

Chuckles Nursery

Parent Quality of Care Review

August 2019-August 2020

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Key RI – Registered Person – Nursery Owner – Lisa Owen PIC – Person In Charge – Nursery Manager – Amy Baugh

The purpose of this report is to provide information to parents and users of Chuckles Nursery on how we have performed and improved over the past year. At Chuckles we aim to provide parents with childcare that is of a high quality and makes children feel safe and secure and we believe this can only be achieved by continually reviewing what we do and taking onboard feedback from parents, children, team members and other professionals. We have a committed and enthusiastic team who are able to review and adapt both their own practices and the nursery policies and procedures to ensure that we are always striving to deliver not just the minimum standards but also provide areas of best practice.

Our Mission Statement

We offer a unique healthy, nurturing childcare experience, where every day is an adventure

Our Core Values

To create an extended happy family through a healthy lifestyle and exciting experiences

Chuckles Nursery opened its doors on the 8th November 1999, and this year we held a 20th anniversary celebration to show how much we have grown over those 20 years and also to recognise the hard work of our team and the strong family support and good relationships with our parents, children and other professionals past and present.

A review of the year

Well this has certainly been a year like no other, little did we know that many of the plans we had for 2020 would suddenly have to be put on hold and that we would have to face challenges like we have never encountered before, and through these challenging times we would discover that as a nursery we are able to adapt and create positive things even under the toughest of circumstances.

So, let us first begin with the end of summer 2019 (which suddenly feels like a very long time ago!). We continued to look at our nursery spaces and over the summer we made further changes to our pre-school areas, we decided to scale back the amount of areas that were pre-set in the rooms and allow the children greater control over resources they needed to support their learning. Maths and writing areas were taken away and resources were integrated throughout other areas instead for example clipboards and pens in the block area, shape and number cutters within the malleable areas and different sized and shaped resources in the loose parts. Creative resources were made more accessible with new storage units and pots, paints were put into dispensers for the children to help themselves when they wanted to paint, and large tubs of loose parts and junk modelling materials were created. Tables within the creative area are left empty at the start of the session except for learning prompts such as pictures/resources relating to the topic and children are encouraged to decide what they would like to do that session i.e. paint, collaging, junk modelling. Once the children have finished their activity, they now have to clear their area so that other can choose different resources and this has seen children taking a far greater responsibility for tidying and cleaning resources such as paint pots and brushes. Decluttering areas, making colours neutral and changing the layout of the room has had a positive effect on the children, we have seen increased independence, session becoming calmer and children increasing their independence skills.

We then started to use this same ethos within our younger children's rooms. Displays became less colourful and careful consideration was given to the value of resources we are using with more loose parts, natural materials and sensory items being used instead of one dimensional and plastic resources. Our toddler teams created new language boards to reflect these changes and team members put new plans and routines in place to allow children more time to explore, be creative and be independent.

In September 19 we repainted our kitchen area to give it a fresh new look and our stairs and landing areas. We also purchased equipment (mainly china crockery) to further develop mealtimes to encourage toddlers to be able to serve themselves ready for transition to preschool and for breakfast to be self-served. The children very quickly adjusted to this new way of doing mealtimes and were confident in serving themselves after just a couple of weeks.

In September 19 we were also asked to take part in Early Years Wales' network event "Bringing a fresh perspective to Early Childhood Education and Care". We did a presentation and carried out a practical workshop to show settings from across Wales how we have engaged with our families through our "Healthy eating with Chuckles workshops". Resources from the workshop were shared with settings and the nursery and the work we have been doing around health eating also featured in Early years Wales' Small Talk publication which goes out to nurseries and playgroups right across Wales.

In October 19 we decided to employ an administrator to help with all the day to day paperwork that we need to stay on top of which then allowed the Nursery Manager to spend more time on the nursery floor supporting our team and carrying out training.

In November we celebrated our 20th birthday with a community event that welcomed both new and old Chuckles family members as well as local businesses and partners to join us to celebrate. The day was a great success and it was lovely to see so many families enjoying magic shows, face painting, soft play, arts and crafts as well as doing some shopping and treating themselves to some delicious sweet treats!

