner' prepare the meals and snacks. *"All staff have Food Hygiene certificates because we wanted them to be able to cook with the children as an activity"*.
- Children are offered meals, snacks and drinks that are appropriate to the length of their stay and mealtimes take place in their designated 'play' rooms. All staff work together to provide a menu that considers a healthy nutritious and varied diet for the children in their care. We were told that when creating new menus, staff provide recipes from home, they reintroduce recipes that have worked well in the past, children's individual dietary needs are considered and when ready the menu is tested for a month and amended accordingly. Children plant vegetables and wherever possible they include these foods in the meals. The Owner explained we share the menus with parents and some parents have asked for the recipes so they can cook the same food at home. One parent told us, *"I really appreciate that my child is getting home cooked food, nothing is ever too much trouble for them"*.
- The setting has been awarded a food hygiene rating of 5, the kitchen where food is stored and prepared was clean and well-organised, temperatures are recorded and a list of allergens are displayed.
- We viewed a snack and lunch service. At snack time we saw the 2-3yr olds were offered the choice of milk or water and had crackers and pineapple, the children were encouraged to pour their own drinks and butter their own crackers. Staff sat with the children and encouraged good social interactions. There were no young babies in attendance during the observation, however, we saw an area where babies' bottles are prepared and were told quality time is spent holding the babies in a large comfy chair during feeding time. Children who are weaning have meals from the menu which are mashed or blended to suit their stage of development. Staff ask the parents for the child's routine and follow that as much as possible. We observed the older babies at lunch time, one child was sat at the table and behind them were 3 other children in highchairs. We suggest rearranging the layout to enable children to look at and engage with one another during lunch and snack times. Children were given a choice of which coloured spoon they wanted and were encouraged feed themselves Risotto. Water in beakers were offered to the children in highchairs and a water bottle to the child sitting at the table. We were told of the system in place of how staff introduce water bottles 3 months before children's 2nd birthday, children will then gradually progress to using small cups at snack times.
- Throughout the day all children have the opportunity to get themselves a drink of water. Each child has a labelled bottle, these are cleaned and refilled daily.

Parents can be confident their child is receiving care in a service where healthy eating is promoted by staff who are trained and knowledgeable about food hygiene and safety requirements.

PART C: SECTION 2.4 SLEEP AND REST MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE

Children benefit from sleep and rest arrangements that meet their individual needs. We know this because:

- Children and parents sleep preferences are respected at Once Upon a Time Day Nursery. Information on comforters and sleeping routines are collected before a child starts and updated as and when changes occur. **Photos and a description of what the child likes to help them to sleep are positioned on the wall in the babies sleep room.**
- We viewed the babies sleep room which had a calming and relaxing ambiance with curtains, soft furnishings and bunk bed cots. We were told if cots are full, the playroom also becomes a sleep area, using mats and blankets. We viewed samples of the sleep log that parents received via the communication App, and we were told that staff constantly monitor sleeping babies and that they are never left alone. Sleeping babies are also considered in the fire evacuation plan.
- Cushions and soft furnishings were supplied in the older children's rooms providing them with the opportunity to rest and relax. **We saw a well-equipped sensory room and were told how this calming environment is available for everyone to use.** We spoke about how displays can also be used to enhance a calming ambiance which could further help children to rest and relax.

Parents can be confident their child's wellbeing is supported by staff who understand their child's sleep needs and routines.

PART C: SECTION 3.1 THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN PRACTICE - INCLUDING ACTIVITIES AND PLANS

The opportunities for play and learning are provided for and delivered in a way that supports, encourages and stimulates children's development. We know this because:

- Resources are clean and in good repair. Grants awarded has improved the outdoor area with new flooring, an all weather sheltered area, seating and risk-taking equipment. Staff consult each other and work together to ensure all children have the opportunity to play and learn outside.
- Once Upon a Time Day Nursery operates an effective keyworker system. Following a training course on 'observations' staff now concentrate on making key observations on two children and results are recorded on post it notes, staff are given time to reflect and write up their observations in the children's 'Learning Journals' these show children's progress and next steps. We were told that if staff notice other children's achievements during this period, these will also be recorded and shared.
- Children's interests and ideas are gathered through discussions with children and parents, these are collected on a large piece of paper and included when enabling the play environments. We suggest using observations as an additional method of recording children's interests and ideas, for example: their behavioural traits and play patterns.
- Opportunities for play and learning are delivered by supporting adults, we viewed an interactive story time where children were encouraged to participate. Excellent Welsh was used during the story and we heard many staff use incidental Welsh throughout the observation of practice.
- Staff have effectively arranged and considered the layout in all the childcare rooms. Children can freely explore their environment and independently access resources. We saw places to relax, be creative, be physically active and places to investigate. The manager explained that "*We don't label areas anymore as we want children to be able to freely take toys into different spaces*". The management team are aware of the new curriculum and '*In the moment planning*' and are keen to start implementing aspects of it.

