**A report on**

**Kate's Day Nursery Ltd**

**115 Mold Road**
**Mynydd Isa**
**Flintshire**
**CH7 6TG**

**Date of inspection: June 2025**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Kate's Day Nursery Ltd

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of setting | Kate’s Day Nursery Ltd |
| Category of care provided | Full day care |
| Registered person(s) | Kate’s Day Nursery Ltd |
| Responsible individual (if applicable) | Kate Burke |
| Person in charge | Louisa Hughes and Peter Holland |
| Number of places | 37 |
| Age range of children | 0 – 12 years |
| Number of 3 and 4 year old children | 21 |
| Number of children who receive funding for early education | 8 |
| Opening days / times | 8.00 – 6.00 Monday - Friday |
| Flying start service | Yes |
| Language of the setting | English |
| Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer? | Yes |
| Welsh Language Active Offer | The service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture |
| Date of previous CIW inspection | Post Registration |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection | N/A |
| Dates of this inspection visit(s) | 24/06/2025 |
| The setting is English medium, and children have English as a first language. | |

## Summary

| Theme | Judgement |
|---|---|
| **Well-being** | **Good** |
| **Learning**<br>**(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)** | **Adequate** |
| **Care and development** | **Adequate** |
| **Teaching and assessment**<br>**(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)** | **Adequate** |
| **Environment** | **Good** |
| **Leadership and management** | **Adequate** |

## Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

## Recommendations

R1. Ensure that practitioners consistently use a positive approach to managing behaviour that respects individual children's needs and understanding

R2. Provide more opportunities for children to develop their independence skills during snack times

R3. Further develop practitioners' knowledge and confidence in delivering the Curriculum for Wales

R4. Strengthen observation and assessment processes to inform future planning

R5. Further develop the use of the Welsh language throughout the setting

R6. Create a structured development plan that focuses on measurable steps to secure sustained improvements

## 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 enjoy their time at the setting. They have a voice and know that their opinions are generally listened to and valued. Children respond well to the opportunities available to them when making choices and decisions about how they spend their time. For example, they confidently move around the environment, choosing where and what they want to play with. Most children express themselves and their needs verbally or through gestures successfully. for example saying what they would like from the snack choices or pointing at items they wish the practitioners to get for them.

Nearly all children settle well and feel safe in their surroundings. They are warmly greeted by practitioners, helping them to develop a sense of value and belonging. Children cope well with separation from their parents and happily join in with activities on arrival. Children form positive bonds with practitioners. They happily approach all practitioners confidently, even those from other rooms, for support and play opportunities, for example when needing help to get some water from the tap or wanting to share a story. Nearly all children develop friendships that are meaningful. They actively seek others to join in their play and enjoy sharing their experiences, such as following each other when riding on bikes outside.

Children's interactions are generally positive. They learn to understand the needs of others and happily play alongside each other. They invite practitioners and their peers to participate in their play and clearly enjoy these interactions, for example when shaking the instruments and gesturing to practitioners to join them. Children are developing an understanding of the importance of being respectful towards each other. Older children enthusiastically play alongside the younger children helping with activities, such as joining in when a younger child was laughing at their reflection in the metal container. Many children play co-operatively and, with practitioners' support, they are beginning to understand the importance of sharing and taking turns. Many children understand and follow the routines happily, such as lining up to go outside and sitting at the table for snack.

Most children have fun and are active in their play and learning. They freely explore the range of opportunities indoors and outdoors with enthusiasm, keen to see what is available for them to play with. Children show enjoyment smiling and laughing together when burying their legs in the sand and moving the dinosaurs around and roaring. Nearly all children enjoy getting fresh air and taking part in physical activities when playing outside, for example being in the sand pit and digging big holes.

Children are beginning to benefit from opportunities to develop their independence. During snack, nearly all choose their own food and pour themselves drinks. However, children do not have enough opportunities to develop their self-help skills, such as being encouraged to put their own coats on. Children enjoy developing a range of skills as they play, such as being creative when pretending to make food in the home corner and developing their co-ordination skills when learning to walk.

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

Nearly all children make appropriate progress from their individual starting points. Most children speak clearly with adults, for example talking about bandages and injuries during role play and discussing the weather while preparing to go outside. Nearly all children listen to adults and follow simple instructions, such as washing hands and going to get their coats. When engaged in play, children listen to adults' explanations and ask appropriate questions, for example asking what they could use to peel a potato in the home corner.

A few children show an interest in making marks, for example choosing card and writing tools at the mark making corner, painting on the easel and drawing on the chalk board outside. Many children develop their creativity and strengthen their hands using dough to roll, pinch and squeeze using tools and cutters, for example flattening, rolling and shaping a piece of dough to create a dinosaur and giving him eyes to see. However, many children do not maintain their concentration for long and practitioners do not always provide purposeful support.

Children gain a sense of belonging and are beginning to recognise the first letter of their name from using the self-registration picture cards on arrival. A few children enjoy listening to stories read to them outdoors.

