Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Lots of Tots Flying Start Playgroup

Awel Y Mor Primary School, Ffordd Ysgol, Port Talbot, SA12 6TP

01639875123

www.lotsoftots.co.uk

Date(s) of inspection visit(s):

12/06/2025, 18/06/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Lots of Tots Childcare Ltd
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	28
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture, or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children are extremely happy and relaxed at the setting because their well-being is a high priority, and their voices are always heard. They have great fun playing with their friends and have a wealth of opportunities to develop independence and follow their interests. They have developed exceptionally strong bonds with staff and receive extremely warm and responsive care.

Staff are professional and passionate about their roles and successfully implement policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy. They are enthusiastic, always interacting positively with children. They plan an extensive range of exciting activities led by children's interests and support children's developmental needs effectively. They keep highly valuable records of children's progress.

Highly effective measures are followed to ensure the environment is safe, secure and well maintained. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and staff proactively identify and

eliminate any emerging hazards or risks to children promptly. Children have access to a spacious indoor playroom and a well-equipped outdoor area. Resources are plentiful and allow children to develop their overall skills exceptionally well.

There is very strong leadership and management at the setting. The management team are passionate in providing an outstanding service and a high standard of care to their children. They have developed strong relationships with a range of partners and parents are highly complementary about the care and opportunities their children receive.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children are very confident communicators as their wants, moods and needs are fully considered. They follow their interests and enjoy freely exploring the resources, toys and activities that are on offer. For example, they can easily move between each play area and between indoors and outdoors. Children's verbal and non-verbal cues are reacted to and they confidently share their opinions and requests with staff. For instance, one child pushed their plate forward to signal that they wanted more snack and staff shared more with them. Children's opinions and interests are highly valued, acted upon and continually reviewed. They are given choices about things which affect them including what drink they would like, whether they would like to join in with adult led activities or which song to choose.

Children cope extremely well with separation because efficient daily transitions fully recognise and support individual needs. These are effectively implemented. For example, children are greeted warmly at the door before being accompanied to the main playroom, where they are greeted with smiles and reassurance if needed. The identical routine in the morning and afternoon sessions, supports children's transition and their wellbeing as the get older. Children clearly have a strong sense of belonging. They confidently interact with the staff, sharing their news or sitting on their lap for a story. Children are very familiar with routines, standing at the main playroom door whilst waiting for everyone to arrive before being given the signal to move to other areas.

Interactions between children and adults are consistently positive and children respond well to staff requests or questions. For instance, when children were fishing for feelings, they were asked by staff to show that feeling. Children happily did this, changing their face to show happy by smiling or looking angry or sad. Some children confidently approached us to ask us what we were doing or to ask us to help them with an activity. Children are developing friendships and play alongside or with others appropriate to their age/stage of development. For example, older children co-operate enthusiastically sharing toys or calling for their friend to sit next to them at snack time.

Children are highly motivated, animated and fully engaged in their play and learning. For instance, one child found some hats, put one on his head, gave another to their friend and cried "*yee haw*" before galloping off. Children eagerly enjoy interesting and stimulating opportunities throughout the setting. They freely explore the toys and resources on offer, using them as part of their play or taking them to other areas of the playroom. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed using the hard hat and tools to 'fix' the doors, dividers and shelves.

Children are self-motivated to initiate their own play and to influence their tasks and activities because child led activities predominate. They can choose to engage with the resources and toys or relax and have quiet times. Children have considerable freedom to safely explore their indoor

and outdoor environment, which supports them to consistently follow their own instincts, ideas and interests. Children take part in activities resulting in a great feeling of achievement and high self-esteem. They are enthusiastic to show or talk about what they have been doing. For example, children enjoyed telling staff about the things they had drawn or painted. Children have good opportunities to develop their independence skills enabling them to do things for themselves successfully. For example, one child said "*squeeze*" as she refilled the paint pot, and some children used tissue to wipe their noses.

Care & Development — Excellent

Staff fully understand and consistently implement the setting's policies which promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and well-being. For example, they remind children about playing safely and are aware of children's individual medical needs. Staff identify and proactively and effectively manage risks. They consistently talk to each other when moving around the setting. They carry out daily visual risk assessments and respond to emerging risks. For instance, staff went outside to check that the outdoor gate was secure before children went out to play. Staff support children to speak or express themselves exceptionally well as they receive an effective and meaningful response/interaction. They react to children's verbal and non-verbal cues and ensure that they understand the children's needs. Staff have a strong understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They clearly understand the process to follow if they have any child protection concerns. Staff implement robust cleaning and good hygiene practices and encourage children to follow good practices themselves. For example, they support children to wash their hands before snack and carry out daily toothbrushing. Staff promote healthy eating and provide a range of healthy snacks including fruits, vegetables and multigrain rice cakes. This has led the setting and staff to win a healthy snack award in June 2025.

Staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive behaviour management strategies. They regularly praise children with well done, good job and that's lovely. They remind children about their expectations. For instance, staff remind children about using kind hands with each other or encouraging children to share and take turns. Staff are consistently responsive, genuinely listening to and respecting children's views. They respond to children's news and questions, asking follow up questions or reacting to the information shared with them. They respond really well to both verbal and non-verbal communication. The interactions are very positive, demonstrating warmth and kindness.

