A report on

Little Trees Celtic Springs

1 Spooner Close
Celtic Springs Business Park Newport
NP10 8FZ

Date of inspection: October 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Little Trees Celtic Springs

Name of setting	Little Trees Celtic Springs
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Adrian Bowcher
Person in charge	Marisa Blundell, Jessica Tate, Charlene Burgess
Number of places	Registered for 115
Age range of children	3 months old – 4 years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	30
Number of children who receive funding for early education	29
Opening days / times	7:30am to 6:00pm Monday – Friday
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and cultural needs of people or is working towards a bi-lingual service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	August 2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	March 2019
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	22/10/2025
Additional information	

Summary

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Expand opportunities to develop children's digital skills

R2 Enhance the outdoor environment to give all children access to a variety of engaging activities

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

Nearly all children are happy and settled at the setting. They are cheerful and calm when they arrive and are greeted by friendly practitioners. This ensures that most children cope well as they separate from parents and carers. They form positive relationships with practitioners who know them well. Most children join in with daily routines such as washing their hands before meals and sitting on the carpet for morning registration, which includes singing familiar songs and greeting their friends. This helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging.

Most children participate well in their learning and play activities and make suitable choices and decisions. They enjoy the freedom to move around the learning areas and choose activities that interest them. Most children express themselves confidently and make their needs known. They know they will be listened to by practitioners who value their interactions. This has a positive effect on children's well-being and self-esteem.

Nearly all children interact positively with their friends and those caring for them. They enjoy sociable mealtimes where they practise good manners and chat happily together whilst eating. Nearly all children are comfortable in their surroundings and develop warm relationships with their peers and practitioners at the setting. For example, older children comfort their friends by offering hugs and checking on their well-being. Many children approach practitioners for support and often invite them into their play, to which they respond with great enthusiasm. Most children are beginning to take turns and share. For instance, they take turns pouring pumpkin soup into containers while others work together on a puzzle.

Most children enjoy play activities and develop their skills effectively while experimenting and learning. Many children ask questions about their environment and are eager to learn new vocabulary. For example, children are interested in learning words that describe different emotions and use when singing familiar rhymes and songs. Many children concentrate for a suitable amount of time that is in line with their stage of development and enjoy periods of extended play. Most children respond positively when receiving praise from a practitioner.

Most children develop their independent learning skills well. Older children take responsibility for their own personal hygiene, such as using the toilet and washing their hands throughout the day. Whilst younger children are supported by practitioners to develop early independence skills such as choosing their own drinking cups and feeding themselves snacks. Many children choose to attempt tasks independently before seeking assistance from practitioners.

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

Most children make consistently good progress from their individual starting points. They develop confidence through accessing a wide range of stimulating activities and resources. Many children make decisions independently about where they would like to play.

Nearly all children express themselves with increasing fluency, for example when making pumpkin soup they describe what they're doing and answer questions with confidence. They make good progress in developing their communication and independent skills during their time at the setting. Most children listen attentively to practitioners and their peers, and many are happy to engage in conversation when speaking with visitors.

Most children show enthusiasm towards books and print in their environment and enjoy retelling stories. They know how to handle a book as a reader and understand that the words and pictures have meaning. Some children use puppets to retell stories such as Goldilocks and use different voices for the three bears. Many children are beginning to develop their mark making skills, for example by drawing family portraits and attempting to write their names. Most children enjoy singing and joining in with Welsh songs. They understand and respond to simple instructions and daily greetings in Welsh appropriately.

Nearly all children's fine motor skills are developing well. They handle and manipulate different objects with increasing dexterity. They mix dough and use cutting tools with confidence, for example when creating Diwali elephants and tea lights. Most children have well developed physical skills and play confidently with a wide range of equipment and toys. For example, they independently use the balance beams, ride bikes, negotiate obstacles and use the slide. Many children develop problem-solving skills effectively through their exploration and play, such as moving guttering in the sensory garden to allow water to flow in order to transport leaves to the end of a pipe.

Most children are making good progress developing mathematical skills. They explore and discuss whether pumpkins are big or small, heavy or light. Children use blocks to create homes and discuss the shape needed for a roof and size needed to accommodate 10 people. Children are beginning to develop digital skills, such as using torches to explore light patterns, though this is still at an early stage.