Most children join in enthusiastically with singing familiar nursery rhymes and are able to repeat basic Welsh words. However, children's experiences of the Welsh language are limited. A few children use a computer keyboard to role play at the medical surgery and look at images on a digital tablet. However, opportunities to engage in purposeful use of digital resources to support their learning are minimal.

Nearly all children engage energetically in outdoor play, looking for bugs, exploring water troughs and investigating as they pour water down tubes. Many children enjoy the freedom to stretch, jump and run, using their whole body with confidence helping them become ready for learning. Nearly all children demonstrate well-developed physical skills, such as when riding balance bikes, digging with spades and balancing on wooden planks. They are able to turn a small tap, manipulate jigsaw pieces and use tongs to place pieces of chopped vegetables into various containers.

Many children enjoy exploring in the mud kitchen, experimenting with capacity, choosing suitably sized containers and using vocabulary such as full, empty, more and less. Many children use their imagination and creativity, mixing soups and pies with sticks and utensils, showing delight when offering adults a taste.

Most children explore the play areas well together, using problem solving and discussion to come to fair decisions, for example deciding that they need to find two helicopters so that they can both 'fly' around the outdoor space together. A few children need adult support to ensure that they develop their personal and social skills appropriately.

**Care and development: Adequate**

Practitioners have a good understanding of how to keep children safe, following the settings appropriate policies and procedures. They ensure that children are sufficiently supervised during activities and routines. Practitioners are aware of the procedure to follow in an emergency as they practise regular fire drills with children. Leaders ensure that they and practitioners have up-to-date training, including paediatric first aid and safeguarding. They understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection, and the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Practitioners record and share any accidents or incidents effectively with parents.

Generally, practitioners promote a healthy lifestyle. They follow a menu that ensures that they provide a healthy and nutritious snack and meal choices appropriately. They employ good hygiene practices well, encouraging children to wash their hands and dealing with intimate care such as nappy changing with a regard to infection control. Practitioners provide regular access to outdoors, allowing children to be active and get fresh air.

Practitioners are caring and communicate warmly with children. Most practitioners are good role models and provide care in a supportive manner. However, practitioners miss opportunities to create a calm and relaxed social environment where children are given the time to share their ideas and feelings. Practitioners play alongside children and use questioning that supports them to develop their speech and language skills. However, a minority of practitioners do not always interact in a way that support children's learning and development effectively. Practitioners are beginning to develop their understanding of the importance of positive behaviour management strategies to support children to share and take turns, for example explaining to children that they need to share by giving them five minutes with a resource and then allowing another child to have a go. However, practitioners do not always celebrate positive behaviour, encouraging children to learn from their peers.

Practitioners are involved in planning. They sometimes consider the interests of the children and offer interesting activities and learning experiences. For example, they add bubbles to water and provide magnets for them to investigate freely. Most practitioners record the individual development of each child suitably. They observe children and use their findings to understand children's abilities and needs appropriately. This allows them to identify some next steps in their learning effectively. Practitioners work with outside agencies and act on their guidance when providing tailored care for children with additional learning needs (ALN). This helps in developing consistent strategies and support for the children. They ensure that resources are stored at a child friendly height, and encourage independence when completing tasks and routines such as toileting. However, opportunities to further develop these skills, such as allowing children to prepare their own snack, butter crackers and get their belongings to go outside, are missed.

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

Practitioners plan and organise appropriate learning activities to enable children to engage in authentic play indoors and outdoors. They are beginning to use their understanding of the

curriculum to plan a range of engaging experiences and environments that nurture children's curiosity. However, this work is still in its early stages.

Practitioners arrange suitable areas for mark making with a variety of writing tools and recycled card to experiment freely. They have a cosy, purposeful book area that attracts children to relax with books. A few staff engage in effective book sharing; however, practitioners do not always encourage children to continue their enjoyment of books independently. Practitioners are beginning to introduce basic Welsh vocabulary. However, they do not plan a structured approach to ensure that Welsh is developed systematically and consistently across the setting.

The outdoor space is particularly effective in providing many areas to develop children's physical skills. For example, it has areas that encourage children to balance along planks and take risks on bikes and tricycles. There are a variety of tools and utensils for children to use when planting, or as they explore in soil, sand and water. This enables children to be curious and enjoy the awe and wonder of mixing, pouring and observing changes when water is combined with other materials.

Practitioners support children to develop their mathematical language during their play, when comparing the size of dinosaurs and discussing how heavy the turnip is. They use a digital tablet to show children images of caterpillars and butterflies and discussing the life cycle. However, practitioners do not always support children to develop their mathematical and digital skills well enough to ensure further learning.

Practitioners engage in thoughtful discussions about nature, which encourages curiosity and a sense of wonder. They model kindness and turn taking, supporting children's social and moral development. However, behaviour strategies are not always consistent, and a few children struggle to share or manage their emotions, which at times distracts from quality learning interactions. While staff respond calmly to challenging behaviour, opportunities to reflect on feelings or explore wider cultural diversity through resources and experiences are limited.

