

SC025812

Registered provider: McRae Residential Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to four children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that care is provided for teenage boys who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in 1996. The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2012.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 November 2021

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: 19 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2020	Full	Good
17/05/2018	Full	Good
05/07/2017	Full	Good
09/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in the social and emotional aspects of their lives while living in the home. They become more confident, and their self-esteem improves. Children say that they enjoy living in the home and feel safe. One child who has moved on from the home said, 'I am in a much better place and I want to thank everyone here for supporting me.'

The home's independence training programme is one of its strengths. Children learn to manage their individual independence training allowance. They shop for themselves, learn to store food in their own fridges and cook their own meals. The home's weekly cookery club also enhances children's cooking skills. Carers guide and demonstrate basic daily living skills with the children.

Carers place a great emphasis on children's education. This helps children to re-engage in education when they have been out of education for some time. Children have examination successes in practical and academic subjects and receive school achievement certificates, for example for the most progress in their year group. One teacher said, 'If they (the carers) had not supported [name of child], he may not have completed his qualification.' Carers celebrate children's successes with them. After a celebratory restaurant meal with his carers, one child said, 'No one has ever taken me out for a meal before. It made my day.'

Carers work hard to help children overcome any difficulties they may have with their family relationships. As a result, children rebuild relationships and connections with their family members and enjoy family time in the community. Where possible, children invite their families to the home to spend time together and to share meals.

Positive behaviour is encouraged in the home. Children agree to their target behaviour rewards. These financial incentives help to encourage children's positive behaviour in the home, such as being up in time for school, tidying their bedrooms, and carrying out household chores on Saturdays. Carers regularly review and amend children's targets, which helps to keep children motivated.

Children have a voice in the home. They visit their favourite barbers and help to plan their weekly activities. Carers change the weekly meal planner according to children's wishes. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some community activities have been restricted. However, carers encourage children to join in physical exercise and play football with them. When it has been possible, children have attended the gym and boxing classes. One child said, 'My life has been much better since living here.'

The home is a four-bedroom terraced property and is suitable to meet the needs of the children. During the inspection, the home was being redecorated. However, leaders and managers should consider removing the children's bedroom door numbers to promote a more homely environment.

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

Children receive significant support and guidance to help them to keep themselves safe. Children engage in regular key-work sessions alongside 'teen talk/hard talk' meetings with carers. The carer team helps children to understand a range of risks and contemporary issues, including drug misuse, gang culture, knife crime, how to stay safe online, and the consequences of criminal behaviour. One parent described their child's key-worker support as 'invaluable.'

An emotional-health support worker visits the home weekly. He provides the children with additional help and advice. The support worker shares any concerns about children and provides guidance to the carer team. As a result, carers understand children's risks and complex behavioural needs very well.

The home's location risk assessment is kept up to date and reflects any emerging risks to children in the wider community. When children move into the home, carers make sure that they are shown around the local area and made aware of any particular areas of risk and vulnerability. This helps children to stay safe in the community.

Carers ensure that all relevant professionals and support agencies are involved in the detailed care planning for children. Carers attend all children's care and planning meetings. However, while carers have worked dynamically and consistently to support the children, some of the children's complex behavioural needs and high risk-taking behaviours have resulted in several unplanned placement endings in the preceding 12 months.

When children go missing from the home, carers always follow the missing-from-home procedures, which includes notifying the police. However, the inspector found that, on occasion, carers have not followed the agreed police online reporting procedures. This means that the police may not have a comprehensive profile of the missing child.

Children's risk assessments are detailed and regularly reviewed. Any emerging risks are identified promptly. However, the inspector found that one risk assessment does not include an assessment of a child's particular risk. This shortfall was being addressed during the inspection.

The inspector identified that several documents in a child's care folder were incomplete or not up to date. This shortfall was being addressed during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by the registered manager alongside the home's manager. The registered manager and the home's manager have a wealth of experience. The registered manager shares his wide-ranging knowledge through delivering university lectures on practice leadership in social work.

The members of the leadership and management team are strong advocates for the children in their care. They appropriately challenge placing authorities and other professionals on behalf of the children. For example, carers' concerns in relation to the effect of placement disruption, school discipline or lack of mental health support, are escalated so that additional resources can be accessed. When describing the home's nurturing ethos, one carer said, 'We collectively strive to make a difference, and the rewards are priceless when a young person's life changes for the better.'

The home has a stable and experienced team of carers. All the carers have a suitable residential children's home qualification. Carers receive a wide range of training to help them meet the specific needs of the children living in the home. All staff undertake training in advanced safeguarding, autism spectrum disorder, knife crime, racism, gang crime and offending behaviours.

The home's updated statement of purpose was not available on its website and had not been sent to Ofsted as required. The registered manager addressed this shortfall during the inspection.

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
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; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	31 December 2021
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— 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that carers follow the agreed police reporting procedures when a child goes missing from the home, and that all of the children's risks are recorded.	31 December 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a homely, domestic environment. In particular, they should consider removing or adapting children's bedroom door numbers to improve the homely environment. ('Guide to the

children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC025812

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: McRae Residential Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 57 to 61 Lodge Road, Croydon CR0 2PH

Responsible individual: Kevin Henry

Registered manager: Paul Rhys-Taylor

Inspector

Victoria Jones, 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 children looked after, 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 2021