

SC457423

Registered provider: MacIntyre

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for five children who have learning disabilities. A charitable organisation owns and operates the home. The organisation provides a separately registered education facility, which is based locally. The manager of the home was registered with Ofsted in October 2014.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 February 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/06/2017	Full	Good
17/11/2016	Full	Good
14/09/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/01/2016	Full	Good

What does the children’s home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the ‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of any measure of control, they, or a person who is authorised by registered person to do so (‘the authorised person’)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i))</p>	05/04/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a))</p>	05/04/2019

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children continue to make good progress in a welcoming and nurturing environment. Some of the children are non-verbal. Comprehensive care plans guide staff on each child’s unique needs and individual styles of communication. Children flourish and enjoy their daily experiences because staff provide consistent care and routines.

The staff recognise achievements and praise the children openly. Many of the achievements increase the children’s confidence and independence skills. Each child has a residential learning target scrapbook. These include photographs of the children completing tasks. Staff write words of encouragement and congratulate children on the new skills that they have mastered. A parent said, ‘I’m really pleased with how everything is going. [My child] is now much better at making food and tidying up after himself. His social skills have really improved.’

Children progress greatly because of the vast range of experiences offered to them. Staff

support the children to engage in activities of their choice that enhance their social development and enable them to interact in wider society. Children attend a local youth club, visit a trampoline park and enjoy activities such as ice skating and swimming. Children benefit from new experiences and the opportunity to further develop their social skills.

The manager is imaginative in her ideas and endeavours to promote children's inclusion in their local community. A summer fete is held annually at the home, which neighbours attend. The manager has continued to build on positive relationships by encouraging the children to actively help others in the community. The children, under staff guidance, now help to take out the bins once a week for their neighbours. During this inspection, one of the children said that it was his turn this week. It was clear to see how much he enjoyed helping. Such actions help the children to develop a greater sense of belonging.

All of the children attend the provider's local school provision. Attendance levels are high. School staff and the staff at the home work closely to help children to achieve. The staff share daily updates, which means that each member of staff can prepare appropriately for their time with the children based on their changing daily presentation.

The staff consistently spend time with the children to gain their views. Children have access to a complaint book, which contains symbols to enable them to express any worries that they may have. Children attend weekly meetings, during which each child chooses a meal for the weekly menu and any activities that they wish to do.

The children thrive because of the regular contact that they have with their families. Staff work well with parents and carers to ensure that arrangements go smoothly. Children maintain good relationships with those who are important to them.

The home works closely with parents and professionals to ensure that children have well-planned transitions. Two children have left the home since the last inspection due to becoming adults. Prior to leaving, they each had a prom party to celebrate their time at the home. This provided a positive ending.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Parents and family members said that the children are safe and happy. A parent said, 'Absolutely fantastic. The previous placement was OK, but I'm very impressed with this home. He loves it. He is safe there, without a doubt.' A grandparent said, 'He is always happy to return. He is happy there. We have been very lucky to find such a lovely home. He is safe and looked after very well.'

The children have a limited understanding of danger. Staff monitor their movements to ensure their safety. There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home. Staff work in a consistent manner with the children and while out in the community and provide the correct staffing levels to adequately meet each child's needs. All of the children have individual risk assessments that consider any potential risks. These assessments guide staff to keep children safe.

Staff have good-quality key-work sessions with the children. They use words, scripts and symbols. These sessions are often used to prepare the children for upcoming events, such as, for one child, a medical appointment. This is an experience that the child has previously found very upsetting. Staff helped the child to visualise where he was going, who was taking him, and why he needed to go. This carefully planned approach achieved a successful visit.

Staff manage challenging behaviours well by skilfully intervening to prevent children from hurting themselves or others. Since moving into the home, one of the children has struggled to regulate his emotions. Staff monitor closely and are quick to intervene with de-escalation techniques. This consistent response has achieved a reduction of incidents for this child. However, records do not evidence that staff are routinely debriefed following incidents. This has the potential to limit the capacity to further improve practice in this area.

The home has effective links with the designated officer, who said, 'I have no concerns. The manager responds robustly and follows safeguarding policies and procedures well.' All of the staff have received mandatory safeguarding training. Staff spoken with during the inspection have a clear understanding of how to implement safeguarding procedures. Staff recognise that they have a duty to safeguard, and they have the necessary skills to ensure that children remain protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced and knowledgeable manager is a qualified social worker. She holds a level 5 diploma in leadership and management. She is passionate about providing high-quality care to children. She manages the home well. A member of staff said, 'The manager is highly supportive, very motivated and has really inspired me to reach my potential. She has the children 100% in her heart.'

There have been significant changes to the staff team since the last inspection. This has not affected the care provided, which has remained stable throughout. There is always a senior member of staff at the home, and the rota is covered to meet the children's needs. New staff benefit from a comprehensive induction. All of the staff spoken with have a good understanding of the children's individual needs. They said that they feel well supported by the manager and one another.

The manager and staff communicate well with families and professionals. The manager and staff are strong advocates for the children, ensuring that the children's individual needs are recognised. Detailed weekly updates are sent to social workers and families. Any new information is shared promptly. The manager is proactive, and skilled at negotiating to ensure that children can participate fully. A social worker said, 'I am very impressed with the home. Communication is very good. The staff always attend any meetings and are able to put a valid case together when further funding is required to support the child.'

Monthly staff meetings are structured and informative. The staff discuss the progress that the children make along with any new presenting behaviours. Time is taken to share information on any new triggers and the techniques used that have been successful in de-escalating. This ensures that the children continue to receive a consistent response.

The manager's monitoring of the children's progress and the care provided is good. She undertakes daily checks and oversees monthly audits. Alongside this, the independent visitor provides detailed monthly reports. However, these reports do not regularly contain feedback from parents and professionals. This reduces the effectiveness of the information provided to the manager as a quality monitoring tool.

The one requirement set at the last inspection is met as all eligible staff have now completed or are working towards a relevant level 3 diploma within the timescales.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC457423

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: MacIntyre

Registered provider address: MacIntyre Care, 602 South Seventh Street, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK9 2JA

Responsible individual: Fiona Veitch

Registered manager: Jennifer Marshall

Inspector

Lynne Drage, social care inspector

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