Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Willows Day Care Brecon

Bishop Bevan Hall, 11 Lion Street, Brecon, LD3 7HY

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www.willowsbrecon.co.uk

The inspection visit took place on 29/01/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Willows Day Care Brecon Ltd
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	30
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to make meaningful choices about their play and daily experiences. They are happy, settled and clearly enjoy their time at the setting. Children feel safe and secure in the care of responsive staff who know them well and respond sensitively to their individual needs. They benefit from stimulating opportunities for play and learning, which effectively promote their independence and overall development.

Staff are professional, appropriately qualified and motivated in their roles. They demonstrate a sound understanding of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and promoting their health and well-being. Interactions between staff and children are warm, patient and nurturing, fostering positive relationships. Practitioners support children's learning effectively through a broad range of activities that reflect children's interests and developmental stages.

The environment is secure, clean and well maintained. A suitable range of toys, equipment and

resources supports children's play and learning. The layout of the premises has been thoughtfully arranged to provide an inviting, stimulating and child-centred space.

Leaders have established a clear vision for the service, which is shared effectively with staff. There are systems in place to review and monitor the quality of care provided, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement. Staff report feeling valued and supported in their roles. Arrangements for staff appraisals are in place to support professional development and reflective practice. However, leaders should ensure that formal supervision meetings are consistently recorded and held at appropriate intervals to strengthen oversight and further promote high standards of practice. Positive partnerships have been developed with parents and relevant external agencies, supporting a collaborative approach to meeting children's needs.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children are provided with opportunities to make decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. They confidently select resources and move freely between areas, transporting toys and materials to enhance and extend their play. Children make meaningful choices throughout the day. For example, we observed children independently selecting stories they wished to read. Children of all ages and developmental stages express themselves confidently. Staff show genuine interest in children's ideas and play, and children's voices are clearly embedded within the planning of future activities.

Children are very happy, settled and confident in the setting. They separate from their parents and carers with ease and form secure, positive attachments with staff who know them well. Younger children readily seek reassurance and comfort when needed, and staff respond warmly and appropriately. Across the setting, children confidently approach staff for support and eagerly involve them in their play.

Children play co-operatively in line with their age and stage of development. They are developing friendships and engage positively with one another, including chatting happily together during mealtimes. Older children demonstrate self-discipline and an understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show respect for others and take care of resources within the setting. Younger children are supported effectively by staff to learn turn-taking and sharing skills.

Children are motivated and purposefully engaged in their play and learning. They benefit from a broad range of stimulating experiences. There is an effective balance between child-initiated and adult-led experiences, enabling children to explore their interests while also benefiting from structured learning opportunities.

Children are supported well to develop independence skills. Children feed themselves confidently and access drinks independently. They are encouraged to put on coats and shoes independently, fostering self-help skills and confidence.

Care & Development — Good

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and healthy. Mandatory training, including paediatric first aid, food hygiene and safeguarding, is up to date. Safeguarding is clearly prioritised, and leaders have systems in place to regularly refresh and test staff knowledge to ensure ongoing awareness of child protection procedures.

Health and hygiene practices are embedded effectively within daily routines. Children benefit from regular opportunities to play and learn outdoors, supporting their physical development and well-being. Nutritious, home-cooked meals are prepared on site using fresh, seasonal ingredients. Mealtimes are calm, social occasions where staff sit with children, modelling positive attitudes towards food. Children were observed eating enthusiastically while enjoying conversation with peers and adults. Staff are patient and sensitive, providing gentle encouragement to children who are less confident trying new foods. Robust systems are in place to manage allergies and intolerances safely.

Accidents and incidents are recorded appropriately and shared with parents. Leaders review records regularly to identify any patterns or trends, demonstrating effective oversight. Clear policies and procedures are in place, and staff understand and follow these consistently.

Staff manage behaviour effectively, using warm, patient and nurturing approaches. Positive language is used frequently to encourage children, and gentle reminders support children in learning to share, take turns and treat others with kindness. Staff interactions promote a calm, cheerful atmosphere, fostering a sense of security and belonging throughout the setting.

Children's learning and development are supported well. Staff complete regular observations to monitor progress and plan appropriate next steps. Practitioners skilfully extend children's learning through meaningful conversations and responsive interactions during play. Staff know children well and adapt care and learning experiences to meet individual needs.

Environment — Good

The premises are secure and well maintained. Leaders and staff ensure the main entrance is monitored effectively, and access to the setting is appropriately controlled. Required safety checks and certification for the building, fire safety equipment and electrical appliances are in place and up to date. The setting is appropriately registered with the local authority's food safety department. A comprehensive range of risk assessments supports the safe operation of the service, and these are reviewed regularly. Fire drills are undertaken with staff and children to ensure all are familiar with evacuation procedures.

The environment is bright, welcoming and child centred, providing a relaxed and homely atmosphere. Rooms are thoughtfully arranged to stimulate children's curiosity and promote exploration and development. A broad range of purposeful resources and books is available, with most items easily accessible to children to encourage independence and self-selection. The outdoor area has been somewhat developed to provide a space that supports children's choice and active learning. It was discussed during the inspection that there are plans in place to further develop the outdoor space.

Displays throughout the setting, including photographs of children participating in activities and examples of their artwork, promote children's sense of belonging and achievement. Leaders extend children's learning beyond the setting through visits to local community spaces such as parks and the library, enhancing children's experiences and connection with the local area.

Toys, furniture and equipment are in good condition, well maintained and subject to regular safety checks. A wide variety of resources ensures that children of all ages and interests are well supported. Child-sized furniture and low-level storage units promote independence and enable children to access resources safely. Suitable toilet and nappy changing facilities are available to meet the needs of the children attending.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are experienced, and prioritise creating a warm, caring, home-from-home environment for children. This vision is clearly shared with staff, contributing to a consistently positive ethos across the setting. A clear and up-to-date statement of purpose supports parents and carers in making informed decisions about whether the setting is suitable for their child. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly to ensure current best practice is reflected.

Leaders undertake regular self-evaluation and plan effectively for ongoing improvements. Systems are in place to gather feedback from children, parents and staff, and this information is used to inform the annual Quality of Care report. This process is meaningful and drives improvements across the service.

Recruitment and staff management processes are thorough. Staff files are complete, and relevant checks are undertaken to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff report feeling valued, supported, and well equipped to deliver high-quality care. Leaders provide appraisals, and records of these meetings demonstrate meaningful discussions that support professional development and good practice. However, there was no evidence of regular formal staff supervision meetings. This limits opportunities for reflective discussion, monitoring of practice, and oversight of staff performance, Outcomes for children/people require improvement because supervision sessions are not completed regularly and we expect the provider to make improvements.

Leaders and staff have built very positive relationships with parents and carers, who provided highly complimentary feedback about the care provided. Parents highlighted how happy their children are to attend and the attentive, caring nature of the staff. Leaders have started to establish community partnerships to enrich the experiences offered to children.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
The inspection identified shortfalls in the provider's arrangements for staff supervision. Records evidenced that formal supervisions were not conducted consistently or at the frequency outlined in the service's own policies and regulatory requirements. This limits management oversight and reduces opportunities to monitor staff performance, practice, safeguarding awareness, and professional development.	29/01/26

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

National Minimum Standards

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.

Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

Best Practice

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.

Recommendation(s)
To continue improving the outside space

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