



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Lots of Tots (Canolfan Maerdy)**

**New Road  
Tairgwaith  
Ammanford  
SA18 1UP**

**Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg**

**This report is also available in Welsh**



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## **Description of the service**

Lots of Tots was registered in April 2009 under the management of Canolfan Maerdy. They currently provide full day care for up to 46 children up to the age of 12 years old. The service operates from a ground floor building, and is located next to the community centre, which serves surrounding villages. The nominated responsible individual on behalf of the organisation is Leonard Preece. The persons in charge are Anna Rowlands and Emily Stewart. The service operates between the hours of 7:30 and 18:00, Monday to Friday and is closed on Bank Holidays.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children at Lots of Tots are confident, happy and have good attachments with their carers. They are cared for by well-qualified staff who know the children's needs. Children have access to spacious rooms with a range of resources and equipment. Leadership and management is effective and the responsible individual is visibly active on a daily basis.

### **2. Improvements**

Since the last inspection, a new safe flooring and shading sail has been erected in the outside play area; the daily menu has been reviewed to offer more choices; stackable beds have been purchased for sleep times; CCTV has been installed in the building along with a finger print entry system that only staff can access. Leaders have secured a national healthy and sustainable award, a workplace health award and a quality assurance award. The carpeted areas have recently been shampooed and cleaned.

Leaders acted upon our recommendations during inspection and ensured that all staff and children wash their hands before mealtimes and after messy activities. Leaders confirmed that older children now help in the preparation of the snack. Leaders have reinforced the nappy changing policy and procedure with all staff. They also confirmed that water is readily available at all times and staff have been reminded to be aware of offering water regularly to younger children.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

We recommended that leaders and staff ensure that a wider selection of activities and resources are readily available for the children, and they are encouraged to be independent and to complete their own work when doing craft activities.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children at Lots of Tots are confident and able to speak and express themselves. They have positive attachments with their carers and are happy and relaxed. They are beginning to respect others and take care of equipment with support. Children are happy and enjoy their play and learning.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children have a voice and are able to express themselves well in their home language.

We saw children being offered a choice of fruit during snack time. Children asked for more fruit and some asked for more milk to drink. Children confidently said when they had enough and returned their plates and cups to staff. After snack, some children joined in the story of 'we are going on a bear hunt', but some chose to stand on the side and watched the story being acted out by staff. One child showed signs of being tired, was asked if he would like to lie down which he accepted, and lay on a mattress for a sleep. During lunchtime, we heard children tell staff they did not like the meal and did not want anymore. Other children asked for more dessert and were given more.

Children can be confident their voice is heard at this service.

### **1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?**

Children are happy and excited and express enjoyment. They have good bonds of affection with key staff.

We saw children approach their carers for cuddles and reassurance. Children approached us and wanted us to join in their play. We saw some children were attached to particular staff and stayed close to them. One child arrived later on in the morning and was a little apprehensive. She quickly went to a member of staff she was familiar with and had a cuddle as the parent left. We saw children approach carers to inform them that other children had said something that had upset them. They smiled as staff reassured them. Parents told us how their children had been so upset initially but that staff had made the settling in process so easy and their children settled so quickly.

Children are valued and feel safe and happy most of the time.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

Children are confident in speaking to each other, their carers and visitors. They are beginning to manage their behaviour.

We heard children discuss together about what fruit they liked and did not like. They happily chatted with us as they ate their snack. Some children needed reminding about saying 'please' and 'thank you' whilst others showed good manners without being prompted. Some children needed support in waiting their turn for a game, as they excitedly wanted a turn on the 'tap tap box' before others, to see what was hiding under it. Children responded positively to staff telling them 'don't forget our kind hands' when they wanted toys other children were already playing with, and asked for them or waited until others had finished playing with them.

Children interact well with some support.

#### **1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?**

Children are active and curious, and engaged in their play. They are eager to show or talk about what they have been doing.

Children confidently asked us what we were doing and why we were there. They enjoyed telling us about what they enjoyed doing and some wanted us to join in their play. Children enjoyed a story session which they were obviously very familiar and made noises and actions, such as 'squelch, 'jump and stumble' to the story of 'we are going on a bear hunt' Children playing in the home corner pretended to be the parent and called on the children to come in for dinner. Younger children responded excitedly, clapping their hands as staff began singing a song.

Children enjoy their play and learning, and show interest and excitement.

#### **1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?**

Children take part in suitable opportunities to learn and develop skills. There are some missed opportunities to develop independence further.

We saw children feed themselves during lunch, and younger children made good attempts at self feeding. Older children were able to pick pieces of fruit from a large tray of fruit already prepared by staff. The helper of the day handed out cups of milk that had been poured by staff, to the children. Children confidently counted up to 10 and enjoyed an activity of racing to pick up a beanbag and return it to the start line. Children used toilets independently and washed their hands afterwards.

