



## Inspection Report

**Smarties**

**Mount Street Cp Infant & Nursery School  
Rhosferig Road  
Brecon  
LD3 7NG**



**Date Inspection Completed**

*29/09/2022*

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## About Smarties

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Powys County Council Child Care and Play Services
Registered places	38
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	12 July 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	<a href="#">Manual Insert]</a> No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	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.

<a href="#"><u>Well-being</u></a>	<b>Excellent</b>
<a href="#"><u>Care and Development</u></a>	<b>Excellent</b>
<a href="#"><u>Environment</u></a>	<b>Excellent</b>
<a href="#"><u>Leadership and Management</u></a>	<b>Good</b>

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

## **Summary**

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at Smarties. They enjoy a range of interesting opportunities indoors and outdoors which spark curiosity and engagement. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence.

Staff consistently implement policies and promote physical activities, personal safety and wellbeing. Staff positively praise children for perseverance and good behaviour. They are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities with an appropriate balance of child and adult led opportunities.

The environment has very good indoor play space for children to move freely. People who run the setting ensure that the outdoor play space is used as often as possible and is an extension to the learning environment. They provide stimulating and innovative resources for all ages and stages of development

People who run the setting have a strong vision that they share with others. There is a culture of continuous professional development which is modelled by leaders. People who run the setting have developed meaningful and positive relationships with parents and carers.

## Well-being

Excellent

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at Smarties and their happiness and voice is the driving force of this setting. Children are confident communicators. They engage with their friends, staff and some felt comfortable to chat to us. For instance, one child spoke about the robot they had just made and the difficulty experienced in attaching its eyes. Children's opinions and interests are highly valued, acted upon and continually reviewed. For example, the children voted for the story they most wanted to hear, and one child spoke at length about their interest in robots to a staff member.

Children cope extremely well with separation because efficient daily transitions fully recognise and support individual needs and are effectively implemented. They form positive emotional attachments with staff and each other. We saw them comfortably turn to staff for support. For instance, children who were playing with a doll asked for support when another child interrupted their game. Children are happy at this setting, we saw children smiling, laughing, and enjoying their time. When children were brought back from an activity in the hall, they looked full of pride as their return was greeted with enthusiasm by the staff. They have a strong sense of belonging and are very familiar with the routines of the setting. For instance, at tidy up times children knew where the resources were stored, and they knew the expectations of their behaviour when handling the pet rabbit.

Interactions between children and staff are consistently stimulating and children cooperate enthusiastically. We heard children chatter away to each other during the course of their play. Children interact excitedly with staff during their activities and are inspired and motivated to develop their creations as a result. Children express clear empathy and are sensitive to the needs of others. For example, when a child knocked down a tower of blocks, the children showed compassion to the child who had built the tower, helping them to rebuild it.

Children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. They enjoy a range of interesting opportunities indoors and outdoors which spark curiosity and engagement. They have the freedom to safely explore the indoor and outdoor environment. Children demonstrate resilience, focus, enjoyment and sustained thinking when engaged with activities. They are self-motivated to initiate their own play and to influence their tasks because there is a good balance of child and adult-led activities.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop independence. They are encouraged to take care of their belongings, finding their own hooks to hang up their coats and bags. They access their bags at snack time and choose who they would like to sit next to. Children confidently access resources and activities, and they are given opportunities to plan, develop and evaluate concepts which are of interest to them.

Staff consistently implement policies and promote physical activities, personal safety and wellbeing. Staff identify risk and are proactive and effective when managing this. They ensure that all children can access activities and resources throughout the setting. Staff also have an appreciation that managed risk taking is good for children's development. For example, we saw supervised children carefully balancing on outside balance beams and navigate steps independently. Staff have a thorough understanding of their role in protecting children and answered safeguarding questions confidently.

Staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive behaviour strategies. We heard staff positively praise children for perseverance and good behaviour. Staff use an array of behaviour management techniques including distraction and negotiation. For example, one child became upset at snack time and did not want her apple, the staff member patiently listened and suggested they find an alternative snack instead. Staff role model empathy when minor fallings out happen. We heard staff ask children to imagine how they would feel if that had happened to them, and this resulted in a compassionate and caring response from the children.

Staff are consistently responsive. They make every effort to genuinely listen and communicate with the children. We saw staff using sign language to ensure that all children were aware of the routines of the day and what was happening next. Interactions are positive, demonstrating warmth, kindness and patience. Staff take time to make sure that their interactions are meaningful and beneficial to the children in their care. This is a real strength of the setting.

