

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC457423
Inspector	Rosemary Dancer
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	MacIntyre Care
Registered person address	MacIntyre Care 602 South Seventh Street Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK9 2JA
Responsible individual	Brenda Maria Mullen
Registered manager	POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	28/01/2014

Inspection date	30/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	inadequate
Outcomes for children and young people	adequate
Quality of care	inadequate
Keeping children and young people safe	inadequate
Leadership and management	inadequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	inadequate
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Some young people have made progress during their time living in the home and they have developed in many areas of their lives. For example, some have learnt to take care of their personal hygiene needs, developed their communication skills and have developed positive relationships with staff. However, inadequate assessments of needs in relation to young people being considered for a placement, mean new admissions have impacted on other young people's safety, well-being and ability to progress.

A lack of information from some local authorities about young people's needs further impacts on staff's ability to meet every young person's needs. Young people's wishes and feelings are sought but it is not always clear how or if these have been acted upon.

Young people are living in a home that is currently not homely or safe. The organisation has failed to act promptly in response to damage caused during incidents. They have not addressed maintenance concerns that impact on young people's safety, for example, the repair of fire safety doors.

The arrangements for the health care of some young people are overall satisfactory and some have progressed well in regards to their health. However, important

information for staff, for example about allergies, is not clearly recorded within files. Additionally, staff do not always act in line with health plans. They have not always timed the duration of a seizure so they can report this to medical staff. There have been errors and omissions made since the last medication audit which have not yet been addressed.

Behaviour management in the home is sometimes reactive and on a number of occasions has led to the restriction of a young person's liberty. Physical intervention records do not provide a clear view about the incident and its outcome in every case.

Staff receive good quality training to help them carry out their roles. However, the frequency of supervision for some staff has meant that they are not being adequately supported.

It is not clear from records that complaints have been dealt with effectively. The arrangements for monitoring the home are inadequate and this means that there is little drive to improve the quality of care. Not all monitoring reports are forwarded to Ofsted. While some notifications of serious events are made to Ofsted not all have been made. There were no records in the home in relation to two serious complaints about a member of staff. Additionally, the home has failed to notify the local authority about the admission and discharge of young people placed by other authorities. There is a minor revision required to the Statement of Purpose.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for five young people with learning disabilities. A charitable organisation owns and operates this setting. The organisation provides a separately registered education facility which is based locally.

The home was registered in February 2013.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2014	Interim	good progress
21/08/2013	Full	adequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
20 (2001)	promote and protect the physical, emotional and mental health of the children accommodated in a children's home (Regulation 20 (1)) *	24/10/2014
21 (2001)	make suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21 (1)) *	24/10/2014
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are kept clean and reasonably decorated and maintained (Regulation 31 (2)) *	24/10/2014
16	ensure the procedure under paragraph (1)(b) shall	24/10/2014

(2001)	in particular provide for written records to be kept of any allegation of abuse or neglect, and of the action taken in response (Regulation 16(2)(d))	
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there (Regulation 11(1)(a))	16/10/2014
17 (2001)	ensure no measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) shall be used at any time on children accommodated in a children's home (Regulation 17(1)) *	24/10/2014
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose of which shall include full details of the points from (a) to (i) of this regulation (Regulation 17B (3))	24/10/2014
32 (2001)	take adequate precautions against the risk of fire (Regulation 32 (1A) (b))	16/10/2014
23 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the home to which children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their health and safety (Regulation 23(1)(a))*	16/10/2014
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate supervision; with specific reference to ensuring that the supervision policy clearly sets out the expectations regarding the frequency at which staff must be supervised and ensure that this frequency is adhered to (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	30/10/2014
30 (2001)	ensure that if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table (Regulation 30 (1))	16/10/2014
12B (2001)	ensure that the local authority for the area in which the children's home is located is notified, in writing without delay of the admission of a child and the discharge of a child (Regulation 12B (a) and (b))	16/10/2014
24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of the investigation (Regulation 24 (5))	24/10/2014
33 (2001)	ensure that visits by the independent person shall take place at least once a month and provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI (Regulation 33 (7) and (9) (a))	30/10/2014

34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in schedule 6 at least once in every 3 months and supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of monitoring the matters set out in schedule 6 (Regulation 34 (1) (a) and (2))	30/10/2014
5 (2001)	revise the statement of purpose and notify HMCI of any such revision within 28 days. (Regulation 5 (a) (b))	30/10/2014

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children's views, wishes and feelings are acted upon in the day to day running of the home and in important decisions or changes in the child's life (NMS1.1)
- ensure the manager monitors all records kept to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends and ensures that immediate action is taken to address issues raised by this monitoring (NMS 21.2)
- ensure statutory placement plans and reviews of plans are contained on each child's file; with specific reference to continuing to request the information from the responsible social work department. (NMS 25.8)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Some young people have made some good progress in the development of a more positive self-view. They display an increase in their confidence, skills and self-worth. Some young people have benefitted from the opportunity to develop attachments and sound relationships with members of staff who they trust enough to talk to and confide in. Other young people have struggled to progress in these areas and as a result relationships in the home can be strained.

