

SC457423

Registered provider: MacIntyre Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to five children who may have special educational needs, social and/or communication difficulties, autism or a combination of these.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024 and is working towards his level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 December 2024

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: 21 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2024	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Good
15/06/2021	Full	Good
08/10/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

All five children living in the home spoke with or spent time with the inspectors. The manager was present during the inspection.

Children's family members and professionals agree that children are safer since living at the home. The staff say that they feel well supported.

The manager and staff work hard to ensure that the home remains a welcoming and cosy environment for children. Children's bedrooms are personalised to reflect their likes and dislikes. Their bedroom walls are decorated meaningfully with awards and photos of their families. Children have spaces where they can play together or alone. They can also sit with staff and watch their favourite television shows.

Children make good progress and enjoy fun times with the staff who care for them. Staff regularly bake with children. They make personalised sensory play dough together, using scents such as peppermint. One child is supported to use their parent's special recipe to regularly make bread and soup. Staff recognise the significance of this for the child's cultural and emotional needs. Staff also routinely prepare sensory obstacle courses for children around the home. This helps children learn to manage their feelings and have fun with staff members, which in turn strengthens their relationships with their carers and enhances their sense of belonging.

Staff and the manager work well alongside social workers and education professionals to support children effectively with their education. Staff are aware of the potential for children to feel overwhelmed by moving between their home and school environments. The organisation employs a specific member of staff to spend time with the children throughout the day. This helps children to move between both settings with less stress.

Children's moves into the home are well considered and managed. Children and their families are supported to visit the home and meet staff before the child moves in. A specialist 'transitions officer' works alongside the manager and staff to ensure that this move is well planned. Children's parents are appreciative of the effort and care that staff show to them. One parent said, 'I am very happy with the home, they communicate well with me.'

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

Staff know the children they care for well. Children's risk assessments are updated, and their behaviour plans identify their specific triggers. As a result, staff can work alongside children and see beyond their presenting behaviours. This helps staff to calm children before their feelings become too overwhelming. These positive relationships have helped to ensure that, since the last inspection, staff have not had to hold children to keep them safe and no children have been missing from the home.

The manager and staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and ensure that they work together with other professionals. Incidents are managed well, and all necessary actions are taken to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively.

The manager has a balanced approach to ensuring the safety of the children and encouraging staff to allow the children to take measured risks. This enables children to build their independence and to try new things at a pace that is right for them.

Staff work hard to ensure that children can spend meaningful time with their families. Staff are supporting one child to spend time with their parents in a busy city location on Christmas Eve. Other children are spending time with their parents over the Christmas holidays. Children's parents are appreciative of this effort by staff to build and maintain their family relationships. One child's parent said, 'I know my child is safe, well cared for and loved by staff. This helps me to feel at ease.'

Staff speak of children with warmth and compassion. They have carried out some sensitive work with children. However, this work is not consistently recorded well enough to give children an understanding of their life story or time in their home. Additionally, the language used by staff is not always clear or child friendly.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has high expectations of the quality of care that he expects staff and professionals to provide to the children. He is a tenacious advocate for the children. He has successfully challenged one local authority and the child has now received the level of support and additional oversight that they are entitled to.

The manager is supported by a warm and approachable responsible individual. The responsible individual carries out comprehensive supervision sessions with the manager. These support and challenge the manager in equal measure as he progresses in his role.

The manager has worked hard to build a level of psychological safety and resilience in his team since commencing his role. Staff are appreciative of his care and availability. One member of staff said, 'There is nowhere else like [name of the home]. There is a magnetic wave that brings you in. The staff and children are amazing.' Staff morale and motivation appear high. This benefits children as staff feel listened to and safe enough to offer the children in their care warmth, consistency and stability.

Staff team meetings are regular, as is staff supervision. Staff can use their time during supervision as a safe space to explore the emotional labour of their role, as well as focus on safeguarding the children. Consequently, there are no issues with retaining staff.

The manager has developed good relationships with the children's social workers. They consistently say that the manager is good at communicating with them.

Staff are provided with a balance of online and face-to-face training. They are trained to understand and respond to the needs of the children. Learning from this training is embedded in practice through team meetings and clinical consultations.

There are gaps in the manager's oversight of the home. He has not identified gaps in staff recordings of their time with children, nor challenged staff when they have used imprecise language. Additionally, two members of staff have not had an appraisal this inspection year. This is a missed opportunity to develop staff in terms of their recording skills and other aspects of their practice.

The manager has met the requirement from the previous inspection. The recommendation has been restated.

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, The 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 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 (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home</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)(a)(f)(h))</p>	<p>25 April 2025</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should consider, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home’s care. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: SC457423

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: MacIntyre Care

Registered provider address: Seebeck House, 1 Seebeck Place, Milton Keynes MK5 8FR

Responsible individual: Jennifer Marshall

Registered manager: Duane Anstey

Inspectors

Majella Russell, Social Care Inspector
Sarah Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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