Staff are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities with an appropriate balance of child and adult-led opportunities. Staff play alongside children looking for opportunities to extend learning and discussion. We saw staff share sustained thinking with children as they sought to find solutions at the construction table. Staff are quick to seize moments which children initiate and then motivate and inspire them to explore their curiosity and play. Staff involve children in the planning of activities and children provide the starting point and ideas on which planning evolves.

Staff recognise when children may have additional needs. They take purposeful action and make effective use of the support available. Staff provide tailored, considered and patient care. They ensure that children are supported in the creation of a space in which they can play.

## Environment

Excellent

People who run the setting have comprehensive policies in place and ensure that the environment is suitably safe, secure and well maintained. Staff complete effective and accurate general risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed. Regular fire drills are completed. Consistent cleaning routines result in a clean and pleasant indoor environment. Effective infection control practices successfully minimise any risk to children's health and safety.

People who run the setting ensure the environment has very good indoor play space for children to move freely. They ensure the environment meets the children's needs and enables them to reach their full potential. For example, on the morning of our visit the area had been carefully rearranged to consider the best use of space for children with additional needs. People who run the setting ensure that the outdoor play space is used as often as possible and is an extension to the learning environment. Careful consideration and planning of outside areas, as well as extensive resources and play equipment, challenge and stimulate children's curiosity and interest. For example, the wooden climbing area was exciting, and children challenged themselves to cross the balance beams. The gardening area encourages children to try foods which they have grown. People who run the setting provide children with access to a range of areas which promote play and learning. For example, a construction area, mud kitchen, forest school area and water play area. Children influence and contribute to the planning and development of these areas. For example, one child wanted curtains and cushions to be added to the outside 'cwtch' area and this was quickly done. Parents told us, *'They get lots of outside time including forest school – he thoroughly enjoys.'* One child told us that they were very happy at the setting and particularly liked the pirate ship.

People who run the setting provide a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources to ensure children have good variety and choice. They provide stimulating and innovative resources for all ages and stages of development, which contribute to the children's all-round development. For example, through construction play, sensory activities, small world and creative activities. Children can access toys and resources easily, as they are stored at low level or within their reach. People who run the setting are committed to providing stimulating resources to promote children's curiosity about the wider society, celebrating equality and cultural awareness. A cultural area celebrates the diversity of the children who attend the setting and seeks to support children in their understanding of the world and where their friends come from.

## Leadership and Management

Good

People who run the setting have a strong vision that they share with others. Children and staff create a 'Vision Soup' which is a collection of agreed values which the setting works towards. Photographs are used to exemplify each value making it an accessible document for all. 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. They ensure that the required records are accurately kept and acted quickly to implement improvements to systems highlighted during the course of this inspection. For example, adding signs and symptoms to the allergy checklist. People who run the setting engage positively with Care Inspectorate Wales and are keen to drive improvement.

People who run the setting set high expectations and lead by example. They implement current best practice relevant to the children in their care. Their sound understanding and awareness of the new curriculum has resulted in a positive impact on the children's play and learning. The people who run the setting demonstrate a passion and drive to deliver high standards for the children who attend. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities to promote the Welsh language. People who run the setting actively implement self-evaluation. They produce a thorough and reflective quality of care report seeking and implementing the views of children, parents and staff.

Leaders follow timely and robust recruitment processes to safeguard children. They have good systems in place to update suitability checks as required. At the time of our visit staff suitability records were not held at the setting. This has been swiftly rectified following our visit and duplicate records are now available at the setting for inspection. The performance management process is good and regular supervisions, appraisals and team meetings are held. There is a culture of continuous professional development which is modelled by leaders.

People who run the setting have developed meaningful and positive relationships with parents and carers. There are excellent systems in place to keep parents well informed about their child's time at the setting. Parents told us, *'Lovely setting which is welcoming and very approachable. My child loves it so much he's upset on the days he doesn't go!'* The people who run the setting have positive relationships with a range of professionals, the community and other stakeholders.



**Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards**

None

### Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
<b>New</b>	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
<b>Reviewed</b>	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.
<b>Not Achieved</b>	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
<b>Achieved</b>	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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Ratings	What the ratings mean
<b>Excellent</b>	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.
<b>Good</b>	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.
<b>Adequate</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b>	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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