Developing our staff has remained a priority this year, in September 2019, we joined Noodle Now which is a company that provides on-line training. Each team member has their own account and the Manager can see what training they have accessed and how they did. Apart from mandatory training they are encouraged to complete 1 course every three months to further their Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Noodle Now has over 50 courses ranging from subjects such as Children's Mental Health, Motivating Boys, Outdoor Provision. We have a list of which courses should be accessed first which are appropriate to their role and then it is left to their choice. This really came in handy when some of the team were on furlough as they had plenty of time to improve.

Team members have also attend training courses in order to implement new ideas and practices within the Nursery some of the additional CPD course completed this year are:

- Sign Language
- Healthy Eating
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Play to Learn (all about how to develop physical and active play)
- Busy feet (developing play through music and movement)
- ICT
- "Science is fun" Workshops

Examples of good practices that have been implemented within the nursery as a result of training include putting in place a set visual support cards to help children with communication difficulties, developing new areas within our pre-school room to give the children opportunities to use more loose parts and carry out investigations as part of their learning and also adapting our current planning to include elements from the new curriculum that is due to be implemented.

We also feel that having a good team that supports each other is just as important as training so this year we put in place a few little added extras to provide an environment that they are happy to work in and where we can we try to provide small touches to show they are appreciated. We have cake day on the last Friday of the month, an extra day's holiday at Christmas to do their shopping and once a week some of the team attend a dance fitness class which the Nursery pays for.

We continued to build parental links through the Autumn term and for the first part of the spring term with parents attending workshops for Seize the season, sports, healthy eating and new for this year woodwork. We had some excellent feedback from parents after the workshops

"Love to attend the workshops, always excited to participate" , "Loved being able to see what _____ has been doing in nursery" , "So much fun, really enjoyed it, the instructor and staff were amazing" "it was great to come in and see what _____ has been doing" "I really enjoyed spending time with _____ in nursery and seeing how much she enjoyed doing the woodwork" "Woodwork is a great idea for the children, I would definitely come again – really enjoyed"

The Nursery also sponsors local sports teams to encourage children into sport ie Cricket, Rugby and Football.

In November 19 we had our Healthy, Sustainable Pre-school Award accreditation which we passed with no recommendations to action.

In December 19 we started on another big change to our nursery environment, the building of an extension to increase the size of our pre-school rooms and increase our overall registration numbers to 70 places. After a few delays we finished the building work at the end of June 2020 and then our pre-school team spent the summer putting all the finishing touches in place to create "Y Cuddfen". Areas have been designed using the 4 seasons as theme's and displays have been created to engage the children and to display their work.

In March 2020 we had an inspection carried out by CIW, during this inspection our team was praised for their excellent knowledge of our safeguarding procedures and their quality interactions with the children. We receive ratings following our inspection in 4 key areas and we are pleased to say we received a rating of excellent for Leadership and Management and Good for both Wellbeing and Care and development. Our final rating was for our environment and we were disappointed to receive an adequate rating due to work that was being carried out in our upstairs toddler areas and also the work still being carried out on the extension due to the unavoidable delays. This work has now been completed and we are confident in saying that our environment is now back to the excellent standard that we have maintained over the years and we have on many occasions shared with others as an example of good practice.

In March 2020 we were suddenly thrown into a world like none of us had ever experienced before as we went into a full country wide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, like many nurseries we were faced with the possibility of having to close our doors to our families without any idea as to when they would be able to re-open. When we were given the confirmation that we could remain open for our key worker parents our first thought was to consult our team about how they felt about the prospect of continuing to work whilst the country was being told to stay home to stay safe. It was at this point we realised just how strong Team Chuckles really were, their first thought was not for their own safety but for our families and how they could play their part in supporting them to continue to work. Once the decision to remain open was made we set about trying to make sure that we provided a safe but caring environment for the children attending. Not wanting to forget about the children that couldn't attend we set up our Chuckles Live Facebook page. Although reluctant at first it didn't take our team long to fully embrace their new role as social media stars. We used our Chuckles Live page to stream a circle time session each morning and two further activities throughout the day for families to join in with and we also shared activity ideas that parents could try at home.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we had to make several changes to our procedures to ensure the safety of our children, parents, and staff. Social distancing measures were put in place within the entrance areas, staff room and also on the nursery floor for staff members and

children were placed into small consistent “bubbles” in order to minimise contact between groups of children, additional handwashing stations were also built for each of the nursery areas and outdoors.