Some young people have made really good progress in taking responsibility for aspects of their health, for example, their personal care. A parent stated, 'my daughter has become more independent in personal hygiene. She is more able to dress and choose appropriate clothing for the weather. She requires minimal supervision to bath and keeps herself clean now. In the past she was far more dependent on support from others.' Other young people have learnt to make more healthy choices, for example, in food. This supports their physical health as they grow into young adults. Young people's health has improved since living in the home. A parent stated, 'my daughter has complex health needs; her needs and specific therapies have been explored to improve her health and well-being.'

Young people have some input into making choices about their lives through attending house meetings and key work sessions. However, when young people express their feelings it is not always clear how these have been progressed. This means that young people may not always feel they have been listened to.

Young people enjoy the opportunities to participate in education and learning because education plans are geared to meet their individual needs and abilities. A flexible approach is taken towards young people's learning.

Some young people make a positive contribution to the home and have engagement in the community. This helps support their growing awareness of the world around them and their own personal responsibility to others. A parent stated, 'staff have gone to great lengths to explore new and exciting activities. She is regularly encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities; when she prefers to pursue her own crafting activities this is facilitated and supported.' Other young people have struggled in this regard and this has meant that young people living in the home and people in the local community have had their daily lives impacted upon on occasion.

Young people, for whom it is appropriate, enjoy positive relationships with family members and significant others. This helps them to retain a sense of their identity and heritage.

Quality of care

inadequate

Some young people enjoy sound relationships with staff and others. A parent stated that their child, 'is always happy when she is with staff and has formed very close bonds with some of them.' Another said, 'they have a fantastic range of staff who are excellent role models for my son.' Through these positive relationships some young people have learnt to trust and confide in various staff members. Other young people struggle with developing positive relationships. There has been a significant increase in incidents in the home; this impacts on all living and working in the home.

The arrangements for the admission of young people have not always included a sound, up to date, risk assessment of needs and compatibility. As a result, there is currently an often high level of conflict in the home that impacts adversely on young people and staff. Additionally, not all local authorities have provided the required paperwork to the home. Consequently individual care planning for a young person is not always clear. This makes it difficult for the home to develop good quality, comprehensive plans of care. As a result staff are being reactive to situations rather than ensuring that situations do not escalate beyond control.

Staff are passionate about their work and do care for and about the young people. They have an adequate understanding of needs, especially those relating to their disability.

Young people do make complaints and these are recorded. However, from the records it is not clear what action has been taken. For example, it is not clear if the child has had an appropriate response or what support staff have provided. This could mean that young people do not feel their complaint has been taken seriously. It has the potential to impact adversely on their self-worth and esteem.

Staff have developed good relationships with some parents who have praised the care their child receives. Most parents felt that communication with them was good with a parent commenting, 'I have always found the staff to be excellent. I cannot speak highly enough of their warm and friendly attitude toward me and my family.'

There are some sound practices in place in respect of the health management. However, staff have failed to ensure clear information regarding a suspected allergy for one young person was prominently recorded on the file. Additionally, there has been an occasion when staff failed to monitor the length of a young person's seizure. These shortfalls have the potential to seriously compromise young people's health.

The arrangements for the storage of medication are sound and careful audits are undertaken on a regular basis. However, since the last audit, the record of the administration of medication has missing entries. Additionally, a recent error was made in the administration of a young person's medication. This means that a young person did not receive the medication they require and it is not clear if other young people have taken their medication or not. These omissions have the potential to

lead to young people receiving two doses of medication and medical issues when young people do not receive their medication.

Staff support young people in following their preferred activities and interests. Some young people have been on a holiday over the summer period. These experiences help young people to develop their skills and increase in their confidence in their abilities.