Nearly all develop strong creative skills. For example, they collect natural objects to create family pictures and enjoy making mud pies and soup in the sensory garden area. Children show awe and wonder when interacting with nature, noticing things like changing leaf colours and the "shiny, spiky" conkers.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners follow clear systems and procedures to ensure that children are safe and healthy. They understand their roles and responsibilities well and adhere to the setting's daily practices. All practitioners have current first aid certificates. They keep accurate records of accidents, incidents, and pre-existing injuries, and consistently share these with pares / carers.

Practitioners have a solid understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and are fully aware of the action to take should they have any concerns. Most practitioners ensure that nappy changing procedures are in line with current infection control guidance and promote dignity and privacy for all children. Practitioners ensure all medical information is recorded in line with recommended guidelines. Leaders review and analyse procedures regularly and make amendments when necessary. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles by providing children with a variety of nutritious snacks and fresh water for them to drink. They follow good hygiene practices in line with infection control guidance, for example wiping tables before children sit down to eat. Practitioners ensure that all children have daily access to fresh air in the nursery's outdoor learning area and visit local areas of interest. They encourage children to develop good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before eating.

Practitioners have a warm, reassuring and comforting manner with children. They model positive behaviour strategies and language and follow the setting's policies well. Practitioners facilitate children's social development successfully by encouraging them to help with simple tasks. They celebrate children's kindness, positive behaviours or when they succeed. This has a positive effect on children's self-confidence and develops their understanding of respect and support of others.

Practitioners promote children's play, learning and development successfully. They provide children with purposeful areas of learning, which are influenced by children's interests. Practitioners have comprehensive knowledge of children's individual needs and preferences and promote children's well-being effectively.

Practitioners identify and support children with additional needs well. They work successfully with parents, carers, and outside agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children. Practitioners implement and review children's progress regularly to ensure that their needs are met.

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 good understanding of how children learn through play and exploration. They have a sound understanding of child development and provide a worthwhile range of experiences that support children's learning across all areas. Practitioners pay good attention to children's interests and use this information well to help them plan future experiences.

Practitioners place a strong emphasis on enabling children to follow their curiosity and offer rich opportunities for them to engage in experiences that interest them. For example, they explore with the children how to make enclosures for animals when building a zoo. As a result, nearly all children develop as confident explorers of their environment.

Practitioners use observations and assessments to identify opportunities for developing children's learning. The information is shared with parents via their child's online learning

journey. Leaders and practitioners are developing how they use these assessments to plan children's next steps in learning and measure their progress over time.

Practitioners create a calm and inclusive environment. They take part in collaborative play, listen carefully and interact at the child's level. Practitioners support children in developing independence skills. For example, older children put on their coats before going outside and access toys and resources independently.

Practitioners promote worthwhile opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills. The setting fosters a strong reading culture, with practitioners offering many storybooks for children to read and listen to together. Practitioners naturally ask children to count and recognise numbers and shapes in their play. For instance, they place numbers on wheeled toys outside, which supports number recognition and helps children consider numerical order.

Practitioners effectively support and promote the development of physical skills. They provide activities that enhance fine and gross motor skills effectively, including mud kitchens, bikes, and small equipment in different play areas. Practitioners provide a few resources to develop children's digital skills. However, opportunities for children to use these effectively are limited.

Practitioners help children grow spiritually, morally, and socially. They support children in building friendships, encourage sharing and taking turns, and offer praise when these positive behaviours are demonstrated. Leaders arrange visits to the setting from local community figures such as the police and the local fire service. Children learn about Welsh traditions, such as St Davids Day, and create Welsh landmarks and castles using visual prompts. They effectively promote diversity, as reflected in the range of books, resources and activities available throughout the setting.

Environment: Good

Practitioners ensure that children are supervised carefully in a safe environment. They follow a good range of clear and comprehensive policies, which allows them to effectively promote the safety and welfare of children. They ensure that only authorised persons have entry to the setting and maintain a digital log of all visitors. Leaders develop and maintain a range of detailed risk assessments, which practitioners implement effectively to support the safe and smooth running of the setting. Practitioners are pro-active in undertaking daily safety checks of the environment and specific activities, ensuring risks are minimised.

