



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Little Learning Tree**

**Llandinam CP School  
Llandinam  
Powys  
SY17 5BY**

**Date of inspection: October 2024**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and  
Training in Wales**

## About Little Learning Tree

Name of setting	Little Learning Tree
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Powys County Council Child Care and Play Services.
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Jean Carter and Megan Higgs
Person in charge	Sian Lucas Jones and Hazel Cadman
Number of places	16
Age range of children	2 to 5 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	7
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 9:00 – 3:00 Term time
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	16/09/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	N/A
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	22/10/2024
The setting is English medium and all the children have English first language.	

## Summary

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Well-being</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Learning</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	
<b>Care and development</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and assessment</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Good</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## Non-compliance

**No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.**

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve practitioners' use of Welsh in order to develop children's understanding
- R2 Develop opportunities for children to have free flow access to the outdoor learning area
- R3 Make greater use of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning and development

## What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### **Well-being: Good**

Children's well-being is at the heart of the setting. Children are confident when separating from their parents, settling well as they enthusiastically get involved in an activity when they arrive. They are happy and show they are relaxed and confident in their surroundings as they are keen to talk to others and invite them into their play. Children form positive relationships with practitioners and with regular visitors, greeting people as they arrive and wanting to talk and share their experiences. Children gain a sense of pride and develop their self-esteem as they enjoy the activities and want to show others what they have done.

Nearly all children have a strong voice and make effective choices and decisions about how they spend their time. They move around most of the environment, freely choosing where and with what they want to play. Children are confident to communicate and ask for things they want, knowing that they will be responded to with care and interest by practitioners. Children's interests are always considered by practitioners when planning activities and providing resources, resulting in children having access to inviting opportunities and experiences.

Nearly all children interact well and play confidently alongside others, showing their characters and personalities. They learn to be respectful and begin to share and take turns with only a little support from practitioners. For example, they are learning to understand they may have to wait for their turn to go on a particular piece of

equipment. Nearly all children follow routines and respond well to instructions, for example helping to tidy up when asked and knowing to sit at the table at snack and lunch time.

Children enjoy their play and, as a result, nearly all children engage with activities successfully. They engage well as they follow their interests and have exciting and inviting opportunities to play. For example, they find the right pieces to complete the track for the train's journey. Children have effective opportunities to play independently and can choose to take part in appropriate adult led activities. For example, they enjoyed measuring what was needed to make play dough.

Children are confident to try and do things for themselves including accessing the different areas of learning and toilet facilities independently. They develop effective self-help skills as they hang their coats up on arrival and attempt to put their waterproofs and wellies on before going outside. Children move around the environment independently, choosing resources to play with and items to enhance their play experiences, for example when finding a magnifying glass to look around the room and find more of the pretend ice cubes to put in their drink.

**Learning (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):**

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three- or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

**Care and development: Good**

Practitioners understand their role in keeping children safe and secure, implementing the setting's effective policies and procedures well. Practitioners fully understand the child protection policy and the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Practitioners record attendance, accident and incidents and the administration of medication successfully, ensuring parents are kept informed of appropriate information. Practitioners practise fire drills regularly, so they and the children are aware of the procedure to follow in an emergency.

Practitioners promote and support children to lead a healthy lifestyle. For example, they only provide milk or water for children to drink. Good hygiene practices and routines are embedded, including tables being wiped and handwashing completed at appropriate times. Practitioners ensure children are provided with daily opportunities and experiences that allow them to be active in the fresh air. Children have access to the outdoors and a variety of physical activities and resources including bikes and slides.

Practitioners have a warm and caring manner with the children. They are good role models and their interactions teach children to be polite and respectful. Practitioners provide valuable sociable experiences for the children. They sit with them at snack time and have lunch together, giving children and practitioners a chance to chat about their day and talk about what they want to do. This supports children to develop their speech, language and communication skills in a relaxed and

comfortable atmosphere. Practitioners implement effective behaviour strategies. They support and encourage children to follow the rules and behave appropriately. Practitioners speak with the children using language that is appropriate for their age and stage of development. They encourage children to share in a calm and friendly manner, diffusing any situation and stopping it from escalating. Practitioners implement routines to help children feel relaxed and understand what will happen next. For example, children know that following circle time it will be time for snack, and they should go and wash their hands.