The home is in a pleasant residential area. The layout of the premises is suitable to meet the needs of the young people living there. Young people have personalised their bedrooms in line with their needs and preferences. However, there has been recent significant damage to the home. This means that currently the environment within the communal areas is stark and not particularly welcoming or homely. Maintenance issues have been delayed for no apparent reason. This environment does not support young people to feel valued and to take pride in their home.

Keeping children and young people safe inadequate

Some young people during their time in the home have developed very positive relationships with some staff. They have felt confident enough to begin to confide in them with things that have been upsetting them. However, the behaviour of some young people, which can be dangerous and frightening, has had a negative impact. It has led to some young people choosing to spend longer times in their bedrooms than they previously did. This means that their opportunities to interact with staff are diminishing.

Some behaviour management risk assessments and plans are out of date. This is due, in part, to relevant placing authorities failing to provide information to the home. Some plans do not contain clear details about how to reduce risks.

Staff do not consistently apply agreed behaviour management strategies or take a proactive approach in dealing with situations. This has led to incidents escalating. Some situations have escalated to the point where staff have used seclusion, for example locking a young person in a bathroom. This is not acceptable; it breaches young people's rights and devalues them as individuals.

Staff are trained in using de-escalation techniques. In relation to physical interventions, aside from seclusion, they only use these when necessary. Staff record each incident of physical intervention. However, the records lack detail so it is not easy to understand what has occurred and the outcome. For example, some records do not show the context of the situation and whether there were injuries. There is little evidence that staff are proactive in eliciting young people's views about incidents of physical intervention. The lack of detail in the records makes it difficult to gain an accurate oversight of incidents. Additionally, it does not provide the safeguards intended for young people because key information is missing.

The home has dealt effectively with a safeguarding concern that is on-going; the matter was referred to all appropriate agencies. Staff took action to safeguard young people and support and reassure them that the matter was being taken seriously. There were no records available in the home to enable an assessment of two other concerns that have had implications for young people's safety and well-being This does not provide appropriate safeguards for young people.

Regular checks take place in relation to the fire alarm systems and each young person has a personal evacuation plan that they have practiced. This makes sure that they have experienced an evacuation and means that they are likely to be able to better manage their anxieties in the event of a real emergency.

The quality of the management of health and safety risks are poor. There is currently a danger to young people from a fire door that does not shut flush. This could expose them to the danger of harm by smoke inhalation. There is a fire risk assessment but this does not highlight the level of risk or the risk reduction strategies. It has not been updated in relation to the issues with the fire door.

There are hazards in the home, including nails protruding from the wall and visible wires that could pose a danger of electric shock. There are bricks discarded to the side of the home and broken windows. This places young people at significant risk of harm.

While health and safety assessments highlight risks, there is little evidence that the assessments are robustly implemented. For example, the maintenance team do not fix issues which are of a safety concern immediately.

Leadership and management

inadequate

There has been no registered manager in post since May 2014. A manager has been appointed recently and Ofsted is awaiting an application from her to register.

There is a Statement of Purpose that details the aims and objectives of the home. It has not been updated with the change of the management arrangements. Consequently, the document does not provide an accurate reflection of the home.

The monitoring arrangements for the home are inadequate. There was no evidence available to show that internal and external monitoring are taking place at the required frequency. This means that concerns about specific incidents and patterns and trends are not being identified so that immediate action can be taken to address issues. Lack of regular external monitoring means that young people do not benefit from opportunities to talk regularly to an independent visitor. The reports of the monitoring that has been carried out have not been submitted to Ofsted. Ofsted, therefore, does not have a consistently current view of the home.

Notifications of significant events such as serious complaints about staff are not always notified to Ofsted. This means that Ofsted, as the regulator, does not have an up to date view about the quality of care being provided and is not informed about action taken to address shortfalls or complaints.

The managers were not aware of most of the shortfalls found during this inspection. This is despite some of them having a serious impact on the safety and well-being of young people.

The home has not informed the local authority of the admission and discharge of young people to the home. This means that the local authority is not aware of the young people living in their area.

There are sufficient staff to care for the needs of the children. However, they have not received supervision on a regular basis to ensure that they are effectively supported in carrying out their sometime difficult roles. Staff feel that the training opportunities and the quality of training is good. It has enabled them to implement their skills and knowledge into their practice. This supports them to work with young people.

The arrangements for dealing with and concluding complaints from young people and others are not clear. Records of the action taken in response to a complaint and the outcome of the investigations were not on the file. This means that it was not possible to establish if appropriate action had been taken and the complainants were satisfied with the response.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.

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