Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Pennar Flying Start and Fledgling Playgroup

Pennar Community School, Owen Street, Pennar, Pembroke Dock, SA72 6SL

01646684402

www.pennarcommunity.pembrokeshire.sch.uk

The inspection visit took place on 22/04/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Pembrokeshire County Council Child Care and Play Services
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	40
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 provider is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children are confident communicators and have a strong sense of belonging. They interact happily with staff and each other and know staff will listen to them. Children choose where they would like to play and are able to take part in a variety of purposeful activities which enables them to develop their independence skills.

Staff follow policies and procedures skilfully to promote healthy lifestyles, safety and well-being. They use an effective approach to support children to settle quickly and promote their curiosity when playing. Staff respond to children's interests and provide exciting and age-appropriate learning opportunities.

Leaders provide excellent measures to ensure everyone understands their responsibilities. They offer an environment which is extremely organised and well-maintained. Leaders provide an exceptional variety of age-appropriate resources and practitioners make very good use of both the

indoor and outdoor environments to successfully promote and extend children's all-round developmental skills.

Leaders understand their regulatory responsibilities and have an exciting vision for the future. They have a skilled team of experienced staff and have developed very strong relationships within the school where they are located, as well as with parents and the community nearby.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children communicate their wishes confidently and staff consistently respond to their needs. They make frequent choices about where and with whom to play and fully benefit from free-flow provision. Outdoors, children independently choose from a range of resources and sustain activities such as building, ball games, role play and bubble play. At snack time, children decide what they would like to eat and drink. During adult-led activities, children confidently choose to practise skills or share books and ideas with staff.

Children are highly settled and demonstrate a strong sense of safety and security. They move confidently between indoor and outdoor areas and follow established routines, such as rolling snack, circle time and home time, which effectively promote independence and decision-making. Children who are settling in are reassured sensitively and calmly, enabling them to re-engage quickly in play. They welcome visitors warmly, communicate confidently and those who attend for wraparound sessions arrive with clear enthusiasm.

Children interact exceptionally well and thrive socially through play. They collaborate, share resources and support one another. For example, during outdoor role play children chatted warmly as they helped to settle dolls in buggies and in another area indoors, children counted together while building block towers. Relationships between children and adults are consistently warm and respectful; children confidently seek help and respond positively to support. Children show a strong sense of belonging, anticipate routines and sustain concentration for extended periods during group activities when they enjoy the setting's familiar characters and story time.

Children are highly engaged in their play and learning and show sustained enthusiasm whilst indoors and outdoors. They initiate imaginative play and demonstrate increasing empathy, for example when caring for dolls they remind others to be quiet so a baby could sleep. Children embrace the time and space given to them to explore, cooperate and negotiate, enabling them to create their own games. They practise sharing and turn taking, and participate in activities such as outdoor physical dance.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop independence and confidently follow their interests. They manage self-care routines well, including using the toilet and washing and drying their hands independently. Rolling snack is well embedded and supports children to wait, take turns and join appropriately. At the table, children serve themselves drinks from small jugs and choose healthy foods, enjoying relaxed social mealtimes. Across the provision, children access areas independently and sustain purposeful role play.

Care & Development — Excellent

Staff have a strong understanding of their responsibilities and consistently implement effective procedures to promote children's health, safety and well-being. They understand safeguarding arrangements and can explain procedures confidently with clear information displayed for parents and visitors. Hygiene and infection prevention are well embedded, including regular handwashing and appropriate use of protective equipment. Children benefit from healthy food choices, and staff manage individual health needs well, including allergies, dietary requirements and intimate care. Nappy changing is carried out sensitively and with dignity, with records maintained accurately. Staff share key information with parents promptly through the daily digital platform, supporting continuity of care. They support children with additional learning needs and work with external professionals to meet their individual needs.

Interactions between staff and children are consistently of a very high quality and have a positive impact on children's well-being and learning. They are warm, attentive and respectful, and work effectively as a team, communicating clearly to maintain ratios and provide timely support. Staff use praise well to build confidence and extend children's learning through skilful questioning and rich language. For example, encouraging children to count during bubble play and using mathematical vocabulary as children explored which cars fitted the ramp. Children respond to staff with evident enjoyment and delight and readily seek their support. Staff use opportunities throughout the day to introduce the Welsh language through clear sentence patterns and songs and children respond confidently. They have created a calm and welcoming setting, reflecting a strong shared commitment to meeting children's individual needs.

