

2671000

Registered provider: McRae Residential Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to six children with social and emotional difficulties.

Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The home and the manager registered with Ofsted in July 2022.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
---	------------

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 1 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/07/2024	Full	Good
16/05/2023	Full	Good
03/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Shortfalls in planning, gaps in staff training and ineffective monitoring systems have limited the staff's ability to consistently provide safe and nurturing care to children.

There are two children in the home. One child moved in during the inspection. One child is settled and feels that living in the home has changed their life and is helping them to mature. This child speaks highly of the staff and finds them 'entertaining'. They appreciate the discussions they have with staff.

One child is now attending college, which they enjoy and attend regularly. They also attend health appointments with support from staff and benefit from in-house therapy.

One child understands the reason they receive consequences. The child appreciates that staff explain the reason for the consequence and encourage them to reflect and learn from the situation. Staff also support the child to learn from complaints. When a neighbour complained about the child, the child was encouraged to apologise and was spoken to about maintaining positive relationships.

Children have several opportunities to share their thoughts. Children's meetings allow children to discuss important topics such as sexual health and knife crime. Children engage with these meetings and have the chance to lead on these discussions. Staff also seek feedback from children. For example, one child wrote a letter about their views on the home.

Five children have left the home since the last inspection. Most children had a planned move out of the home. Staff took the children out to eat and gave them a gift and a card. For one child, staff took them to their new home and did follow-up visits.

The home is suitably decorated for the children. However, there is a fence in the garden that is broken and is a potential risk to children's safety.

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

Poor leadership decisions and inconsistent risk management affect the safety and well-being of some children in the home.

When children go missing from the home, staff do not consistently contact or look for them. Staff do not report missing episodes to the police in a timely way, and they do not provide basic information about the children. This does not help the police to

remain well informed about children's circumstances or any other important information that can be used to locate them.

The registered manager does not ensure that the regulator is notified about all serious incidents that happen in the home. When there were concerns with a child having weapons, this was not suitably risk assessed. Room searches were inconsistent and sometimes happened in response to an incident instead of being a risk management strategy that is consistently reviewed.

The registered manager does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the actions that are involved after a physical intervention has taken place. The registered manager used a physical hold to manage a child's behaviour. The child and the manager did not receive a debrief. The responsible individual did not provide additional oversight. This lack of oversight compromises the ability to ensure that incidents are appropriately recorded and reviewed to ensure safe staff practice.

Leaders and managers complete an internal fire risk assessment. However, it is not clear whether this is carried out by a suitably competent person. Fire exit doors in the home use locks that require a key. This means that in the event of an emergency, children and staff are unable to open doors quickly and easily.

Children's social workers commend staff for attending meetings to discuss children's safety. Staff complete referrals to external agencies so that children can receive further support. Staff have discussions with children to help them understand the professionals' concerns about their safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The management oversight of the home is inadequate. Leaders and managers do not have effective monitoring systems or oversight of children's care. Recording systems are poorly organised, and there are gaps in children's records that hinder the manager's understanding of patterns and themes.

Leaders and managers made a poor decision regarding admitting a child into the home. On the second day of this inspection, there was a planned admission of a child to the home. The child's placing authority was unaware that the registered manager would be leaving the home shortly after the child moved in and future management arrangements were not shared. This shows a lack of understanding of the potential impact of significant changes in the home on children's feelings of stability, and how this should be transparently communicated to support any risk assessments or decision making.

Forums to support staff development are weak. Supervision is irregular and discussions do not consistently focus on improving staff practice. The workforce development plan does not detail what training is mandatory. As a result, not all staff have completed basic training or training specific to children's needs and vulnerabilities.

Recruitment processes are not robust. The registered manager cannot demonstrate that all staff have been securely recruited, for example, by evidencing that all gaps in staff's work histories have been explored or that any issues raised in applications are suitably risk assessed if needed. Leaders and managers are also unable to evidence staff receive suitable inductions.

A staff member has not started their qualification that is required for the role, despite working in this home for years. Leaders and managers have poor oversight of this.

Leaders and managers do not work effectively with the independent visitor to support improvement in the home. The independent visitor does not consistently report on matters that are required by regulation. The independent visitor does not always visit the home monthly. The regulator sometimes receives reports late.

Leaders and managers do not learn from the failings that have occurred in the other children's home owned by this provider. As a result, such failings have been repeated in this home. One staff said that they were set up to fail. Another said that 'communication with the other home and being on the same page' is an area for improvement.

Several shortfalls seen at the last inspection remain a concern, and a requirement 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
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— provide adequate means of escape from the home in the event of fire. If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(1) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (1)(b) (2)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that fire exit doors provide an easy and quick exit from the home. The registered person must also ensure that the home's fire risk assessment is carried out by an appropriate qualified body or individual.	2 February 2026
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))	2 February 2026
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff—	2 February 2026

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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when children go missing from the home, staff look for them and make suitable attempts to contact them. The registered person must also ensure that when room searches are required, they take place regularly and that this is suitably reviewed to ensure the safety of children.	
The registered person must ensure that— 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— a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; 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")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and 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)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when physical interventions take place, there is a clear understanding and oversight of what happens after such an incident. This is to ensure that the child is safe and that the staff member carrying out the intervention is suitably supported.	2 February 2026
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—	2 February 2026

seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that at the point a child is moving into the home, they are transparent with placing authorities about the management arrangements in the home. The registered person must also ensure that when children are missing from the home, they report missing incidents to the police in a timely way. Missing reports must include detailed and relevant information about the missing child.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(h)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to provide safe and effective care to children.	2 February 2026

Leaders and managers must also ensure that there are effective monitoring and review systems in place, and that when shortfalls are identified, prompt action is taken to address them. Leaders and managers must also ensure that there is effective management oversight of children's records. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"). The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (4)(a) (5)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that recruitment processes are robust and that staff are suitably risk assessed to work with children. The registered person must also ensure that all staff working in the home have completed their level 3 qualification within the expected timescale.	2 February 2026
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a) (4)(b))	2 February 2026

The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— 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; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that independent visits are completed in line with regulation and help the regulator to understand how children are safeguarded and how their well-being is promoted.	2 February 2026
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must keep children's records up to date and ensure that information in children's files is clear and accessible.	2 February 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the broken fence in the garden is fixed so that the home environment is appropriate and safe for the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that the workforce plans include sufficient details of all training that is mandatory. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: 2671000

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: McRae Residential Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 57 Lodge Road, Croydon CR0 2PH

Responsible individual: Kevin Henry

Registered manager: Amin Isa

Inspector

Chelsea Agyeman, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2025