Practitioners are beginning to observe and assess children's progress to support future development and have suitable methods in place to support children with ALN. Practitioners provide a range of interesting activities that encourage children to play and learn from each other. However, planning and assessment are not consistent enough to support children's next steps in their learning and development. While interactions are joyful, staff are at an early stage of developing their understanding of how to use the Curriculum to support children's progress effectively.

**Environment: Good**

Leaders and practitioners ensure that the environment is safe and secure by implementing effective procedures and routines. They correctly record the arrival and departure times of visitors, children, and practitioners. Practitioners are aware of the setting's health and safety procedures and implement them well. Routines are completed daily so the environment is kept clean. Regular checks are completed on the environment to ensure that it is well maintained and that any possible hazards are identified and managed well so that they are not a potential risk to children. Leaders ensure that required safety checks and mandatory

records, including the record keeping of fire and smoke alarm tests, are completed in a timely manner. Leaders provide indoor and outdoor environments that are safe for children. For example, they ensure that gates are kept locked and safety gates are used appropriately to prevent children accessing areas unsupervised.

The environment provides a welcoming atmosphere. Neutral colours used in the rooms contribute to providing a calm feeling. Attractive displays of children's work and photos of their families give children a sense of belonging. The environment provides suitable space and facilities for children. Leaders ensure that children have the room to be grouped according to their ages and stages of development, which allows the areas to be developed and support age-appropriate play and learning. All spaces are equipped with quality and suitably sized furniture so that children are comfortable and can have some independence. Older children can independently access and use the available toilet and handwashing facilities, and nappy changing facilities are effectively accessible for children and practitioners.

Leaders have developed inviting and inspiring outdoor areas that give older and younger children space to play, learn and be in the fresh air. The newly redeveloped areas provide children with a range of exciting opportunities with areas created providing a range of interesting opportunities for the children. An area has been created to give babies their own space, enabling them to crawl and toddle around safely, while accessing the range of resources available. The larger area, used by the older children creates a space where they are inspired to be creative, physical and imaginative in their play. Leaders and practitioners have worked hard to create different areas of learning, including a well-used and popular mud kitchen, and a sheltered outdoor classroom where children take part in a range of activities or have some quiet time sharing a book. The popular water play area and large sand pit allow children to use their exploration skills as they dig, pour, measure and solve problems. Practitioners ensure that the outdoor areas are utilised well.

Leaders provide a wide range of resources that are well maintained and of good quality. They ensure that natural, recycled and authentic resources are used effectively to enhance the environment, for example a range of different sized pots, pans and containers in the mud kitchen and real food for children to play with in different areas throughout the nursery. Resources are organised well on low level shelving, so that they are easily accessible to children. Various equipment is available for children to support their physical development, for example slides, bikes, trikes and large tubes and tires for children to crawl through, climb on and practise their balancing skills.

**Leadership and management: Adequate**

Leaders have created a happy, friendly and welcoming ethos. They have a clear vision for the setting and have recently made substantial changes to enhance play and learning areas. A warm, homely environment ensures that children's well-being is a priority. The statement of purpose provides a clear picture of the setting and relevant policies and procedures are up to date. Leaders have a team of practitioners who work well together. There are safe recruitment procedures in place, ensuring that staff are appropriately qualified for their roles. No breach of regulations or NMS was identified during the inspection'.

Leaders support staff well-being effectively through regular discussion and supervisions. However, not all practitioners are deployed effectively enough to achieve the greatest benefit to children. For example, practitioners sometimes miss opportunities to engage in beneficial teaching moments. This sometimes leads to children not always benefiting from the best learning opportunities.

Leaders draw on a range of professional learning opportunities to support the ongoing development of practitioner's skills and understanding. For instance, through specific training, leaders and practitioners have developed their skills in creating an authentic environment, which supports them in providing appropriate learning experiences.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning processes are in their early stages of development. This has supported leaders to make positive improvements in areas such as enhancing the outdoor provision and developing focused spaces for mark making. In addition, leaders have established an organised area for meetings and administrative work. However, leaders do not always identify key priority areas and develop clear, robust action plans to ensure sustained and consistent progress.

Leaders make appropriate use of professional partnerships, such as with the local authority advisory service. Leaders and practitioners have made some progress in developing their understanding of the curriculum and implementing improvements. However, at times, there is a delay in acting on guidance, which slows the pace of improvement. Frequent staff changes in some rooms also present challenges in sustaining progress consistently.

Leaders and practitioners have established good links with the local primary school. This contributes to supportive transitions and continuity in children's learning and confidence. The setting keeps parents well informed through regular newsletters, opportunities for discussion and a digital app that provides updates on daily activities. Regular visits to the local park help children learn how to cross the road safely and provide opportunities to enjoy the local community.

Leaders use grant funding effectively to purchase resources and access funded training opportunities, both supporting the quality of provision and building staff confidence.

## 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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