A report on

Busy Bees St David's Park Day Nursery

St David's Park
Ewloe
Flintshire
CH5 3XN

Date of inspection: June 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Busy Bees St David's Park Day Nursery

Name of setting	Busy Bees St David's Park Day Nursery
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Busy Bees Nurseries Limited
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Cheryl Creaser, Christopher McCandless
Person in charge	Barbara Karda
Number of places	129
Age range of children	0 – 12 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	67 children
Number of children who receive funding for early education	35 children
Opening days / times	7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	12/04/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	14/03/2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	17/06/2025

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. Ensure that practitioners challenge and support children to make more consistent progress through a balance of adult and child led activities

R2. Sharpen improvement processes so that they focus better on identifying and addressing areas for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning

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

The children are happy and settled. They have formed close bonds with practitioners and approach them for cuddles and reassurance when they need it, knowing this will be provided without question. Children's individual preferences are respected and prioritised over daily routines. For example, children sleep whenever they are tired rather than at set nap times, and babies drink their milk whenever they are hungry.

Children feel secure and communicate confidently with practitioners, knowing their views will be respected. For example, during circle time children express how they are feeling and know practitioners will support and reassure them if they say they are sad. Most children are confident to approach visitors to talk about what they are doing and show their favourite toys. Nearly all children are eager to share their achievements and involve practitioners in their play as they know they will respond with enthusiasm.

Most children interact well together and are beginning to form friendships. They are developing positive social skills effectively, such as turn taking and sharing. For example, children share the magazines and take turns to use the scissors and glue sticks while creating collages of picnic baskets. Younger children work together to create a tower using soft play cubes, taking turns to place cubes on the tower and cheering together when it topples over.

Nearly all children enjoy the activities on offer and engage well with tasks. For example, children enjoy exploring the mud during messy play, using the scoops to create mud pies and searching for 'treasure' hidden inside. Nearly all children concentrate well and focus intently to achieve what they have set out to do. For instance, when preparing a 'teddy bear's picnic' the older children persevere well whilst using the safety knives to cut harder vegetables and show a great sense of pride when they manage to slice all the way through. The younger children concentrate well while using scoops to fill the cups in the sand tray and using the sponges to give the dolls a bath. Lots of laughter, cheering and happy chatter can be heard during activities as children excitedly show staff and their friends what they are doing.

All children are encouraged and supported to do things for themselves. Older children complete self-care tasks such as wiping noses and washing hands independently. Babies practise self-feeding during lunch and snack times with plenty of time and space given to do so independently. Nearly all children are happy to help tidy up at the end of activities. All children lead and direct their play and choose resources as they wish as all toys and activities are set out within their reach.

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

Many children make suitable progress from their individual starting points during their time at the setting. They play and explore with curiosity and confidence. They make independent choices about their play and use resources creatively to follow their interests, for instance using an advertising leaflet as a treasure map.

Many children engage in creative play, using a variety of media and materials. They enjoy expressing their ideas through painting and role play. A majority sustain concentration for appropriate periods, particularly during outdoor activities. During their play activities, a few children do not always work well or share resources with others positively.

Many children develop their communication skills confidently. They express themselves clearly, for instance when explaining the feeling and the smell of cinnamon scented dough as they squeeze it through their fingers. Many listen attentively and respond well to simple instructions, for example at snack times.

Many children make useful progress in developing their early Welsh language skills. They enjoy taking part in Welsh songs and small group activities. They understand and respond to a range of common Welsh phrases, and use basic vocabulary confidently, such as good morning and counting to three. A few children are beginning to use Welsh independently, for instance singing 'happy birthday' to others in Welsh, without prompting.

Many children enjoy listening to stories, and handling books and leaflets. They handle books with care and respond positively to familiar stories. A few children talk enthusiastically about some of the characters and main events in stories they have heard.

Many children show increasing confidence when mark making, using a range of media both indoors and outdoors. A few recognise that writing can represent their name and are beginning to understand writing as a means of communication, for example when trying to write their name on their drawings.

A majority of children's mathematical development is progressing appropriately. They are beginning to identify shapes in the environment and use mathematical language in their play, for instance when comparing the size of towers they have built from blocks. Many count with growing confidence and join in with adults when they count out loud. A few count objects reliably, for instance when playing with wooden rings in the construction area.