Children benefit from observant staff that support and record their development in an environment where the resources, toys and equipment encourage research and enquiry, independence and self-directed play.

PART C: SECTION 3.2 STAFF INTERACTION WITH PEERS, CHILDREN, PARENTS, AND OTHERS

Positive staff interactions support children to develop in a nurturing and playful learning environment. We know this because:

- There are policies and procedures in place that support staff to be well trained and professional individuals.
- We saw friendly exchanges between staff and parents and most parental feedback viewed, mentions how the communication App helps them to keep up to date and well informed of their children's time at Nursery. Both parents spoken too also expressed their gratitude towards the communication App used, "*We always get daily photos and an update on what they've been up to, it's really helped, especially when they first started*". **Progress Days are also offered as a way of keeping relationships with parents open, they take place on a Saturday and it's a chance for parents to ask any questions, view children's 'Learning Journals' and look around the setting.**
- We saw some excellent interactions between staff and children. Staff are patient and attentive, softly spoken and listen well to children. Children have the opportunity to learn about social relationships, they are supported to share resources and engage with/or alongside each other. They are confident in their surroundings, and some were happy to engage with us. Staff work well as team and are excellent role models; we heard staff use clear language and observed verbal and non-verbal ways of communication, it was clear that showing compassion and love to the children in their care was embedded practice.

Children benefit from being with responsive and enthusiastic adults who enjoy talking to them. Parents can be confident that staff and management at Once Upon a Time Day Nursery are caring professionals who work together to enrich their children's wellbeing, learning and play.

PART C: SECTION 3.3 WORKING WITH PARENTS AND OTHERS

Children's development and well-being are promoted in a service where staff work with parents and a range of external agencies to meet the needs of all children. We know this because:

- There are systems in place to ensure staff are well informed about each child's individual needs and preferences prior to their start at Once Upon a Time Day Nursery. Staff have meetings with parents to collect information, this information is shared with keyworker staff and if early intervention is needed or already in place, staff establish a working relationship with the relevant professionals and on occasion the keyworker may be asked to complete a report.
- Parents spoken to were very happy with the information they receive about their child and the setting. The communication App allows for time sensitive information to be inputted and shared with parents, staff record information in the App about children throughout the day such as snacks/meals eaten, toileting, nappy changing, relevant observations, etc.
- At the entrance we saw walls displaying helpful information for parents, including the menus and health information, staff members photos and names, children's keyworker groups, certificates and reports, a Policy and Procedure file, photos of past events and positive quotes from parents.
- Family fun days / trips / progress days are organised and well received. We were told about past experiences where positive interaction with adults who are not employed staff, enrich children's learning, such as the Fire and Police services, etc. Future plans include linking with 'Dogs Trust', raising money for the charity and inviting them into the nursery setting.
- **The setting has excellent links with the community and have started the process of working with a councilor to create a community space/garden that the nursery will be able to use. We were told they have also started building relationships with other nurseries in the area, this is a great way to share ideas and best practice.**

Parents can be confident that their child's needs are supported by a range of professionals in an environment where staff recognise the importance of involving parents and others in their child's learning and development.

PART C: SECTION 3.4 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT AND PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Plans for improvement are identified and acted on to offer the best possible experiences and opportunities for children and their families. We know this because:

- Once Upon a Time Day Nursery monitors their service well and management are proactive in taking part and implementing suggestions from external assessments.
- We viewed a detailed Quality of Care (QoC) Report which highlights current successful practice, a list of who contributed and the methods used, qualitative and quantitative findings from feedback and changes made to the service since their last review.
- Children have a voice and are listened to, "*Child satisfaction is usually assessed every day through observing play and listening to their ideas*", (QoC Report 2023). We were told how they are supported to contribute to future plans and saw a large piece of paper in each childcare group that detailed the children's ideas. We heard older children being asked how they feel during a circle time and saw emotion faces displayed in the other childcare rooms.
- Parents and staff's views are sought through a variety of methods. Management value their staff's opinions and have excellent communication links with parents. We saw a suggestion box and viewed a sample of the parental and staff questionnaires, which all contained very positive results. One staff member told us, "*We have weekly meetings and annual appraisals where I can make suggestions but there is also an open-door policy and I know I can talk to them at any time*". When a parent was asked whether they were given the opportunity to make a difference to the service and voice their opinions we were told, "*We have surveys that we are very happy to complete and know that if there was anything major, we could discuss this with any of the staff*". There are systems in place for dealing with complaints and parents spoken to know who to contact if they felt something wasn't right.

Parents can be confident that the care their child receives is based on excellent management systems that take account of reviews within the service and by external agencies.