



Little Ferns Tylorstown



Edmondes Street, Tylorstown, Ferndale, CF43 3HH



01443730820

The inspection visit took place on 12/05/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	The Fern Partnership
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	26
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

Excellent

Summary:

Children have a strong voice and are happy, settled and enjoy attending the setting. They form strong bonds with staff and begin to form friendships. Children are extremely enthusiastic in their play and learning. Their independence is consistently encouraged throughout their time at the setting.

Staff are professional and passionate about their roles and successfully implement policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy. They form warm, respectful relationships with children and respond sensitively to their needs. Staff place children at the centre of their learning and development and monitor developmental progress effectively.

Leaders provide a warm and welcoming setting for children where they can play safely in a rich environment. They ensure the resources and equipment are suitable to meet children's individual needs. Leaders identify any unnecessary risks to children and eliminate them where possible, ensuring the environment is safe, secure and well maintained.

Leadership and management of the setting is excellent. The management team is strong and passionate about providing an outstanding service in the local area. They form exceptional partnerships with families and other agencies and professionals to ensure consistent care for the children.

Findings:



Well-being

Excellent

Children make meaningful choices about how they spend their time at the setting. They move easily between the activities and areas, transporting toys and resources to support their play. Children express themselves confidently, knowing staff listen to their needs and wants and value what they say. They chat extremely happily to staff as they play and learn, eagerly inviting them into their activities. Children's voices are very strong at the setting. Staff acknowledge their interests and use this information to inform the settings planning approach.

Children are extremely settled, happy and they enjoy attending the setting. They cope very well with separation from their parents and carers and form strong emotional attachments with staff. They are secure and relaxed in the staff's care, approaching them confidently to share their experiences and engage them in their play. For example, a child frequently and enthusiastically interacts with a staff member, involving them in their water play. Children are very familiar with and evidently enjoy the routines of the setting. For example, they are eager to help to clear up before the end of day activities begin where they dance and sing to familiar songs.

Children are beginning to develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff in line with their age and stage of development. They play happily alongside each other, learning to co-operate and show respect for each other, resources and toys. Children interact enthusiastically with staff, who communicate in a manner that is respectful, friendly and encouraging. For example, children chat to staff about what they can see in the outdoor environment, they delight in making shadows whilst being encouraged to look at the sky, identifying wildlife and colours through rich conversation.

Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in their play and learning. They confidently lead their play and pursue their own interests with sustained focus and enjoyment. Children's preferences are responded to exceptionally well and skilfully, which extends their learning. They naturally have thoughtful ideas. For example, during water play, children's experiences were enhanced by adding sea creatures, coloured water and tools that promote fine motor development. Children make purposeful choices and remain deeply absorbed in their play.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills. For example, during snack time children are encouraged to self-serve their snacks and pour their own drinks. Children are supported well if they show an interest in learning new skills. When children indicate they are cold, they are directed to a child-height coat stand, select a coat and get dressed independently.



Staff have an excellent understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. Leaders and staff prioritise safeguarding and have a thorough knowledge of the actions they need to take should they have concerns about a child. Staff accurately record accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries, and ensure they are shared appropriately. They record both their own and children's attendance to ensure they always know who is on the premises. Staff implement robust cleaning and hygiene practices effectively. For example, they sanitise tables before use and use personal protective equipment when preparing food. Staff are fully aware of children's dietary and allergy needs, and ensure separate cooking utensils, cutlery and plates. Staff actively promote healthy lifestyles. They encourage children to try healthy foods at snack time and provide daily outdoor play experiences that support their physical development and wellbeing. Staff practise regular fire drills with children so that they know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Staff have a strong understanding of children's needs and respond to them sensitively. They treat children with kindness and use effective behaviour management strategies. Staff interact in a patient, caring manner and chat naturally with children to support their play, learning and emotional well-being. They show genuine interest in what children do, using praise thoughtfully to celebrate achievements and encourage perseverance. Staff speak respectfully to children and to each other, acting as excellent role models. They use gentle tones, explanations and distraction methods effectively. The behaviour management policy promotes positive strategies that help children to regulate their own behaviour and build their self-esteem.