Staff know the children very well. They are sensitive to the needs and experiences of individual children. They kneel or sit at children's level and use language suitable to children's development and understanding. For example, when dealing with a potential conflict, a staff member used "*no thank you*" to a younger child to stop him from disturbing another child who was playing. The staff member explained using simple language that the child did not want to be disturbed. Staff are committed to providing a broad range of play and learning activities. They follow in the moment planning, responding to children's interests, using them to develop and support their play and learning. For instance, while playing in the home corner, a staff member was given 'pasta' and she asked the children which size spoon she should use to eat the pasta with. This sparked debate about which spoon was most suitable for the staff member. Written planning and observations about the children are regularly recorded and include the opportunities the staff used to enable and develop children's learning. Leadership and staff at the setting are evaluating and developing their system of planning, observation and next steps in response to training and the needs to the

children in their care. Staff support and provide for children with additional needs, such as children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and children with speech and language difficulties, relevant to the children in their care. They work closely with outside agencies to implement strategies to support children with additional needs and share information regularly. Staff provide good opportunities to develop independence, encouraging children to try things for themselves first as well as offering support if needed. Staff use incidental Welsh during the sessions. For example, during snack they ask children if they would like "*llaeth neu dŵr*" or remind children when it's "*amser tacluso.*"

Environment — Excellent

Leaders and staff ensure children are cared for in an extremely safe and secure environment. They are vigilant, supervise the children closely at all times and ensure only authorised persons have entry to the setting, maintaining a log of any visitors. They work closely with the school in which they are based to ensure that the premises are in good condition. Routine maintenance checks for the premises and any appliance checks are conducted regularly, including smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, portable appliances and periodical electrical checks. Staff follow a range of effective risk assessments. They carry out visual daily safety checks of the indoor and outdoor area, which highlights any risks and take appropriate action when needed. For example, they may remove any broken resources or equipment to be repaired, or they may contact the school caretaker to deal with any environmental issues. They complete fire drills regularly with appropriate records kept and notes made of any relevant issues encountered.

The environment is extremely clean, warm, welcoming and highly maintained. The play areas provide a high-quality environment for children to play and learn. We observed children moving freely and confidently between each space, relishing in the activities and resources on offer. Staff explained that the outdoor area would normally be fully open for children to freely move between but due to the weather, it was not possible to fully implement on the day of the inspection due to the weather. Staff continued to take children outdoors in groups, wearing appropriate protective clothing and footwear, to allow them to continue to access the outdoors. Indoors is presented with care and natural décor provides a calming environment. Clearly defined areas offer rich learning experiences such as role-play, messy play, creative, and construction as well as a cosy reading corner. The layout of the environment in conjunction with low-level furniture and resources fosters children's independence. For example, they confidently access low level storage with open shelves and baskets finding what they want with ease. Outdoor provides a range of opportunities to support children's overall learning and curiosity as well as their physical development. Children's toilets are clean and suitable for the age ranges cared for. The nappy changing facilities and toilets promote children's privacy, dignity and respect.

Children benefit from a purposeful range of age-appropriate, clean and highly maintained resources, equipment and toys which are of excellent quality. The setting has high quality furniture and resources to support children's independence. For example, child sized tables, chairs, low level toy storage units and coat pegs for children's belongings. Regular checks are conducted to monitor quality. There are a beneficial number of resources which help children learn about diversity and promote their cultural awareness such as books, dolls, small world people and displays. The outdoor area provides excellent opportunities for children to develop their physical, creative and investigative skills.

Leadership & Management — Good

There is a strong leadership at the setting, which works positively to support and develop the setting, its staff and children. They maintain and share an up-to-date comprehensive and professional statement of purpose that accurately reflects the service provided. Leaders have developed a wide range of policies, which are reviewed regularly and updated with changes. However, not all policies fully reflect the setting's procedures. Leaders ensure that they collect and securely store the required records in order to fully support children's needs at the setting. For example, they collect children's personal details, medical or dietary needs and permissions. However, the current documentation does not clearly state that parents are consenting to the setting seeking emergency medical advice or treatment for their child. Since the inspection visit, the setting has confirmed that they have amended the wording in their contracts to reflect more clearly the permissions they are obtaining in relation to emergency medical consent. Leaders engage positively with Care Inspectorate Wales, completing notifications when there are changes at the setting and they have implemented the recommendations from the last inspection.

Leaders actively implement self-evaluation. They seek and implement the suggestions of children, their parents/carers, staff and other interested partners. Leaders produce a good quality of care report which includes information about what they do well, their priorities for improvement and a summary of responses they received.

Leaders follow timely and robust recruitment processes to safeguard children. Staff files show that regulatory pre-employment checks are carried out. They ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Leaders employ suitably qualified and experienced staff and implement a good induction procedure. The performance management process is good and encourages staff to attend a range of training. For example, staff have attended training including learning to behave - positive behaviour management strategy, enabling adults and an introductory course in sign along. Leaders carry out good supervision and appraisals with staff. These allow staff to discuss their personal development, their strengths and weaknesses and what support is needed to be in place. Leaders consistently ensure that practitioners are deployed effectively to ensure children's needs are fully met.

Leaders ensure that all communication and engagement systems with parents are good. They keep parents well informed. Parents told us that the staff are amazing, and they do a brilliant job. They receive daily verbal feedback about their child which focuses on positives and know that staff will talk to them if there are any issues. They said their children love coming. Leaders have very good links with a range of professionals. They have developed strong links, responding positively to information and advice given to improve children's well-being and identified needs. Outside agencies commented that the setting puts children at the centre of everything, they welcome any suggestions for improvement, and they are open to change.

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.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

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)
Standard 10 - Healthcare	Written parental permission is obtained in advance and is clearly regarding any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

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)
Further develop policies to ensure they reflect the settings practices.

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