

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025812
Inspector	Angus Mackay
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	McRae Residential Care Services Limited
Registered person address	61 Lodge Road Croydon Surrey CR0 2PH

Responsible individual	Sheila McCrae
Registered manager	Paul Stephen Rhys-Taylor
Date of last inspection	22/10/2014

Inspection date	03/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The Registered Manager is a qualified social worker and has a diploma in management studies. He has been the manager of children's homes under other regulatory bodies prior to being registered with Ofsted and has worked well with all regulatory organisations. Staff, young people and placing authorities have a positive view of the management of the home. One placing worker saying, 'The managers works well with me and is very good at responding to me. We work well together and the home have taken responsibility for much of the local work with the young person which has been very helpful to me.' The responsible person has put in place good succession planning and appointed a suitably experienced and qualified deputy manager for the home. This ensures continuity of care for the young people and suitable arrangements for cover in the manager's absence.

Since the last inspection the manager has revised the complaints procedure ensuring it contains contact details for the HMCI and actions to take if the complaint is about the Registered Manager. Similar changes to the child protection policy ensure that any allegations can be dealt with fairly and impartially. The recording of notifications and guidance linked to this has also been appropriately updated. The children's guide was updated to include contact details for Ofsted, and how to secure access to an independent advocate. However the guide did not contain details on how to contact the children's commissioner or their reviewing officer. These changes were put in place during the inspection. These positive changes have improved the procedures for safeguarding young people in the home.

The home has produced a suitably formatted bound and numbered log book for recording restraints. There have been no restraints for several years as staff manage behaviours by their application of behavioural programmes supported by the use of rewards and sanctions. However the recording of sanctions does not include all required information, in particular their duration or how effective they may be. In

addition some sanctions were inappropriate financial sanctions. The recording of sanctions and the description of permissible sanctions was amended during the inspection. Managers are now providing staff with clear guidance about what is an acceptable sanction and how to record it appropriately.

New admissions are carefully planned and the home ensures that they can meet all young people's needs prior to admission. Where necessary this includes linguistic issues such as meeting the care needs of young people with no English or English as a second language. Movements out of the home are skilfully managed and young people are fully engaged in planning these moves. The home insists on young people engaging in education and have successfully enrolled all new admissions in ongoing education, training or work. Some of those getting ready to leave say, 'Staff take this seriously and really prepare us for independence.'

The manager conducts regular monitoring of the home and produces a report on the conduct of the home from this. The report has not been submitted to Ofsted every three months as required. The external monitoring of the home is regular, thorough and provides a good additional safeguard for young people in the home. The independent visitor accurately records and comments on the views of the young people and where possible their families or social workers. The manager makes good use of the comments from these visits to improve the quality of care in the home.

The home is comfortable and pleasantly decorated. There are some areas for development which they were addressing but have been delayed due to a serious illness of the contractor. The home has monthly fire drills and has modified their recording of these to show all parties who have taken part in them. New young people to the home are taken through the evacuation procedure and a drill is held soon after their placement begins. The manager has commenced but not completed a review of the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the home. Consequently although children live in a safe well maintained environment, not all local risks have been identified and assessed to ensure their overall safety.

Staff training was previously organised by an external consultant who unexpectedly died in January. Consequently new staff have not commenced the appropriate induction programme. This has also affected the annual evaluation of training which the Registered manager is planning to include in his development plan for next year. The manager accessed the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards during the inspection making them available for newly appointed staff.

Information about this children's home

This is a privately-run home which provides care and accommodation for up to four young people. This home caters for young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/10/2014	Full	good
07/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
20/06/2013	Full	good
17/12/2012	Interim	good progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17 (2001)	ensure that no measure of control or discipline is used which is the imposition of any financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum by way of reparation (Regulation 17 (2) (g))	31/03/2015
17B (2001)	ensure that any measure of control, or discipline, in particular any sanction, shall include the information contained in paragraphs (a) to(i)) (Regulation 17B (3)(a)-(i))	31/03/2015
31 (2001)	ensure that the premises used for the purposes of a children's home are appropriately and suitably located, so that children cared for by the children's home are effectively safeguarded and are able to access services to meet needs identified in their care plans or placement plans. (Regulation	31/03/2015

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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- update the children's guide ensuring it contains details on how a child can contact their Reviewing Officer and the Children's Commissioner(NMS13.5)
- ensure that an evaluation of the monthly monitoring of matters set out in Schedule 6 is sent to HMCI at appropriate intervals (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 3.14)
- ensure new staff undertake Children's Workforce Development Council induction standards, commencing within 7 working days of starting their employment and being completed within 6 months (NMS 18.3)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated by completing planned improvements. (NMS10.3)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.