Staff clearly recognise how best to support children through providing a wide range of opportunities for them to explore and experiment independently within the environment. As a result, children are at the centre of their own learning and development. Staff operate an effective key worker system; regular observations and assessments enable them to monitor and track children's progress. Children's families receive a written 'newspaper' style summative assessment, where progress is recorded and celebrated in line with the Curriculum for Wales. Staff use a variety of assessments alongside speech and language toolkits to identify any emerging communication needs at an early stage. Staff are extremely proactive in promoting children's play, learning and development and work closely with a range of partners and external professionals. They identify and meet children's individual needs through targeted support. Staff actively promote the Welsh language through daily use of incidental Welsh, songs and rhymes. They also explore cultural diversity, providing resources, books and activities that allow children to gain an understanding of the world around them.



Leaders have highly effective measures in place to ensure staff fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children. Staff ensure children are cared for in an extremely safe and secure environment. They remain vigilant and always supervise children closely. Staff ensure doors are always locked and secure, and only authorised persons are permitted entry to the setting, maintaining a log of any visitors. Routine maintenance checks for the premises and appliances are carried out frequently, including checks on smoke alarms and fire safety equipment. Leaders ensure effective systems are in place to support infection control and store hazardous substances away securely.

The environment is extremely welcoming and very child friendly. Leaders use neutral colours and resources throughout the environment, creating a sense of calmness and relaxation. The indoor playroom is light and well organised with clearly defined areas offering rich opportunities for play and learning. Leaders ensure there is ample space for children to move freely and independently and provide areas for children to relax and unwind. The outdoor environment is arranged as an effective play and learning space that is safe and stimulating. Children may access the outdoor area at any time; it is a clear extension of the learning environment. They are encouraged to participate in physical activity, such as using bikes and scooters and push along toys.

Wall displays include examples of children's work, photographs of children and bilingual labelled images, all of which stimulate children's interests and create a sense of belonging. Children can access toilet facilities and a cloakroom directly from the playroom encouraging the development of independence skills.

Leaders provide high-quality furniture, toys and resources that stimulate children's play and learning. Resources and equipment are clean, well maintained and easily accessible, enabling children to choose what they want to play with independently. Many resources are made from natural materials and can be used flexibly, encouraging imagination and open-ended play. Furniture is appropriately sized for children, allowing them to sit and play comfortably. For example, tables and chairs are the correct height for children, and provide a surface where they can eat snack, communicate and socialise. Resources are plentiful and in excellent condition. Leaders provide toys and materials that encourage children to engage in play creatively. For example, children enjoy the water play, which is enhanced with toys and resources in line with children's suggestions. This approach supports the adopted planning approach. Resources are also used to support children's emotional development, including story books such as 'The Colour Monster' that introduce and explore feelings and emotions.



Leaders have a very strong sense of purpose seeking to promote and sustain excellent outcomes for children. They are passionate about children's wellbeing, and share this passion with staff, creating a highly motivated and positive team. Leaders are highly organised and conscientious. They keep written records consistently and effectively and store them securely. There is an extensive range of policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed. Leaders manage the setting well and promote a positive culture of openness, encouraging communication between the management team and staff.

Leaders continually look for ways to improve the service and outcomes for children. They are proactive and take responsibility for keeping up to date with latest research and best practice standards in the childcare sector. They have well developed and established systems to ensure regular feedback from parents, children and staff to inform their annual quality of care review which supports planning for improvement.

Leaders follow robust recruitment processes so there are always enough staff and checks are carried out to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. There is a clear system in place to ensure that staff's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are current and there are a suitable proportion of qualified staff at the setting. Leaders invest significantly in their staff team. All staff receive regular supervisions and annual appraisals. These are high quality and enable them to celebrate their strengths and identify areas for development. Leaders ensure staff receive excellent opportunities for further training; staff we spoke to told us that they felt valued and supported by the management team.

Leaders and staff who work there have established very strong relationships with parents. Parents feedback shows they think highly of the setting and the care their children receive. Leaders have very strong working relationships with a range of external support agencies, such as speech and language therapists, health visitors and Flying Start quality assurance officers, who support children when concerns about progress or development arise. Leaders have established links with partners in the community, for example they organise visits for the children to the local library and parks helping them to develop an understanding of their local environment. Leaders work with professionals and organisations to share good practice, ideas, and suggestions.

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)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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