

SC489212

Registered provider: MacIntyre Academies

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private organisation in partnership with the local authority. The home provides placements for severely disabled children and young people who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder that might result in behaviours of concern. The home accommodates up to six children and young people permanently, and up to six children and young people under short-break arrangements.

All children and young people attend the academy on the same site. The home was previously a residential special school before being registered as a children's home in July 2015. The school states that it offers a waking day curriculum.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2018.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 November 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: 13 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/09/2018	Full	Good
03/05/2017	Full	Good
01/11/2016	Full	Good
13/04/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))	31/12/2019
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children’s home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))	31/12/2019

Recommendations

- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Specifically, the registered person should demonstrate that full recruitment information is available for all staff working in the home.

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Specifically, the registered person should check that all risk assessments contain the appropriate level of detail regarding known behaviours of concern.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff know the children well and are attentive to their needs. Staff respond effectively to behaviour changes in children and use their knowledge of the children to redirect and avoid incidents. Children are treated with dignity and respect and the care that they receive is centred around their individual needs. Staff understand what constitutes progress for an individual child. Targets are in place which help support the children to become more independent in certain areas of their lives.

Children are supported to contribute to decisions regarding activities and meal choices. Work is underway to strengthen this process to cross reference staff observations of children with the use of symbols to gauge their feelings and gain the feedback of children who have complex communication needs. This is to ensure that staff don't rely on one form of communication to gain the voice of the child.

Children attend the on-site education provision. Children have access to a range of specialist support services in the home and within the school environment. This includes a speech and language therapist who works with the care team.

Children have access to a range of community-based activities. These include horse riding, art classes, trampolining and visiting local attractions such as a palace and local woodland. These activities build on the interests of children and help to promote their self-esteem and confidence. For example, the inspector observed a child hosting a table top sale to their parent and members of staff from the home and school.

Children's health needs are met well. Children are supported to attend routine health appointments and specialist support is accessed where required.

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

The home environment is well maintained and free from avoidable hazards. The recommendations from external risk assessments have been followed. Fire drills are completed regularly and have included a drill that simulated night-time conditions to test that children and staff were able to evacuate safely.

The physical intervention records have improved since the last inspection. Durations of holds are now recorded. There are occasions when the registered manager has been involved in the physical intervention and, in these cases, he ensures that somebody else reviews the incident and speaks to the child to ensure impartiality of any quality assurance checks.

Risk assessments are in place and clearly guide staff on how to manage risk effectively. However, in one risk assessment, more detail would be helpful to staff in making clear the child's known behaviours. There is a good understanding of the risks that the internet can pose to children and these are well assessed and recorded in relation to the specific risks posed to individual children.

Recruitment checks on agency staff could be further improved. The organisation has

taken steps to carry out an audit of the recruitment checks carried out on agency staff and to satisfy itself that the agency follows appropriate procedures. However, this does not capture the full recruitment information on agency staff that may be new to the home between the time of these audits being carried out.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is passionate about his role and has high expectations of his team and the service that they offer to children. He is able to talk at length about the children in placement. The registered manager is clear on the strengths and weaknesses of the service.

Agency staff, some of whom are regular workers at the home and have been for a long period of time, do not receive formal supervision. There have also been occasions since the last inspection where supervision frequency has not been in line with the timescales detailed in the home's statement of purpose. The content and the quality of supervision when it does happen is strong. Staff told the inspector that they feel well supported and well led.

Staffing levels have improved since the last inspection and agency staff usage has reduced. Ongoing recruitment drives and planned attendance at local recruitment fairs hope to further reduce the need for this usage over time. Comments from parents and other professionals state that the service has improved over the past year and they speak highly of the registered manager.

The location assessment does not identify some of the local environmental risks. For example, the home is situated next to two very busy roads. One of these roads is also a local bus route and has three schools and a leisure centre located on it. The road gets extremely busy and is a clear risk when children and staff are accessing the local community. This has not been identified in the location assessment.

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: SC489212

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: MacIntyre Academies

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

Responsible individual: Rachelle Russell

Registered manager: Adam Lawrence

Inspector

Daniel Healy, social care inspector

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