

# 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 children with disabilities and young people with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. The home provides care for up to six children and young people permanently, and up to six children and young people under short-break arrangements.

The home has been without a registered manager since July 2021.

### Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2022

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected      inadequate

The effectiveness of leaders and managers      inadequate

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

**Date of last inspection:** 21 September 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/09/2021	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Good
13/09/2018	Full	Good
03/05/2017	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

Some children make good progress at the home. However, for some children, there are significant concerns about their progress and safety in the home. This is because there has been a recent decision to admit two children in an emergency, with a separate staff team not employed by the home. This exposed children to unfamiliar adults and compromised the ability of the manager to oversee the home effectively.

Children who are permanently placed are supported to develop skills in line with their abilities. This progress is well recorded in monthly reports. The newly placed children are not being looked after by permanent staff. This means that they are not receiving the same level of focused care and there is the potential for inconsistent approaches to supporting children.

Children's health needs are, overall, managed appropriately. However, not all files are up to date with the correct information. One child's file lacks key information about a specific health condition. This means that there is the potential for the child's health to be affected and for staff to provide inconsistent care. However, education information is well recorded and all children attend school and make progress.

Children's views and choices are sought through observations and occasional meetings. However, children are not directly involved in direct decision-making about their care. Children are supported to have their say using pictorial images but the use of these to gain the views of the children is inconsistent. There is the risk that some children may not be heard in the home.

Leaders and managers have recognised that there is a current shortage of staff and have made the decision to reduce the numbers of children that access short breaks. Staffing levels have been supplemented by temporary agency staff. These staff are inducted effectively into the home and are given clear expectations. However, this is not extended to staff that are supporting children who have been admitted to the home in an emergency.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate**

There are key failures in how risk is managed in the home. Although most children do have adequate risk management plans, some do not. For children without plans, this means that there has been insufficient consideration of the risks they may experience from or present to other children already in the home. This means that there is the potential for all children to be affected by this poor risk management.

Staff have recorded that there have been unexplained marks on children's bodies. These have not been followed up or treated with the required actions, concern or

professional curiosity. The manager's auditing systems have not picked this up nor held those responsible accountable for checking these records. These failures extend to notifying serious events, as required by regulation, to Ofsted.

Staff manage incidents of physical intervention well. However, there is inconsistency in the recording, especially when it comes to debriefs for staff and children. It is not clear when the manager has reviewed incidents. Similarly, there are inconsistencies in the level of detail recorded. This affects the ability of leaders to review staff practice effectively and any patterns of behaviour.

There have been two significant safeguarding concerns since the previous inspection. The response to these has been poor. Staff have not raised concerns with leaders within effective timescales and when managers and leaders have become aware there has been an insufficient response.

A serious incident where a child did not receive medication for three days was not adequately investigated. There was no updated direction to staff following this incident. Similarly, the staff involved were not spoken to in any detail. These are key failures to ensure that issues are thoroughly investigated and actions put in place to reduce further errors.

An incident where a member of agency staff was alleged to have fallen asleep in a child's room was not challenged by other staff on shift at the time. This was not raised with leaders for a further two days. Although an appropriate referral was made to external safeguarding agencies regarding the member of agency staff, no action was taken with the staff in the home who were aware of this allegation and did not report it. There was no evidence of updated guidance to night staff of expectations of practice. These incidents involve the children placed in an emergency who are being looked after by staff who are external, and not fully known, to the home. The lack of joined-up working and management oversight has significantly affected the risk to all children in the home.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

A new manager for the home has been recruited but is yet to register with Ofsted. The manager has clear aspirations for what they want to achieve and how they hope children will achieve. There is a clear passion for the care of the children by both leaders and staff.

However, the ability of the manager to make effective change has been significantly affected by the recent decision on admissions. Two children are being looked after by a separate team. This has not allowed the manager to have full oversight of the home. This is a significant failing.

Leaders and managers made the decision to admit two children, despite this being outside the home's conditions of registration. These children were admitted in an emergency. There was no evidence of leaders fully assessing the impact of this on those two children, the other children in the home and the abilities of staff to

provide safe care. This was compounded by allowing third-party staff to work with the two children despite leaders and managers having no knowledge of their suitability to do so.

Monitoring and review systems have not detected shortfalls or weaknesses in the quality of the care provided for children. The significant failings are further demonstrated by the decision to admit children whose needs could not be cared for in line with the conditions of registration. This shows that the leadership and management of the home are weak and ineffective.

Staff are clear about how they help the children to achieve and are proud of the work that they do. However, this has also been affected by the emergency admissions to the home. The pressure of this, combined with a staffing shortage, has meant that staff feel stretched and unable to provide the same opportunities to children as previously given.

Staff do not receive consistent levels of supervision. For experienced staff, this is meant to be monthly and for newer staff fortnightly. However, this has not been achieved. The impact of this is that staff are not afforded the opportunity to receive appropriate levels of guidance and support to develop their practice.

## 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 children’s views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children’s care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—</p> <p>help each child to express views, wishes and feelings.</p> <p>ensure that each child—</p> <p>is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives.(Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(b)(i))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child’s relevant plans.</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>

<p>(Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i))</p>	
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health; and</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>

<p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home.</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them;</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and</p> <p>a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>



<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>

<p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p>	<p>26 June 2022</p>

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	
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\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** MacIntyre Academies

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

**Responsible individual:** Michaela Soporova

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Mark Newington, Social Care Inspector  
Emeline Evans, Social Care Inspector

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