Practitioners provide a good range of resources and activities that support and inspire children to play and learn. They arrange exciting opportunities for children in the areas of learning, both indoors and in outdoor areas such as the forest school and woodwork space. Practitioners are supportive in ensuring children have experiences that help them to develop a range of skills, resulting in creative pieces of work the children are proud of. Practitioners have appropriate procedures in place to record children's progress and identify next steps in learning. They have adopted an approach to planning that ensures children's interests are considered effectively. Practitioners get to know the children well and successfully identify individual children's needs, including those with additional learning needs (ALN). Routines, planning and support are successfully tailored so that they meet the needs of all children.

**Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good**

Practitioners have a beneficial understanding of how young children learn through play and exploration. They plan a wide range of stimulating activities that promote children's natural curiosity well. Practitioners consider children's interests, stages of development and learning styles carefully. They make regular observations of children to identify their needs and note activities that engage them effectively. For example, they have developed a range of role play scenarios after noticing children enjoy the kitchen area where they used their imaginations to play different roles.

Practitioners are effective role models. They show children how to use resources appropriately, such as scooping out the centre of pumpkins using spoons and rolling coloured dough into balls. Practitioners introduce children to new vocabulary during their play well. For example, they discuss the noise marbles make as they roll down a marble run and describe the texture of different materials. Practitioners ask questions to extend children's thinking and problem-solving skills successfully. They discuss how children could make a longer train track and how best to stick bottle tops onto their woodworking projects.

Practitioners encourage children to respond to simple questions and instructions to and express their views and opinions, such as discussing what they have for lunch and chatting about birthday parties. Practitioners provide cosy and attractive reading areas where children relax and share books and stories alone or with friends. Practitioners add books to other areas of provision, which promotes children's interest in stories and non-fiction texts well. For example, there are recipe books and a calendar in the role play kitchen. There are valuable opportunities for children to engage in a range of mark making activities, such as painting pumpkins and writing their names on their drawings.

Practitioners support children to develop their Welsh language skills through greetings, asking simple questions, and singing songs and rhymes during whole group sessions. However, practitioners do not use Welsh phrases and vocabulary frequently during the children's play.

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to learn about Welsh culture and traditions. They celebrate St David's Day, cook, and eat food such as Bara brith and cheese and leek muffins. There are images of the Welsh countryside, flag, and emblems on display in the setting.

Practitioners promote children's numeracy skills well, such matching marbles to numerals on cards and counting different amounts of ingredients to make dough. They sing number songs with children and encourage them to count forwards and backwards and promote mathematical language effectively. For example, they talk about full cups of flour and make buildings using magnetic shapes.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to be physically active, such as going up and down slides and running outdoors. There are worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills, such as pouring their own drinks and using brushes and combs in the hairdressing area.

Practitioners support the development of children's spiritual, moral and cultural development well. They foster a sense of awe and wonder in the natural world successfully. For example, children enjoy looking for a robin that regularly visits the outdoor area at the setting. There are opportunities to grow fruit and vegetables in a greenhouse and observe seasonal changes. Practitioners provide interesting activities for children, such as making collages with the natural materials around them, exploring how things roll down a grassy bank and making homes for dinosaurs. This aspect is a strength of the setting.

Practitioners ensure that children develop an understanding of faiths that may be different from their own. For example, practitioners provide a range of musical instruments, books and images to promote the children's awareness of festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

The setting's procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress are effective and practitioners carry out regular and useful observations of children's play. They use the information to identify next steps in learning effectively.

Practitioners provide parents and carers with regular, useful summaries of their child's progress and well-being.

Practitioners provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop their digital skills. For example, they provide suitable equipment such as child friendly keyboards and children enjoyed driving their toy trains over the bridge as it lit up and made train noises.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe and secure. Registers are completed and visitors are recorded. Entry to the setting is controlled and there is no unauthorised access, so all persons on the premises can be accounted for.