Staff are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities and actively contribute to children's individual development. However, whilst their planning processes are detailed and offer exciting, innovative and purposeful experiences and activities, children's progression and next steps of development are not yet fully embedded within their observation, planning and next steps processes.

Environment — Excellent

Leaders have highly effective security arrangements, and the setting is a safe and well-managed environment for children. Entry is tightly controlled through the school reception or the early years side entrance and external doors remain locked, with access granted only by staff. Visitors follow clear signing-in procedures using the school's digital system and the setting's visitor record, which strengthens safeguarding arrangements. Statutory safety checks are up to date and leaders maintain purposeful risk assessments for indoor and outdoor areas and equipment, which are reviewed regularly. Fire drills and evacuation arrangements, including lockdown procedures, are practised and accurately recorded, and fire safety equipment is serviced and suitably located. Leaders also maintain clear attendance records and ensure key safeguarding information is prominently displayed, including flowcharts, designated safeguarding person details and registration documentation.

Leaders provide an exceptional, well-maintained environment that enables children to play, learn and move freely. The spacious indoor provision is welcoming, homely and thoughtfully organised into purposeful rooms and areas that promote choice, independence, curiosity and sustained play. Children benefit from a strong free-flow approach, making full use of the secure and exciting outdoor space for exploratory, creative and physical play, including opportunities to experiment, build and problem-solve. The setting's additional facilities are well planned to support children's care, needs and routines, including a purpose-built kitchen where staff prepare balanced snacks, suitable quiet spaces, bathrooms and a private nappy-changing area that supports dignity while maintaining supervision and ratios. Leaders also make very good use of the wider school grounds to extend children's learning, experiences and physical development through additional activities such as nature walks, yoga and dance.

Leaders provide a wide range of high-quality, age-appropriate resources that offer opportunities for exploratory and experiential play. All resources are displayed at heights which ensure children can always access these, enabling children to make choices as well as develop their independence skills. Leaders and staff prepare a range of stimulating resources which are carefully laid out on open storage units or in tuff trays. We saw resources and display boards promoting and celebrating cultures and diversity. For example, dolls, multicultural areas and crafts linked to Chinese New Year, and a Welsh board which promotes Welsh heritage.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders understand most regulatory requirements and have taken effective steps to establish a reliable service for families in Pennar and the wider area. They updated the Statement of Purpose during the inspection process, and it now reflects the service. Leaders maintain a comprehensive range of policies and procedures, which they review annually and update when required. Children's files contain the necessary information, including permissions and consents, and key records such as medication and accident forms are in place. During the inspection, leaders responded promptly to organise documentation and ensure records were signed. Following recent changes to management roles, leaders plan to introduce shared, designated time to complete regulatory tasks effectively alongside the setting's day-to-day practice.

Leaders submit an annual Quality of Care Report, which demonstrates how they gather the views of children, parents and staff. They consider feedback appropriately and use it to inform planned improvements to the service. Leaders have identified clear priorities for the year ahead, for example developing a planting area, which is expected to further enhance children's outdoor play and learning experiences.

Leaders support a small team of staff who work together enthusiastically to ensure children are safe, cared for and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff supervise children well and plan effectively, so ratios are maintained, including on the day of the inspection. Staff are approachable and happily discuss their practice, reflecting on their experiences and commitment to providing a nurturing environment. Leaders provide opportunities for professional development through supervision, appraisal and access to mandatory training, as well as relevant school inset sessions. Leaders keep staff files and they strengthened these during the inspection process to include support staff who cover breaks. Safeguarding training is up to date and leaders are taking steps to ensure the appropriate levels of training are sustained and updated over time.

Leaders have developed effective partnerships with the school, Flying Start, the local community and families, which promote positive outcomes for children. They work proactively with the local authority and relevant organisations to strengthen practice and promote children's health and well-being, for example a toothbrushing programme. Communication with parents and partners is open and purposeful, and leaders actively involve others to plan enriching experiences such as inviting the school crossing patrol officer to visit. Children benefit from the use of the wider school site to extend learning, such as picking apples from the orchard, and from a range of meaningful activities, including visits to the library, wildlife walks, bird watches and celebrations such as World Book Day. Parents report very high levels of satisfaction; they describe children as happy, settled and making strong progress, and value the care, responsiveness and commitment shown by staff.

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 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Further embed developmental records to include progress and clear pathways from observations to planning to next steps.

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)
Keep a mandatory training overview for all staff and renew appropriate levels of training at earliest opportunity.
Delegate responsibilities where possible, as part of the quality review of your setting.

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