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Arolygiaeth Gofal
Cymru
Care Inspectorate
Wales

A report on

Happy Days Day Nursery Ltd

**115 Russell Road
Rhyl
Clwyd
LL18 3NR**

Date of inspection: January 2026

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Happy Days Day Nursery Ltd

Name of setting	Happy Days Day Nursery Ltd
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	North Wales Childcare Ltd
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Nicola Evans
Person in charge	Nicola Evans
Number of places	104
Age range of children	4 months to 12 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	10
Number of children who receive funding for early education	3
Opening days / times	7:15 – 18:00 Monday - Friday
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	4 March 2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection	March 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	27/01/2026
Additional information	

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	Adequate
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Environment	Adequate
Leadership and management	Poor

Non-compliance

We identified serious non-compliance in relation to leadership and management, and we have issued a priority action notice to the provider.

Information on all non-compliance is included in the Action and Improvement Summary report, which will be sent separate to the report by CIW.

Recommendations

- R1 Create a culture of safeguarding at the setting that thoroughly considers all risks to children's wellbeing and safety
- R2 Ensure parents and carers receive regular and sufficient information about their children's progress in learning and how they can support their next steps
- R3 Address the non-compliance identified regarding risk assessments at the setting

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

Nearly all children make choices about how they spend their time at the setting. They choose what to play with from the plentiful resources available to them. They move freely between different areas, transporting toys and resources to support their play. Nearly all children are confident to express themselves, both verbally and non-verbally knowing that all their attempts at communication are valued and responded to with interest.

Nearly all children are happy, confident and enjoy attending the setting. Most children cope well with separation from their parents and carers, greeting practitioners warmly. They form strong positive emotional attachments with practitioners. Nearly all children invite practitioners into their play eagerly, bringing books to share and proudly showing models they have made. Nearly all children are familiar with the routines and expectations of the setting; this adds to their sense of safety and well-being.

Most children are beginning to form friendships at the setting. They smile and laugh as they chat together whilst eating their lunch and play contentedly alongside each other or with their friends. They are beginning to co-operate and share resources, often with support from practitioners. For example, they negotiate and wait patiently for other children to finish their turn with a toy before they use it. They show respect and care for resources and toys and use them appropriately.

Nearly all children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. They enjoy both adult led activities and free play experiences. They move around the environment freely as they direct their own play, successfully choosing where and what they want to play with. Nearly all young children enjoy listening to stories shared with them by practitioners. They join in enthusiastically when singing familiar songs and rhymes with practitioners, laughing happily as songs and actions get faster.

Nearly all children have good opportunities to develop their independent skills. For example, they begin to chop fruit and use tongs at snack time to serve themselves. Children of all ages begin to use cutlery appropriately to feed themselves.

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: Adequate

Practitioners build trusting relationships with children and their families. They supervise and support children conscientiously. They follow effective hygiene procedures, washing their hands regularly and encouraging children to develop good hygiene habits.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to go outside and benefit from fresh air and exercise. They ensure that children have access to water throughout the session and sit with children at mealtimes, ensuring that mealtimes are sociable and safe. Practitioners record accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries accurately and share this information with parents promptly. Leaders monitor these records monthly to identify patterns and trends should they arise. Most practitioners have up to date paediatric first aid and safeguarding training.

The setting's safeguarding policy meets requirements and practitioners understand their responsibility to safeguard children from harm, including how to respond to child protection concerns. Practitioners follow appropriate systems and procedures to safeguard children suitably. However, leaders do not carry out robust enough risk assessments across all areas of the setting to ensure all necessary risks are eliminated. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding do not fully meet requirements and are a cause for concern.

Practitioners are good role models. They are consistently kind, caring, calm and patient. They bring warmth and humour into their interactions with children and are responsive to children's attempts to communicate. This ensures children feel valued and enjoy their time at the setting. Practitioners are confident and relaxed in the way they manage and support children's behaviour. They use praise and regular encouragement to good effect and use positive phrases to encourage positive interactions. Practitioners gently encourage children to be kind, show respect for each other and share resources. They are sensitive and thoughtful in the way they support children to resolve disagreements when they arise, bearing in mind the needs and understanding of each child.

Practitioners are nurturing, sensitive and alert to the needs of children in their care. They know children well and respond to their needs swiftly, sharing valuable information between them as they work together. Practitioners are skilful in the way they support children who may have recognised or emerging additional learning needs. They are observant and thorough, ensuring children receive effective support as required. Practitioners work closely with parents, carers, professionals and outside agencies to provide support for the children at the setting.

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

Practitioners know children well and take time to understand what they enjoy and what they need help with. They work closely with the local authority advisory teacher and take part in useful training that helps them improve their practice. Recent training on schemas and how children learn through repeated patterns of behaviour has strengthened practitioners understanding of child development and how they plan activities that interest the children and support their development effectively.

Practitioners plan a wide range of enjoyable activities that help children develop new skills at their own pace. They observe children carefully during play and use these observations effectively to plan next steps in learning. This helps practitioners understand each child's development and learning needs well. The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment where children feel safe, settled and happy, and most make good progress from their individual starting points. Practitioners display children's work around the setting. These displays celebrate the children's creative process and support the development of children's self-esteem successfully. Practitioners develop and change the indoor learning areas regularly in response to what children are interested in, for example adding a construction area and using real DIY shop catalogues to spark ideas and promote early reading skills. These changes help keep the learning exciting and meaningful. Practitioners plan outdoor learning appropriately, working around the limitations of the building.

