A report on

Appletree Day Nursery (WALES) Redwick Ltd

North Row
Redwick
Nr Magor
NP26 3DX

Date of inspection: November 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Appletree Day Nursery (WALES) Redwick Ltd

Name of setting	Appletree Day Nursery
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Jane Alsop
Person in charge	Ellen Rodgers and Lauren Williams
Number of places	60
Age range of children	Birth to 12 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	30
Number of children who receive funding for early education	7
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 7.30am – 6.00pm
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The provider is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.
Date of previous CIW inspection	15 April 2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the first Estyn inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	11/11/2025

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)**	
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 Further develop observation and planning systems to help practitioners identify children's next steps in development

R2 Ensure that the outdoor environment for younger children is appropriately maintained and provides a wide range of play opportunities

R3 Regularly seek and take on board the views of practitioners to further enhance teamwork and ensure that all leaders and practitioners feel valued

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

Children are happy, settled and confident to express themselves. They have many opportunities to make choices and decide how to spend their time. Children explore the indoor and outdoor environments, freely choosing from a variety of activities and resources. Their individual preferences and needs are respected and prioritised. For example, babies follow their own sleep and feeding routines.

Children have close relationships with practitioners and receive support and comfort, which enhances their well-being. Nearly all children cope well when separating from parents and carers and quickly engage in their chosen play. Children develop a sense of belonging as they learn to follow familiar daily routines. For example, they know to hang up their coats, bags and shoes and put on their slippers when they arrive and do so independently.

Nearly all children are starting to form friendships in line with their age and stage of development. For example, children gleefully call out their friend's name as they notice them arrive in the playroom. Most children play happily with or alongside each other and are beginning to co-operate and share resources well. For example, children share pots, pans and jugs of coloured water to make magic potions, and make room for other children to join in. Many children are learning to consider the needs of others. Older children help younger children when completing activities, such as planting seeds and flowers.

Nearly all children enjoy their play and engage well in the activities of their choice, sustaining interest for appropriate periods of time. For example, young children thoroughly enjoy sensory play with coloured rice grains, showing fascination as they fill different sized containers and watch grains of rice fall from their hands. Nearly all children enthusiastically join in with singing and action songs, dancing or tapping along to the beat.

Nearly all children show an increasing level of independence during their time at the setting and have many worthwhile opportunities to develop these skills further. For example, older children complete self-care tasks, such as wiping noses, washing their hands and helping to prepare and serve their meals. Babies practise self-feeding during lunch, with plenty of time and space given to do so independently. All children lead and direct their play and choose resources as they wish as all toys and activities are set out within their reach. They enjoy developing a wide range of skills as they play, such as being creative when drawing or using blocks to create tall towers and bridges.

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners have a sound understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. All practitioners have attended relevant safeguarding training and are confident in the steps to follow should they have a concern about a child. Practitioners supervise children well and complete all relevant records such as registers, medication, accidents and incidents in sufficient detail. All practitioners have current paediatric first aid training, which enables them to treat minor accidents confidently. Practitioners undertake regular fire evacuation drills, ensuring that all staff and children know what to do in an emergency. Practitioners follow effective systems to manage children's allergies and health needs. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners successfully promote a healthy lifestyle and implement good hygiene practices. For example, they use PPE effectively to prevent the risk of cross contamination and encourage all children to wash their hands as needed. Practitioners provide plenty of opportunities for physical activity and for children to spend time outdoors in the fresh air. A cook provides a variety of freshly prepared meals which are healthy and nutritious. Practitioners make sure fresh drinking water is always available to children at the water stations, ensuring children have independent access.

Practitioners interact with children with warmth and affection. They provide comfort and reassurance and treat children 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 praise to children for sharing and being kind to each other. Practitioners gently give clear instructions whilst explaining to children how their behaviour may make their friends feel. For example, when children squabble over toys, they calmly support them to share and clearly explain the importance of kind behaviour. Practitioners use simple signs to support communication with preverbal children, which helps them express themselves successfully.

Practitioners promote children's play, learning and development successfully. They gather detailed information about children before they start at the setting and share information with one another when children move to a new room. This ensures that practitioners continue to meet children's individual needs effectively. Practitioners know children well and provide activities and experiences they know will interest them as well as support their all-round development. They take opportunities to enhance children's learning through conversation and effective questioning. Practitioners recognise when children may have additional learning needs (ALN) and support them well. They work closely with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure best support and outcomes for all children.

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

Practitioners provide a welcoming learning environment, which promotes children's enjoyment and engagement successfully. They know children well and support and encourage them appropriately. Practitioners have embraced the curriculum and provide a broad range of meaningful and authentic experiences. Daily routines are flexible and enable

children to play and pursue their own interests confidently both indoors and outdoors. This ensures learning is holistic and supports children's all-round development well.

Practitioners plan interesting experiences for children to connect with nature and develop their curiosity and imagination. They provide daily opportunities for children to observe farm animals or play alongside the setting's chickens. The strong focus on outdoor learning supports children's understanding of the world, including plants, animals and the seasons successfully.

Practitioners support the development of children's spiritual, moral and cultural development effectively. They encourage children to show kindness and respect to each other and all living creatures. For instance, they show children how to care for the trees they plant or look after an injured bird. Practitioners provide daily opportunities for children to feel a sense of awe and wonder as they interact with the rich natural environment.