Practitioners are aware of the setting's health and safety procedures and implement them diligently. For example, they complete and update risk assessments to manage any potential hazards. Daily checks to the environment are completed before the children arrive so practitioners can be assured no new hazards have arisen.

Leaders provide a stimulating learning environment with plenty of space for children to play and learn. All areas are well maintained and clean. There is appropriate room for children to move around the setting safely and freely. Leaders have successfully created an environment where children and visitors feel comfortable and relaxed. The design and layout of the indoor room promotes children's curiosity well and allows them to play and learn successfully. The attractive displays help children to develop a sense of belonging and feel proud as their work is celebrated. Leaders have developed an interesting area directly off the main playroom for outdoor play. However, this is not always utilised effectively to enable children to choose when they want to play outside. The forest school area is a particular strength of the setting. It is an exciting area where children can manage their own risks as they climb, balance and take part in exciting activities including using hammers and saws in the woodwork area. Leaders ensure that practitioners are confident in supporting children in these areas and manage the related risks well.

Leaders have developed a well-resourced indoor and outdoor play space, containing sheltered areas, forest school and continuous play provision. They provide resources that successfully support children to develop a range of skills. Areas of learning are well arranged and inviting, with resources being age appropriate and of good quality. The environment is creatively enhanced with authentic resources to further inspire the children. This includes cookbooks and scales in the home corner and pumpkin seeds in the play dough area as part of the Halloween theme. The indoor and outdoor environments include a good range of natural materials and small resources. This includes sand and water play areas and digging and planting areas. There are suitably sized toilet facilities and furniture, which successfully supports children to learn to be independent and comfortable. Leaders provide suitable resources and toys to reflect the diverse nature of Wales and its families, including books and flags.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Leaders have a strong sense of purpose and work together with practitioners successfully to ensure provision meets the needs of all children. This promotes a stimulating and supportive atmosphere for children to develop. They share a clear vision for the setting to provide a homely and nurturing environment, building relationships with children and their families.

There is a comprehensive statement of purpose that provides a detailed picture of the setting. This helps parents and carers to make informed decisions about using the service. Leaders have an appropriate range of policies and procedures which they share and implement effectively.

Leaders are organised and manage practitioners well. They meet with them regularly and provide clear communication through meetings and social media. This ensures good teamwork and contributes to the smooth running of the setting. Leaders provide valuable support for practitioners through annual appraisals and regular supervisions. They set and review targets regularly and ensure that all practitioners have access to



worthwhile training opportunities to improve their knowledge and practice. For example, they have attended training on developing assessment arrangements and providing children with opportunities to develop their woodworking skills. Leaders measure the impact of training to ensure that it has a positive impact on children's outcomes.

Leaders have a clear focus on improving the setting and regularly review their work to identify strengths and areas for improvement. They have developed a collaborative and positive culture of self-evaluation. They gather the views of practitioners, parents, and carers appropriately and act on their suggestions thoughtfully. For example, they set up regular consultation evenings in response to parents and carers requesting more information about their children's progress.

Leaders make valuable use of grants to make improvements to the setting. For example, they have purchased woodworking tools and two outdoor shelters for children to spend more time in the outdoors.

Overall, leaders have forged beneficial partnerships that contribute positively to children's learning and development. There is a worthwhile partnership with parents and carers. Practitioners share useful information about children's progress and achievements and ask them for regular updates on important family events and children's current interests and fascinations. The setting operates an open-door policy where parents and carers can share relevant information about their children.

Leaders make effective use of advice and guidance from the local authority's advisory teacher, leading to improvements, such as developing the roles of the management team to support the work of the setting. The setting makes beneficial use of support from the local authority's additional needs team to provide appropriate strategies for children with communication needs.

The setting has useful links with the local community to promote children's learning and sense of belonging, such as visiting the local church and play area. They provide images on displays to engage children with landmarks in their locality. However, there are few opportunities for them to engage with members of the community to enrich their learning and development further.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
<b>Poor</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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