Practitioners speak to children warmly and encourage them to talk, listen and share their ideas. They use both English and Welsh naturally throughout the day, and children enjoy joining in with Welsh songs and stories. Practitioners use sign communication well to support children with communication needs in a gentle and inclusive way.

Practitioners model kindness in their interactions with one another consistently. They reinforce simple messages around being kind and caring with one another. They support children to behave well, follow routines and work together cooperatively. This positive approach is mirrored by children successfully in their interactions with their peers.

There are many opportunities for children to learn about the world around them. Practitioners plan trips to the beach, parks, nature reserves and local community places, giving children chances to explore new experiences and deepen their curiosity. In addition, they plan activities that support children to learn how to care for living things through visits to nature reserves and litter picks. Practitioners plan suitable activities that celebrate Welsh culture, local traditions and wider cultural festivals, helping children understand and respect different ways of life. Practitioners use the cultural background of the children

in the setting to develop a sense of belonging successfully, for example through celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year.

Practitioners encourage children to develop independence by providing worthwhile activities that require them to make choices, solve problems and persist with tasks. They use questioning effectively to prompt children's ideas. Practitioners support children's creative and physical development well through activities such as building, painting, dough play and imaginative role-play.

Practitioners support children to develop their communication, early literacy and numeracy skills well through activities such as singing, role play and counting games. They provide worthwhile opportunities for children to make choices, solve problems and use their imagination in their play.

While parents receive regular information about what their children are doing in the setting, they do not always receive sufficient information about their child's next steps in learning or the progress they make.

Environment: Adequate

Practitioners allow only authorised access to the setting. External doors are locked, and the environment is secure from outside entry. Practitioners accurately record the arrival and departure times of visitors and children. Leaders carry out and record regular fire drills, ensuring practitioners and children know what to do in the event of a fire. They ensure that required safety checks for gas, electricity and fire safety equipment are completed as appropriate. Leaders ensure the areas children access directly are clean and organised to enable children's independent, safe access to resources. They put measures in place to maintain the safety of the learning environment and activities. For example, they provide practitioners with a range of suitable risk assessments for the play areas to guide them in their practices. However, leaders do not risk assess all areas of the large premises and there are unnecessary risks to children's safety in the areas not used by children for play.

The indoor environment is welcoming and decorated in a way which is inviting to children, providing an effective environment for play and learning. The rooms are thoughtfully laid out to provide a wide variety of areas and resources to stimulate children's interest. For example, the home role play area is resourced attractively to invite children to play, and activity tables contain materials and resources that stimulate children's curiosity. Many toys and activities are stored in manageably sized containers at children's height, enabling them to access what they want to play with freely. Play spaces are equipped with good quality and suitably sized furniture for the varying ages of children. The layout of the play

space supports children to move around freely in their designated areas. Nappy changing facilities, toilets and hand wash basins are suitable and appropriately equipped.

Leaders provide a large quantity of good quality, interesting and developmentally appropriate resources, ensuring that children have a wide variety and choice. There is a mix of natural and man-made materials. Resources promote children's awareness of cultural diversity and the world around them. Practitioners regularly check toys, equipment, and resources to ensure that they are clean and in good condition.

Leadership and management: Poor

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting that is based on care and respect for all. The leader's commitment to this approach has helped to build a happy and dedicated team who want to do their best for the children. As a result, the setting has a warm and friendly atmosphere where both children and practitioners enjoy attending. Leaders ensure a suitable range of policies and procedures are in place and the statement of purpose provides useful information for parents.

Overall, self-evaluation and improvement planning processes support the setting's development suitably. Leaders gather useful information from practitioners, parents and local authority advisors to inform improvement plans and review many aspects of the care appropriately. However, leaders do not carry out sufficiently robust risk assessments to monitor and manage risks across the entire setting. They have not identified or eliminated all unnecessary risks in the areas adjacent to those used by children. As a result, a priority action notice has been issued, regarding this matter and the provider must take immediate action to address these matters.

Leaders ensure recruitment procedures are suitable and completed in a timely manner. Practitioners understand their roles clearly and are well qualified. Leaders have suitable arrangements to evaluate practitioners' performance, and they supervise and support staff regularly. They deploy practitioners effectively to support children's needs, including those with additional learning needs.

Leaders provide practitioners with beneficial support to develop their Welsh language skills. Leaders and practitioners have a positive attitude to learning Welsh and enjoy supporting and encouraging each other to use songs, words and phrases. Practitioners' enjoyment of learning to speak Welsh has a positive impact on children's Welsh language skills. This is a strength of the setting.

Leaders ensure practitioners have access to relevant professional learning that supports them in their roles. The recent input on how children used repeated patterns of play has enabled practitioners to support children with additional learning needs successfully.

Leaders communicate suitably, meet regularly with staff to share information, make decisions, ensuring everybody is well informed about the setting's work. Leaders and practitioners work well with the early years advisory teacher, the local authority ALN services and other organisations to improve provision and outcomes for children. Leaders plan transitions within the setting and on to local schools thoughtfully. Practitioners share helpful "nutshell" summaries with receiving schools, outlining children's strengths and next steps. Parents receive regular updates about their child's day through an online portfolio and informal conversations. Leaders and practitioners make effective use of opportunities beyond the setting to enrich children's learning. For example, links with a local home for the elderly help strengthen relationships across generations and broaden children's experiences well.

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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