When putting in these new procedures the wellbeing of the children was always our main priority and we tried to keep the nursery environment and routines as normal as possible for the children. Our team continued to plan and carry out a range of activities for the children to enjoy and we also spent lots of time outdoors enjoying the sunshine and exploring our garden areas. Our pre-school team even managed, despite the challenges to put together a graduation ceremony for the 16 children that we had managed to keep together throughout the pandemic. They also made sure that they included the children who were unable to attend by preparing and sending home packs for them and saying Goodbye to them all in the Graduation speech. As parents could not attend the graduation, we recorded it and then shared it onto our Facebook page so that it could then be shared with their family and friends. This is now something we are going to continue to do as parents loved being able to share this special moment with family members around the world.

During this time we also managed to make some further improvements to our nursery environment, our decking area got a new weatherproof covering so that our younger children will stay dry once the wet weather returns and it also now gives them a space to sleep outdoors. We trialled this during lockdown by purchasing a large gazebo and found that the children were going off to sleep better and sleeping for longer when outdoors, so it is now something that we are going to continue to do.

Upstairs our older toddler team created a magical fairy woodland for the toddlers to enjoy with a fairy garden small world area and ramp leading to a cosy cave. They also thought about the resources that the toddlers enjoyed using most and made areas specifically for these to be used in, they started with areas for construction, playdough, kitchen equipment and sand/water and then later added in a larger role play area that included a cosy area to sit in with the dolls, dolls equipment and dressing up clothes. They also made sure that they kept the Welsh language element of this room in place by creating displays using Welsh language and putting language prompts in all areas.

Our outdoor areas also got a makeover, new signs were put up on the bike track to let the children know where to park their bikes, all of our wooden furniture and equipment was sanded down and re-stained, a musical wall and new water area was created on the patio, all of our walls were given a fresh coat of paint and the children helped our pre-school design a new small walled area – it certainly was a busy summer for us all.

New equipment/resources purchased

- New extension built – furniture purchased, new flooring, resources to create new areas.
- Range of new ICT equipment purchased including microscopes, a listening station, stop watches, recordable clipboards, and new tablets.
- Resources were purchased to create busy boards
- Sport equipment including balancing beams, a range of different balls, an obstacle course and hoops

- Forest school equipment
- Solar panels were fitted to allow us to save on electric costs and also to make the nursery more environmentally friendly

Consultation with our children

We have continued to use a number of different methods to gain feedback from our children this year and throughout the day team members ensure there are plenty of opportunities for all children to make choices and decisions about things that affect them such as the types of activities they would like to do, snacks and routines.

Methods used:

- Nursery rules are discussed and then devised by the children so all children understand what they are
- Children actively involved in making decisions on equipment to be purchased
- Observations carried out daily help us to identify the types of activities and resources the children are enjoying and then make changes if needed so that the children remain engaged
- Children have an input in changing menus e.g. children are asked for their ideas on what to include in new menus with most children able to come up with meal ideas and staff observe what different foods the children were or were not eating and menus are changed as a result of this.
- Children's questionnaires are completed with toddler and pre-school children each month
- Team members ensure any planned activities and experiences throughout the week follow the children's interests and build on knowledge they have learnt in previous weeks and children's feedback is used in observations and evaluations of activities/topics and resources
- Using happy and sad faces at circle time to let us know how they are feeling
- In the baby room they carry out observations of how the children are and play using the ITERS tool and this gives us feedback to what they like and don't like

This year we also introduced some new ways of getting the children's feedback:

- Our pre-school created a "Our day, our way" diary to record daily feedback from the children about their day i.e. what they liked/disliked, favourite areas/resources etc, action points were added and implemented based on what the children said.
- We also changed the format of our children's questionnaires to ask more open-ended questions which allowed us to better evaluate the impact of changes we had put in place.