Practitioners promote Welsh culture suitably by celebrating St David's Day with children and encouraging them to taste traditional Welsh food. They model a few simple Welsh words and phrases throughout each session. Practitioners sing lively songs in Welsh, which encourages children's enjoyment of the language successfully. The setting acknowledges festivals from a range of cultures. For example, practitioners and children explore traditional Indian dress during Divali and create a dragon dance during Chinese New Year.

Practitioners are good language role models and introduce new vocabulary to children as they play. They provide ample opportunities for children to share books and stories and provide beneficial opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills. This is beginning to include innovative and creative approaches. For instance, practitioners support children to pick blackberries from the hedgerows before making blackberry paint to use in their mark making.

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to enhance their mathematical understanding and numeracy skills as they play. They engage children in using mathematical vocabulary effectively as they explore in the water or build with blocks. Practitioners provide a few opportunities to use digital resources such as cameras, and model how to use tablet computers to search for information. Provision to support children's physical skills is strong. Children develop resilience and confidence as they run together in the large field or climb a gate. Practitioners provide a wide range of tools and resources, which develop fine motor skills well. These include hammers and trowels, which children use with good control.

Practitioners provide a positive environment where children's achievements and successes are celebrated. They play alongside children and are developing their confidence in knowing when to provide support and when to step back. This approach is having a positive impact. Children develop their thinking skills well and are beginning to set their own challenges. For instance, children try different approaches and persevere as they attempt to break into a large pumpkin.

Practitioners make suitable observations of children's play and record these appropriately. They use their assessments to provide a helpful initial assessment of children's learning and development. However, ongoing observations of learning are at an early stage of development and do not inform the next steps in planning well enough.

Environment: Good

The environment is safe and secure. Practitioners ensure that external doors are always locked and keep an accurate record of all visitors, so only authorised persons have entry to the setting. Leaders have developed effective risk assessments for all areas of the setting and outings, which show 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 are proactive in undertaking daily safety checks of the environment and complete risk assessments for specific activities, ensuring that risks are minimised. Leaders monitor and manage regular building safety checks effectively.

Leaders ensure that the setting is welcoming and bright with plenty of natural light. The playrooms are arranged in a way that gives children ample space to move around and play freely. Leaders create a sense of belonging by providing individual coat pegs and displaying children's work to celebrate their achievements effectively. Leaders and practitioners have developed the spaces to give children easy, independent access to a range of interesting and developmentally appropriate toys, resources, and activities. Children benefit from access to a large field, which houses a small holding with donkeys, chickens and alpacas who they interact with and help care for. Leaders ensure children in pre-school can access the outdoors in all weathers using the sheltered area directly off the playroom. There are some exciting resources available to children in this area, including block play and woodwork materials. Younger children can play in the large field and access outdoor play spaces directly off their playrooms. Practitioners ensure they use these areas well to promote children's physical development and wellbeing.

Leaders provide good quality furniture, toys, and resources, a few of which promote cultural awareness and Welsh heritage effectively. There is a range of natural materials and resources for children to use in a variety of ways, along with authentic resources in the role play area. This helps children to learn to take care of things, treat them with respect and use items safely, for instance handling real crockery with care. As a result, leaders provide children with an environment that supports much of their learning and development needs well. Leaders ensure most resources and equipment are well maintained. However, some equipment in the younger children's outdoor play areas look worn and tired and the areas do not promote all areas of learning well enough.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders share a clear vision for the setting to provide a safe environment where learning is fun, and children experience the natural world. They ensure that policies and procedures are in place to support the day-to-day running of the setting. These are reviewed regularly and available for staff and parents. Leaders make sure that the statement of purpose is clear and provides an accurate picture of the setting. This helps parents to make an informed decision about the suitability of the setting for their child.

Leaders have clear processes to evaluate the work of the setting. They have an accurate understanding of the settings strengths and areas in need of further development. Leaders set targets for improvement that impact positively on outcomes for children, such as improving learning environments and providing authentic learning experiences. They

respond to advice and feedback from external agencies well and use this information to help them inform their setting improvement plan effectively. This secures ongoing improvements, such as embracing the curriculum and enhancing provision for children's physical development.

Leaders ensure that all practitioners attend mandatory training and regularly provide beneficial opportunities for them to gain further qualifications. Staff working with older children benefit from accessing a range of training provided by the local authority. For example, after attending training on the curriculum they have made beneficial adaptations to their practice.

Leaders carry out regular supervision and annual appraisal meetings with practitioners, which lead to agreed goals and actions. They give practitioners the opportunity to reflect on their practice, share successes and challenges and identify future professional learning needs effectively.

Leaders communicate with practitioners through regular meetings and informal discussions. They are committed to building a team ethos and take steps to enhance the well-being of practitioners. Most practitioners feel valued and supported by leaders. However, few practitioners feel leaders do not listen to their views well enough. This has a negative impact on the ability of all leaders and staff, to work collaboratively as an effective team.

Parents value the service provided at the setting and are happy with the progress their children make. Leaders involve parents in regular events such as bonfire night and sports day, which support a sense of community well. The setting has developed strong links with local schools, and this aids positive transition when children move to the next stage of their education.

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

This document was translated by Prysg (from English to Welsh).

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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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