Nearly all children develop their physical skills effectively. They take part in activities that support their development, such as balancing on walls and when trying to keep eggs on spoons. Many handle tools and utensils with increasing control, including brushes, and rolling pins. They enjoy physical challenges and show perseverance, for example, lifting wooden planks to make a slope.

Most children are developing their digital skills successfully. They use a range of technology to support their play, such as using cameras to photograph their friends and their play activities. Many children are starting to explore programmable devices and recognise well that the control buttons make the device move in different ways.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners are confident regarding their responsibility to safeguard children. All practitioners are confident in the correct steps to follow should they have a concern about a child and have completed the relevant safeguarding training. All practitioners have current paediatric first aid training. Any accidents and incidents are recorded effectively, and these records are shared with parents. Practitioners encourage healthy lifestyles by providing

plenty of opportunities for physical activity and for children to spend time outdoors in the fresh air. They promote children's physical development through a range of activities where they practise climbing, balancing, and taking appropriate risks. Good hygiene is promoted. For instance, practitioners encourage all children to wash their hands as needed and use PPE effectively to prevent the risk of cross contamination. Highly effective procedures are in place to prepare suitable food for children with allergies. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners interact with children with warmth and affection. They provide comfort and reassurance when children need it and treat them with care and respect. Practitioners use effective and consistent strategies to encourage positive interactions and model positive social skills throughout the day as they play alongside the children. They provide consistent praise to children for sharing and being kind to each other. Practitioners use distraction techniques to positively engage children in activities and gently give clear instructions whilst explaining to children when their behaviour is not appropriate. For example, when children bicker over toys, they calmly support the children to share and clearly explain the importance of kind behaviour.

Practitioners know the children well and respond to their individual needs effectively. They collect comprehensive details about children's preferences and individual needs prior to them starting at the setting and these details are used to plan a variety of stimulating activities and experiences. Practitioners ensure that activities are varied, with a good mixture of outdoor and indoor activities that encourage exploration and curiosity. There are effective systems in place to ensure additional support for children with additional learning needs. Practitioners recognise when children require additional support to take part in activities. Practitioners ensure information is shared effectively with parents so they are kept up to date about their child's development. Regular information is shared via a secure online application. This includes information about children's daily routines as well as photographs and information about children's achievements and their next steps for learning.

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

All practitioners work supportively with children. They place a strong emphasis on creating an inclusive, caring environment where children feel safe and supported on their learning journey. Practitioners respond sensitively to children's needs. They encourage children's creativity during play. For instance, they support children to find solutions when faced with challenges during construction activities. They interact with children supportively and model behaviours such as turn-taking and sharing.

Most practitioners demonstrate a suitable understanding of child development and the importance of children learning through play and exploration. As a result, they provide a broad range of stimulating resources that reflect children's interests and promote their positive engagement. However, a minority do not always strike the right balance between timely intervention in children's play and allowing more independent exploration.

Practitioners provide children with varied opportunities to develop their early literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. For example, children explore mathematical concepts, such as

size, through outdoor play and investigate the ways in which different digital devices can be used. Practitioners ensure that they encourage children's physical and creative development, both indoors and outdoors, for instance encouraging children to run and jump in different ways like they were animals.

Practitioners observe children during their play thoughtfully. They often note when children achieve a goal and recognise the activities that engage different children well. This helps then to provide appropriate resources and activities that allow children to follow their fascinations. However, practitioners do not always use this information well enough to plan a balance of child-led and adult-led activities that support and challenge children effectively.

Practitioners ensure that the learning environment is well-organised to promote exploration and choice. Many ensure that children have extended periods of uninterrupted play. They are effective role models and introduce new vocabulary during play.

The setting promotes children's understanding of the Welsh language, and the culture of Wales competently. They incorporate basic Welsh phrases into everyday routines and activities and help children to learn about cultural events, such as the story of St Dwynwen. As a result, children are beginning to use their Welsh language skills confidently.