The setting is welcoming and well maintained. Practitioners follow effective procedures to keep the environment and equipment clean and in good condition. Children have access to child sized furniture, such as tables and chairs as well as low-level toilets and sinks, which successfully promote their physical development and independence skills. Leaders hold regular fire drills, allowing children and practitioners to familiarise themselves with what to do in an emergency. They ensure that routine building and appliances maintenance checks are undertaken when required, and relevant certificates are held.

Practitioners celebrate children's creativity and successes through displaying their work and photographs of their play on the walls. Practitioners encourage parents and carers to share

family photos with the setting; these are displayed for the children to see. This helps to create a strong sense of belonging and connection for all. The indoor area is arranged effectively to provide stimulating play and learning areas alongside calm and relaxing spaces to read and complete quieter activities. Resources are stored at a low level and labelled clearly to enable children to choose independently and pursue their individual interests. As a result, many children are familiar with gathering and returning equipment to the appropriate places.

Practitioners have developed a variety of outside areas for children to use and explore. Generally, the outdoor areas provide opportunities for children to develop their physical skills by using wheeled toys, a climbing frame with a slide, mud kitchen and other play equipment. Older children greatly benefit from accessing a thoughtfully designed sensory garden, which offers valuable opportunities for exploration, curiosity, and skill development. While practitioners consistently provide younger children with access to outdoor areas, these spaces do not currently offer the same level of stimulating and engaging activities. Children have access to good quality resources that represent the world around them and reflect different cultures. Practitioners use authentic resources and natural materials, as well as developmentally appropriate toys, providing children with rich opportunities to play and learn.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting based on supportive core values where children flourish. They have a strong commitment to teamwork and shared responsibilities across the setting to promote a positive and caring ethos where staff, children and families are supported well. Leaders meet regularly with practitioners and provide clear communication, which results in the smooth running of the setting.

Leaders ensure that the statement of purpose is clear and provides an accurate picture of the setting. This assists parents to make informed decisions about the suitability of the setting for their child. Leaders have high expectations of practitioners, and all work hard to maintain and constantly improve every aspect of the setting. Leaders and practitioners are passionate about ensuring the best possible experiences for the children in their care.

Leaders follow safe recruiting procedures to ensure qualified and experienced practitioners are employed. They analyse all aspects of the provision to help identify what works well and what they need to do in order to improve. Their whole approach to self-evaluation is based on ensuring consistent scrutiny on strengthening the provision for children and the impact on children's progress and well-being. For example, leaders used a grant prudently to invest in additional resources that have supported children's independence, collaboration and numeracy skills.

Leaders work closely with staff to ensure they have a voice and opportunities to contribute to future improvements. For example, during monthly staff meetings leaders share their findings and practitioners are encouraged to make suggestions on ways forward to best support the children in their care.

The setting makes good use of the funding it receives. Leaders ensure sufficient good quality resources that enhance the provision for all learners. Leaders ensure that improvements

focus clearly on children's development and progress in skills in accordance with the curriculum. This enables staff to develop children's curiosity and skills effectively.

Leaders implement an effective system for practitioners' supervisions and appraisals that lead to agreed targets. Leaders ensure that staff are provided with beneficial professional development opportunities to enhance their skill as practitioners. Practitioners have attended training opportunities to develop their Welsh skills and the importance of celebrating diversity. This training is evident in the resources and teaching within the setting to develop children's knowledge and skills.

Leaders make beneficial use of the advice and guidance from partners, such as the local authority's advisory teacher and health professionals when necessary. Leaders have developed a range of highly effective partnerships in the community that improve the learning and well-being of children successfully. For example, they have visits from a local business to promote physical literacy and healthy eating through stories.

Leaders foster strong relationships with parents and carers by regularly seeking their input. The setting holds termly engagement meetings and events like stay and play sessions, first aid training, and inviting parents in as mystery readers. Leaders use an app to inform parents about curriculum information, upcoming events and ways they can support their child at home through their monthly blogs. Parents also receive regular updates including photographs and 'wow' moments. This creates a strong sense of family and parents greatly value the regular communication.

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)

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

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

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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.

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