Children are developing and learning but are uninvolved in tasks that could develop independence skills.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Most of the staff know the children well and provide responsive care that meet individual needs. However, not all staff follow careful hygiene practices and healthy work place policies to ensure children are kept safe and healthy. Interactions are managed positively and staff gave praise for positive behaviours. Staff promote children's play, learning and development.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

Staff have undergone training to keep children safe and healthy, and most of the staff follow policies and procedures that are in place for the service.

We discussed child protection scenarios with staff and they responded appropriately and confidently, clearly knowing the procedure to follow should they need to. The service safeguarding policy was comprehensive and included information about the 'Prevent Duty'. The service offered healthy, freshly cooked meals such as pasta and chicken and catered for various dietary needs. Staff were continually wiping children's noses and we saw a member of staff wash her hands afterwards. We saw completed accidents, incidents and medication logs which had been signed by parents. Staff changed children's nappies but did not always follow the service's procedure of wearing an apron and gloves for each change. Children did not wash their hands before meal or snack time, and staff did not wash their hands before serving meals to children. A water well was available in the play room for older children. However, we saw that children were not offered water or reminded about helping themselves. As a result, children did not have a drink for almost three hours. Leaders told us they ensure regular outside play, but we did not see children play outdoors during our visit.

Staff do not always follow safe practice to ensure children are kept safe and healthy.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

Staff are consistent in managing interactions; they praised positive behaviours and ignored the negative.

We saw that staff spoke to children in a calm and reassuring way and children were awarded with warm praise for positive behaviour; "well done you!" and "that's fantastic, good job!" An example of this was when a child had taken another child's personal toy brought in from home. Staff asked him to return it and he did so. Staff recognised this and he smiled as they praised him. When a child did not want to take part in an activity and cried on the floor, staff ensured he was safe but ignored him, as he wanted to be left alone and they continued with the task. We saw staff cuddling younger babies, smiling and responding to noises and gurgles from them in a lovely manner.

Staff are consistent in managing interactions in a clear, positive and appropriate manner.

### **2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?**

Staff provide a caring atmosphere and are responsive to the care of the children. Staff knew individual preferences of children and acted upon this.

Staff knew children in their care well and responded to signs such as tiredness. A child who was visibly upset was offered a lie down, as staff knew that he had been up late the night before and he was not himself. We discussed with a member of staff why one child was not taking part in a craft activity and the staff told us how they did not like having their hands painted and preferred not to do it so had taken them to another activity. Children were printing Easter cards, and some children were physically guided by staff to paint and print in a way that ensured it was where the staff wanted it to be. We saw daily record books or forms, which were completed each day by key worker staff with information such as food eaten, sleep, activities and general mood.

Most of the staff promote children's play, learning and development well and understand individual needs.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

Children are cared for in a colourful, spacious and reasonably clean environment. There are designated rooms for each age group all of which have toys and resources, although these are not all accessible to all children. Leaders ensure the safety of the premises, inside and outside.

#### **Our findings**

##### **3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?**

Leaders ensure that there are regular and thorough practices in place to support a safe environment. They identify and, so far as is possible, eliminate risks to children's safety.

The main door to the building remained locked and visitors were allowed entry and exit by staff members only through a fingerprint recognition system. We signed a visitors' book upon arrival and saw that it was used daily. All areas were risk assessed by leaders regularly indoors and outdoors as well as daily checks carried out by staff in their designated rooms. We saw carpeted areas that needed cleaning as children had their food and carried out their craft activities there. Leaders told us that these carpeted areas were deep cleaned regularly. All electrical equipment had been PAT tested in September 2016. All toilets had a good supply of paper towels and hand washing soap.

Leaders ensure the environment is safe most of the time and there are systems in place to improve hygiene and prevent infection control.

##### **3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?**

The nursery is welcoming, friendly and has ample space for play and learning indoors and outdoors.

Staff greeted parents and visitors at the entrance lobby. An information board was also available. Wall displays provided learning opportunities via mathematical language, words, letters and labelling of equipment. Staff had arranged tables and chairs to provide sociable areas for snack and meal times and made areas available where children could spend quiet time or sleep. Outdoors, children had access to an enclosed area with a safe flooring and a shading sail both of which were recently purchased. Leaders had rearranged the play area for older children to ensure 'learning areas'. However, children did not have access to equipment and resources which they could choose freely as they wanted to, such as mark making or free painting. Leaders informed us that they will continue to develop this further. The after school club had a dedicated room with age appropriate resources such as music, board games, loom bands, computer games and a pool table.