Examples of feedback from children and actions taken

Some of the children highlighted that they didn't like to use the block area as it was too loud so we put a rug into the area to absorb some of the sound, after doing this we found that the area was used more frequently by a wider range of children

"The kitchen is too messy and I don't like to play in there" – We looked at our pre-school kitchen area and decided to remove the equipment that the children were not using such as the plastic plates and cups as there were large amounts of it, we replaced them with real plates/cups and added in food packaging, real baking trays and large utensils. We also added a clock, tea towels and recipe books, we found after making these changes the children were far more engaged in the area.

Our baby team noticed that the babies were not using the bottom area of the room as much and were not interested in the equipment they had out for them. They redesigned the area and added grass to the floor and textured animals to the walls for the children to look at and feel. The resource boxes were removed and replaced with treasure baskets for the babies to explore independently and a new busy board was put onto the side wall for them to play with. Observations carried out once they had finished showed the babies were using the area more spending more time there than before.

Parent Consultation

Each month we have a question of the month on our notice board and in the newsletter for parents to respond to via email – we are very grateful to parents who take the time to provide us with valuable feedback and positive or negative comments are always gratefully received as they ensure our practices and standards are continually improved and that praise can be given where deserved.

We also continued to communicate with parents via

- newsletters that go out each month and are published on our website
- the notice board at the entrance to the Nursery
- our website
- Nursery Facebook page (Chuckles Nursery Newport)

Responses and action from questionnaires:

We received very positive responses for the question asked with over 95% of parents being Very Happy or Happy with our policies and procedures and no responses for unhappy/very unhappy.

How happy are you with the range of activities your child takes part in? – “I absolutely love how many activities _____ is involved in, he always comes home each day doing something different, we as parents always appreciate that Rowan is involved in events e.g. Valentines, Christmas etc. We are genuinely happy with the level of activities he has each day – he gives us ideas to do at home and he always spends the evening talking about what he did”

A parent suggested getting involved in recycling/environment days so this year we celebrated Earth day and made recycling part of the children’s daily routine. We have also started to use a lot more recycled products in the nursery for junk modeling, glass jars to store paints/resources and household items to make treasure boxes.

How happy are you with the new menus? “I am really happy with the meal as it is freshly cooked and served and a good variety”

After our parent workshops we sent out evaluation forms and received positive feedback from all workshops, we also asked parents to leave feedback on our Nursery.Co.uk profile for other parents to see and we were overwhelmed by the responses we received:

Team Consultation

Comments and feedback from our team is very important to us, supervisions are carried out every term and team members can also request additional meetings if needed, during meeting team members can discuss what has been going well, any problems with their work load and also concerns about any of the children in their care, they also allow team to share with us their achievements and plans for improvement which could then be put into the nursery plans. All the management team are hands on and are approachable daily so the team and parents can exchange ideas/requests at any time. Appraisals are carried out in June and team members provide us with new ideas for training that they would like to take part in and evaluate their job roles.

Other Organizations Consultation

Our Chuckles Facebook page allows us to engage with the local community, we share information about community events through the page for parents to see. We have regular contact with the local community hub and let parents know of events they are putting on.

Professional questionnaires are given to visitors to the setting to enable them to give us feedback on our tea and the nursery including how welcoming we are and also how good we are at taking on board advice and putting in place actions.

What we are currently working on implementing into the nursery....

- Two new outdoor rooms in garden areas to allow children to spend longer lengths of time outdoors and stay warm/dry
- Create a new Staff Induction process based on the new induction produced by Social Care Wales
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How we graded ourselves

As part of the process of creating a Quality of Care Review we have to grade ourselves against the following areas:

Wellbeing; Care and Development; Environment and Leadership and Management. The grades are

Poor These are services where important areas for improvements outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's 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.

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.

Excellent: These are services with many strengths that are committed to ongoing improvement, 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.

We have graded ourselves Good in all areas.

Follow up on last years areas to address – all completed

- Next term we will focus the first few weeks on showing the children where items go and the importance of putting things back when used
- Look at how we currently carry out preschool children's questionnaire and change format to ask more open-ended questions and better evaluate impact
- Further develop mealtimes to encourage toddlers to be able to serve themselves ready for transition to preschool.

Plans for next year

- Start the new induction programme with all members of the team.
- Implement our own in-house Welsh training programme so all members of the team speak more Welsh
- More training into how rooms are developed using different displays and activities.