Practitioners place a suitable emphasis on developing children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. For example, they introduce children to a variety of important festivals and traditions from around the world. They use real-life experiences, such as visits to a fire-station and a litter pick, to help children learn about their community and the importance of caring for their environment.

Environment: Good

Leaders prioritise children's safety and implement effective systems to manage, monitor and minimise any potential hazards. Daily safety checks take place to ensure that all areas and resources are free from any potential hazards. These checks are meticulously recorded, with any required mitigating steps noted and implemented promptly. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the premises and outings, which identify any potential hazards to children's safety and the steps taken to eliminate or minimise the risk to children. These risk assessments are reviewed regularly. Practitioners ensure that children know how to exit the premises quickly and safely if required by completing regular fire drills. These fire drills are well documented, with any actions required noted and implemented swiftly.

All play areas are comfortable and welcoming with plenty of space to allow children to move around freely. Leaders ensure children have a sense of belonging by displaying photographs and samples of children's work on the notice boards throughout the setting. Playrooms are well organised into different learning areas, with a good range of natural resources, loose parts and real-life items both indoors and outdoors. For example, there are a range of wooden blocks, pegs, tin cans and buttons available in each of the playrooms to encourage children to use their creative skills and imagination. Leaders place emphasis on using natural, calm colours and decoration throughout the setting, providing a calm and homely environment that is not over-stimulating for children.

Leaders ensure that the outdoor areas offer children a range of interesting and exciting play opportunities that help children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Mud kitchens, sand and water play areas are available for all age groups, as well as opportunities to explore a wide range of recycled items, as well as natural items such as shells, pinecones and pebbles. This encourages children to explore, experiment and use their senses. Leaders ensure all playrooms have suitable furniture and equipment to aid children's independence, such as low level sinks, toilets, tables and chairs as well as toilet seats and potties for younger children. There is also a good range of toys and resources, which promote multiculturalism and diversity, which helps children learn about the world around them. All resources are of good quality and are appropriate for the ages of children in each room and are stored at low level so children can access them independently.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to providing a nurturing, high-quality environment where all children feel safe and valued. They promote a warm, caring atmosphere, and ensure that practitioners work collaboratively to support children's well-being and development well. The leadership team has a clear vision for the setting, which they communicate effectively to staff and parents. As a result, practitioners feel well supported and are confident in approaching leaders with ideas and concerns.

The nursery has clear statement of purpose, which reflects accurately its aims and its provision. Leaders ensure that appropriate policies and procedures guide practitioners in their daily work. They undertake regular reviews of the setting to make meaningful improvements, ensuring that available space is used effectively to create engaging experiences for children.

Leaders have established suitable self-evaluation processes that help them to identify a few areas for improvement appropriately. They undertake appraisals and supervisions with practitioners regularly. These encourage practitioners to reflect on their work and consider their professional development. Leaders support staff's aspirations positively. However, leaders do not always focus sharply enough on identifying strengths and shortcomings in teaching or learning. As a result, they are not always clear enough about the areas of practitioners' work that need improvement.

Leaders prioritise the matters they want to develop thoughtfully. This work is often effective in improving provision and practice. For example, their work to improve the use of Welsh throughout the setting has resulted in many children using the language confidently.

Leaders make beneficial use of available funding to enrich provision, for example by investing in outdoor play equipment and nature-based learning resources, which have contributed positively to children's engagement and well-being.

Leaders support practitioners' professional development beneficially. They ensure that practitioners receive relevant training that supports their understanding of children's care and well-being. However, not all leaders, or practitioners with teaching commitments, have a strong enough understanding of the curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings in Wales.

The setting maintains strong relationships with parents and carers. Leaders provide parents with regular reports on their children's development. They use their digital platform beneficially to provide parents with regular updates on children's activities. Leaders respond well to parents' questions and requests, and this helps to ensure that children settle well, and that their well-being is promoted effectively.

Leaders form and maintain worthwhile partnerships with external agencies. They engage positively with advisory teachers and health professionals to seek guidance. They use this information well, and particularly effectively when supporting children with additional needs. These partnerships have had a positive impact on the setting's ability to provide tailored support for individual children. Leaders maintain useful links with local schools. They take great care to support children sensitively as they prepare to move to school and share information with these schools helpfully.

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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