

West Berkshire Mencap Childrens Services

Enborne Gate, Enborne Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 6AT



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

4 August 2015

4 August 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The play opportunities are very general and do not excite or motivate children.
- The deployment of staff does not always support good levels of attention for each child or ensure that they are always supervised to keep them safe.
- The key-person system for the youngest children is not effective. Some staff do not know enough about the children they are caring for, so the support they provide is not tailored to meet their specific needs or promote their well-being.
- Recruitment procedures are not robust enough to ensure the suitability of staff. Gaps in employment history are not challenged, and references are not suitably documented to demonstrate that all staff are suitable to work with children.
- The provider does not sufficiently monitor and evaluate how well the setting is operating, and is not effectively identifying their strengths and areas to further develop. Therefore, they have not identified a number of breaches in requirements.

It has the following strengths

- Senior staff know about and meet children's medical needs particularly well.
- Senior staff have a good understanding of what to do if they have a concern about a child in their care, including those children who are made more vulnerable by their additional needs.
- Children enjoy a good range of outings to local places of interest, and use the outdoor area to good effect to extend their play opportunities.
- Parents comment positively on the support that staff provide for their family and how they value the care that staff provide.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- implement an effective recruitment process to ensure staff suitability, with specific regard to gathering full and relevant information about previous employment history, maintaining records of vetting processes, checking the references and ongoing suitability of all staff, especially returning staff
- improve staff deployment in order that all children are adequately supervised throughout day
- ensure that every child has a key person who makes sure their care is tailored to meet their individual needs, helps the child become familiar with the setting, offers a settled relationship for the child and ensures their ongoing safety

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- plan meaningful activities that ignite children's interests, motivate them to take part and meet their specific needs
- review and extend the self-evaluation processes to drive continuous improvement by identifying and targeting key aspects of practice that will rapidly improve the quality of care practices and outcomes for children.

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- implement robust systems to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- implement robust systems to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and outdoor areas.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection, and held a meeting with the managers and a trustee of the setting.
- The inspector looked at children's records, evidence of the staff suitability, and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures to safeguard children's welfare.
- The inspection took place during a playscheme session in the summer holidays.

Inspector

Melissa Cox

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Children initiate their own play. They choose to play indoors or outdoors and can choose from the variety of resources that are available. Staff and volunteers suitably support children in friendly conversation as they read books together. However, staff do not always plan activities for the children that interest them. For example, children sit for long periods of time waiting for a cooking activity to start as staff have not sufficiently prepared this beforehand and are, therefore, not ready to start when children sit down. In addition, the activity does not capture their attention as it involves further waiting while each child gets a turn to do some stirring in a bowl. Overall, the activity lacks direction or purpose and children soon indicate that they want to leave.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children requires improvement

Children generally build positive relationships with those familiar staff who know and meet their needs well. However, the setting uses a high number of volunteers and occasional staff who are less familiar with children's specific needs. This means that children do not always get the tailored support or attention from all staff that they need to promote their well-being. In addition, staff do not deploy themselves effectively. Some children wander around the setting unsupervised and then go into the garden unaccompanied. This does not promote their safety. Permanent staff are confident in their roles. They are vigilant in monitoring and meeting children's specific health needs throughout the day. They follow robust procedures when administering medication and meticulously document the action they take to make sure each child is looked after according to their individual care plans. Behaviour is good and children learn to cooperate with each other.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision requires improvement

Managers do not have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Managers do not have an up-to-date understanding of, or robustly implement, safer recruitment procedures. They do not consistently check staff's past employment, complete references or check their ongoing suitability. Managers complete suitable induction with all staff and volunteers, but do not effectively monitor their performance or deployment. Consequently, not all statutory requirements are being met and staff are not consistently meeting the needs of all children. Nevertheless, parents feel that the staff provide them with valuable respite care and they are given information about their child's day during daily talks with staff, and kept updated through regular newsletters. Staff exchange information with other professionals involved in children's care to promote a consistent approach. Senior staff are qualified and complete regular training to help them safeguard children. Self-evaluation is not robust and does not identify all weaknesses in practice.

Setting details

Unique reference number	955621
Local authority	West Berkshire (Newbury)
Inspection number	826273
Type of provision	Out of school provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	3 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	3
Name of provider	West Berkshire Mencap
Date of previous inspection	4 August 2009
Telephone number	01635 41464

West Berkshire Mencap Children's Services are provided by West Berkshire Mencap. They registered in 1997. Facilities offered include a holiday playscheme, Saturday schemes, weekly toddler and support groups and a variety of after school clubs for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The club's operational hours depend on the funding they have available. The manager holds an appropriate qualification. The club employs three permanent staff who are supported by a number of volunteers.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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Piccadilly Gate
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