

SC489212

Registered provider: MacIntyre Academies

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The 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 under short-breaks 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: 13 to 14 September 2018

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 3 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
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
<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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the home is resourced properly in relation to management of staff and leadership of residential practice.</p>	01/01/2019
<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, 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>	01/01/2019

<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>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all required information is available in relation to the agency staff who work at the home.</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>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</p>	<p>01/01/2019</p>

<p>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)(iv))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the duration of the physical intervention is always recorded, and that the person that they authorise to speak to the child or young person about the use of physical intervention has not themselves been involved in using that physical intervention, and that the children’s or young people’s views on the use of physical interventions, as well the debriefs with staff members, are recorded.</p>	
<p>Other records</p> <p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date; and</p> <p>retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered manager must ensure that the register of children is kept in line with Schedule 4.1.</p>	<p>01/01/2019</p>

Recommendations

- Children’s homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Specifically, the registered person should arrange for a fire drill to take place at night-time.
- 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 safeguard children and minimise 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 all staff receive effective induction, supervision and formal reviews of their performance.
- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children’s homes. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Specifically, the registered person should improve record keeping in relation to complaints.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home has a positive impact on children and young people. They receive one-to-one personalised care that meets their complex needs and promotes their development. Children and young people are safe, have positive experiences and make progress across many areas of their lives.

Children and young people have built close relationships with staff members and respond well to their guidance. One young person's father said that he felt that the staff members did not just look after his son well, but actually loved his son. All parents spoken with said that they appreciated the service and described the quality of care in positive ways.

Staff provide children and young people with a nurturing environment that has clear structures, routines and boundaries. The predictability and emotional warmth shown by staff help children and young people to be calmer and develop a sense of security. One young person's father said that the home helped him to 'have his real son back', referring to how his son was before the concerning behaviours escalated.

A carefully balanced approach to risk management results in children and young people having good opportunities to try a variety of activities. Having new experiences enhances children and young people's flexibility, resilience and social integration. The activities that they recently engaged in show the great progress that they have made: travelling by public transport, walking in parks and the countryside, relaxing on a beach and visiting farms, markets, museums and cafes.

Children and young people receive holistic care that has been developed in partnership with other professionals. For example, the occupational therapist has created individual sensory routines to aid children and young people's good sleeping patterns and this has had a positive impact on their sleep.

Children and young people access specialist help and a range of therapies. Several parents said that without the staff's help they would not have been able to take their children to health appointments or manage them after they had undergone medical procedures. The home's robust medication procedure underpins the good management of children and young people's medical conditions.

Staff encourage children and young people to eat healthy food. As a result, some children and young people are now able to eat a wider range of foods than they would have done previously. For example, one young person who used to have only liquid foods now has three solid meals a day.

Staff work together across the home and the school to ensure that children and young people receive consistent support to develop their life skills. Consequently children and young people's independence is growing. They receive good support to have a smooth transition into adulthood.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Some practices that contribute to the overall safeguarding of children and young people do not consistently meet the requirements for good. There are weaknesses in the records relating to staff recruitment, physical interventions and fire drills. These weaknesses have not had a negative impact on the safety of children and young people, but they unnecessarily increase the risks to their welfare.

An appropriate procedure is in place to ensure that the agency staff who work at this home are fit for their role. However, the procedure's inconsistent implementation fails to minimise the risk of children and young people being looked after by people who might not be suitable. In particular, none of the required records were available for an agency staff member who has been working at the home since April 2018.

There are no concerns about the use of physical interventions and their effectiveness in protecting children and young people from harm. However, the records do not always include the duration of the physical interventions or the views of children and young people. When the views of children and young people were commented on, this was sometimes recorded by a person who carried out the physical intervention and therefore had a conflict of interest. Some records also lacked information on debriefs with staff members.

The registered manager's involvement in physical interventions reduces his ability to have independent oversight of these incidents and to quality assure the records. His involvement is an indication of a wider staffing issue: having an inexperienced staff team results in the registered manager often having to deal directly with behaviours of significant concern.

Fire drills are conducted regularly in daytime hours, but there have been none at night. The personal emergency evacuation plans for children and young people indicate that each of them would need a high level of individual support, should there be a fire. It is important to plan how this would work in practice, as usually 12 children and young people sleep at the home and there are three night staff on duty.

All parents said that they had confidence that their children are safe. Comprehensive risk assessment and behaviour management plans underpin the good support that staff provide for children and young people.

Staff understand children and young people well and are in tune with their emotions.

Staff are able to identify when children and young people's anxieties are rising, and use strategies to reassure them before their behaviours escalate. The proactive and positive approach to managing children and young people's behaviours has resulted in a reduction in incidents, both in terms of their frequency and their intensity.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager runs the service effectively and efficiently. Children and young people's individual files demonstrate good care planning and good care practices. The home's quality assurance processes and monitoring reports are child-centred, and focus on the progress of and outcomes for children and young people.

The registered manager is a competent leader who took over a service with a number of weaknesses and confidently managed the change that was much needed. His main focus has been on ensuring that children and young people are safe and receive high-quality support. Giving less priority to some aspects of record-keeping has resulted in some gaps in records.

All parents said that the service has improved significantly in 2018. They said that they are more satisfied with the service and, most importantly, that their children are happier. They credited the improvement to the registered manager.

Leaders and managers have recruited staff with the right attitudes, empathy, resilience and mindset needed to care for severely disabled children and young people who display behaviours of concern. However, the great majority of staff, including team leaders, have a limited experience of working in a residential setting. Out of 22 permanent staff members, 21 are new to the home and new to residential care.

Supportive management, a comprehensive training offer and opportunities to gain a vocational qualification cultivate the staff's professional curiosity and enhance their competencies. Staff are enthusiastic about their work and the team spirit is good. One staff member said that they had 'a dream team'.

For some time, the registered manager was responsible for inducting, supervising and reviewing individual professional performance of all staff members. The unrealistic workload led to some gaps in record-keeping relating to induction, supervision and probationary appraisals. Four team leaders have recently started to carry out some of these management tasks and the organisation is recruiting for the newly created post of a service coordinator to support the registered manager.

The home's register of children and young people does not include all the required details, although the information is available in other documents. The registered manager takes seriously any form of dissatisfaction, but the records of complaints in some cases lack detail. These weaknesses and the others that have been identified in this inspection report have not had a negative impact on children and young people.

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: Residential special school

Registered provider: MacIntyre Academies

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

Responsible individual: Coral Romain

Registered manager: Adam Lawrence

Inspector

Seka Graovac: 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
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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