Leaders are developing areas to ensure they are accessible and suitable for all children.



### **3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?**

Leaders provide a range of resources and toys indoors and outdoors. They are age appropriate and accessible in some areas.

Leaders had equipped the baby room with stimulating and age appropriate toys. Resources were stored in low level units, although children were not encouraged to access them independently. Resources included small tables and chairs, selection of books and a quiet area with cushions, home corner, climbing frame, small world play, dressing up clothes and craft equipment. The babies room had a selection of dolls and prams, sensory toys, stacking cubes, soft toys, abacus, baby bouncers, musical instruments and rattles.

Leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment is sufficient.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Leaders at Lots of Tots ensure that the service is well run, and has an ethos of children's needs takes precedence. Staff are supported by regular appraisals and a thorough induction process prior to starting. The service has good partnerships within the community as they share the building with other groups.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

Leaders have a sense of purpose and the statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of the service. They support the team of staff to the best of their abilities, and ensure policies are updated and shared.

The statement of purpose had clear aims, which contained the relevant information for parents and accurately reflected the service that was provided. We saw a comprehensive policy file which leaders had recently reviewed and shared with staff. However, leaders told us they were limited on being able to carry out all designated tasks as they only worked part time and felt restricted to being able to support staff fully. However, all staff spoken to during the inspection told us they really enjoyed working there and felt fully supported by the person in charge as well as the responsible individual.

Leadership is effective at this service but more time is needed to ensure staff adhere to the service's policies.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Leaders have systems in place for gaining the views of children and parents.

Leaders had completed a quality of care review which reflected on the past year and plans for the next 12 months. We read positive responses, which complimented the care given. Leaders told us they will begin a healthy snack award scheme in the near future and are working towards a national quality assurance award. The service has gained a national small workplace award and a preschool sustainable award. Leaders showed a desire for further improvement and were looking for the next scheme.

Leaders value feedback and committed to planning for improvement.

#### **4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?**

Leaders ensure that the service is correctly staffed and that staff are appropriately deployed. Staff are well supported and encouraged in personal development.

We saw staff files which showed that staff had completed mandatory training as well as training to develop their careers. Three members of staff had completed their level 5

qualification and the person in charge had recently started a leadership training course. Leaders had a positive ethos for developing and improving staff training. Staff told us they felt very well supported by leaders and encouraged and supported in personal development. Following any staff training, leaders ensured evaluation and feedback to leaders and other staff members. Staff told us they received regular supervisions and annual appraisals.

Management of practitioners, staff and resources is effective.

#### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

Leaders have developed good relationships with parents, local community and schools.

We saw that there was a relaxed discussion between parents and staff when they dropped off and collected their children. Parents were encouraged to bring their children into the nursery rather than drop them off at the door. We spoke to six parents who were very complimentary of the service. They told us that staff were friendly and very approachable. They said that their children loved coming and asked to come on days they did not attend. Parents told us how children were very attached to specific staff. Parents told us they had recently been invited to a parents evening to discuss their child's development at the service. The nursery makes regular visits with the children to the local trotting park. Leaders arranged a sponsored walk, Spring fair, Christmas fair and 'breakfast with Santa' on a weekend day for children and their families.

The service has developed positive partnerships with parents and the local community.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

Following the previous inspection, the service was notified they were non compliant as they did not have a system in place to monitor the quality of care; they did not have an updated statement and they had not completed risk assessments of the environment.

Leaders confirmed that all of the above were in place following the inspection.

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

We recommended that leaders ensure;

- all staff and children wash their hands before mealtimes and after messy activities;
- children are involved in the preparation of the snack;
- the nappy changing policy and procedure is reinforced with all staff;
- that water is readily available at all times and staff are reminded to be aware of offering water regularly to younger children;
- a wider selection of activities and resources are readily available and accessible for the children and
- children are encouraged to be independent and to complete their own work when doing craft activities.

## 6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

- One inspector undertook one visit to the service on 20 March 2018 for a total of 5 and half hours and gave feedback over the phone for 30 minutes on 29 March 2018;
- we observed children and the care they received at Lots of Tots at different times throughout the day using our “SOFI” tool to capture evidence of children’s engagement and the care being provided by staff;
- we spoke to a number of children and staff during the day;
- we spoke to six parents /carers;
- we looked at information received as part of the self assessment of service statement and
- we looked at documentation and policies which included staff files, children’s files, policies ad procedures, risk assessments, fire drills and daily diaries.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Leonard Preece
Person in charge	Anna Rowlands Emily Stewart
Registered maximum number of places	52
Age range of children	0 – 11 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday 7.30hrs – 18.00hrs
Operating Language of the service	Both
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	28 October 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	20 March 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.
Additional Information:	