

SC025812

Registered provider: McRae Residential Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four boys. The boys will often have suffered abuse or neglect and may also display challenging behaviour. The home's statement of purpose states that the home only accepts boys aged 13 to 16 years of age.

The manager has been registered since 2012.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 May 2018

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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/07/2017	Full	Good

09/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/11/2016	Full	Good
22/02/2016	Interim	Sustained 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(d)) This particularly relates to sufficient staffing levels during the night.	30/11/2018
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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)(4)(a)(b)) This relates to HMCI's timely receipt of the independent person's monthly report.	30/11/2018
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered	30/11/2018

person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(1)(2)(b)(5))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3); the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. 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— a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(3)(b)(4)(b))	30/11/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3); 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)(3)(d))	30/11/2018

The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; (Regulation 6(1)(2)(a)) In particular, the home must only provide care and accommodation in line with the statement of purpose and must provide HMCI with an updated statement of purpose should the home’s care and accommodation criteria change.	30/11/2018
---	-------------------

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff engage proactively with the placing authority to contribute fully to the relevant plans for the child’s care on an ongoing basis (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 56, paragraph 11.3). In particular, when young people’s welfare or progress concerns are identified, staff must contact the local authority to request a review of the young person’s care plan.
- Staff should understand factors that affect children’s motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 39, paragraph 8.13). In particular, staff must regularly review the effectiveness of the home’s young people’s rewards and consequences policy.
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1. The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8). In particular, the home should have a comprehensive training recording system in place.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

All professionals spoken with compliment the staff on their good levels of nurturing care. As a result, young people build trusting relationships with the staff. One young person said he has learned to trust staff and 'talk to them about anything'.

Staff know the young people very well and understand their risks and vulnerabilities. The staff's knowledge is enhanced through subject-specific weekly key-work sessions with young people. These sessions address any concerns as they arise, such as substance misuse or staying safe in the community.

Young people have opportunities to share their views on the quality of care that they receive and the daily routines in the home. Weekly 'teen talk' meetings enable young people to discuss subjects that include keeping the home safe, their contributions to staff recruitment interviews, deciding on whether they would prefer the office door open or shut during the day, menu choices and requests for online clothes-shopping options. Staff action young people's requests.

Young people understand their care plans and contribute to their statutory review meetings. Young people make good progress in the home. Examples include increased attendance at school, reduction in missing-from-care episodes, improved self-care, and increased engagement with external care professionals.

Young people enjoy a wide range of activities that are suited to their individual preferences. Leisure centre membership, football club, go-karting, playing pool and cinema trips are available alongside young people's opportunities to invite friends to the home. An annual summer holiday abroad enhances young people's overall experiences.

The home's independence training programme helps young people to prepare for their futures. Engaging in budgeting, cooking and general household chores ensures that young people acquire the skills to help them when they move on to independent living. A celebration, which includes the giving of gifts, acknowledges the significance of young people moving on from the home.

Staff work hard to encourage young people to engage in their education. The home's policy of offering financial incentives for school attendance is usually successful. If it is not, staff take into account young people's hobbies and interests and refer them to many alternative options such as the Prince's Trust programmes. However, when this is not successful and young people fail to make progress, staff do not always consult with placing authorities regarding the suitability of the placement.

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

The registered manager considers every referral in detail, taking account of the impact on the young people already living in the home. The staff's input into the referral and admission decisions is encouraged, which further enhances placement matching. As part of the assessment process, the registered manager visits young people where they are

living prior to coming to live in the home.

Young people sign 'acceptable behaviour contracts' which set out the home's rules and boundaries. Young people receive consequences for poor behaviour and appropriate financial rewards for their positive engagement such as attending school, tidying their bedrooms and coming home before their curfew times. However, staff do not review the effectiveness of each young person's consequences and incentives. As a result, some incentives are ineffective and some young people continue to challenge the home's boundaries.

Staff are very effective advocates for young people. Since the last inspection, staff have successfully supported young people to access language translation services, independent mentors and independent advocacy. This encourages young people's confidence and ownership of their care plans.

The home's location risk assessment is thorough. Contributions from local agencies and the police enable the registered manager to analyse any risks in the community and those which are more likely to have an impact on young males. The assessment includes identifying crime- and gang-related 'hot spots' in the local area. Young people's key-work sessions, alongside police presentations during 'teen talk' meetings, help to emphasise any risks and how young people can keep themselves safe.

Positive behaviour is encouraged in the home. The staff's skills in de-escalation techniques help to minimise challenging behaviours and crisis situations. There has been one incident of restraint since the last inspection. However, due to insufficient staffing levels at the time of the incident, police were called to assist. The registered manager acknowledged that this was not appropriate practice, and stated that additional staffing levels at night are to be put in place.

All staff receive training in child protection and safeguarding vulnerable young people. However, the training records are completed across a number of different formats. This raises the risk that not all training is accurately recorded or training refresher courses are not completed in line with guidance.

Staff recruitment procedures are not robustly adhered to. During the inspection, one staff file did not contain verification of the employee's references or photographic identification. This runs the risk that unsuitable adults are employed in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Internal and external monitoring systems are in place. The external independent visitor visits the home once a month. However, the monthly reports lack detail and analysis, and do not provide an opinion on whether young people are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes young people's well-being. In addition, the reports are not provided to HMCI in a timely manner.

The registered manager completes regular reviews of the home's quality of care. He highlights areas of progress and areas for improvement. Despite this, the quality of care review does not contain the feedback and opinions of young people regarding the home, its facilities and the quality of care that they receive in the home. As a result, opportunities to further develop the service are missed.

The registered manager has a strong sense of how each young person is progressing. He is able to make robust decisions, such as refusing unsuitable referrals. However, oversight of young people's post-16-year-old planning is not comprehensive. As a result, young people's transition plans show them remaining in the home after they are 17 years old. This is outside of the home's statement of purpose age criteria.

Not all staff are qualified in the appropriate level 3 qualification and there is no evidence of the home assessing that any other professional qualifications held by staff are equivalent to the required level.

During the inspection, staff spoken with said they enjoy working in the home. All staff attend monthly team meetings and are supported with regular supervision. During the inspection, all professionals spoken with praised the staff's effective partnership working and collaboration. Staff and support agencies attend young people's reviews, which helps to ensure that young people's care is coordinated and relevant to their individual needs.

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: SC025812

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: McRae Residential Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 57–61 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 <http://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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018