

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 run home provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The home was registered in June 1996. The manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2012 and is suitably qualified.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 September 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 30 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/10/2024	Full	Good
27/02/2024	Full	Good
15/03/2023	Full	Good
30/11/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children in the home have lived here for several years and are settled. They have positive relationships with the staff who they say are 'helpful, respectful and genuinely the best'.

Children's emotional, physical and mental health needs are well met. Children have good access to local health services and benefit from therapeutic support. This gives them opportunities to talk about their emotions and their feelings in a safe space.

Staff are invested in children's educational success. All children have completed their GCSE exams and are enrolled in college. Most of the children have plans about what they want to do in the future. One child wants to go to university and get a masters in mechanics or engineering. Another child is studying music and aspires to be globally recognised in the music industry.

All children engage with the home's independence training programme. This includes practical tasks such as developing their skills in cooking, budgeting and cleaning. Some children are also supported to develop their CV so they can be prepared to make job applications in the future.

Staff ensure that children see their family regularly, and family members appreciate how staff support this. One child's parent is happy with the 'brilliant progress' their child has made since they moved into the home.

Children have opportunities to share their views and wishes. Key-work sessions are child led, and children engage in meetings called 'teen talk sessions'. These sessions include discussions about issues in society where children can explore their views and opinions. Leaders and managers also seek external support for children as needed. They arranged for one child to have an advocate to help them have their say about issues in their life that will affect their future.

Staff want children to have positive experiences when living in the home. One child attends swimming weekly. Children attend other activities such as cinema trips and go-karting. Staff understand the importance of children attending cultural celebrations. Staff took one child to an international football tournament that was designed to celebrate different communities.

Leaders and managers want children to live in a positive, well-designed home. For example, the home has recently had a kitchen extension that brings more light and space to this communal area. Some areas still require attention, but there is a plan in place to address these.

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

Children feel safe in the home, and their family members are confident about their safety. Leaders and managers work closely with children's professional networks. Staff know and understand the primary risks to the children. Children's risk assessments are up to date and have strategies that guide staff to help keep children safe.

When incidents happen, staff manage them well. As a result, physical intervention is rarely used. Staff have reflective discussions with children to help them understand the worries about their safety, which contributes to the low number of incidents.

Staff ensure that there is a coherent system to administer medication. Children receive the correct amount of medication at the right time, and managers monitor this well.

When children go missing, staff look for them and contact family and other professionals. Staff report missing children to the police; however, the police say that reports lack the necessary details to help them locate the child. Return home interviews rarely take place. Leaders and managers do not escalate this shortfall, meaning children miss important opportunities to speak with someone independent about their experiences and safety when away from the home.

Leaders and managers complete an internal fire risk assessment. However, it is not clear whether this is carried out by a suitably competent person. Where recommendations about fire safety are in place, these are not suitably followed up to ensure they are completed within a suitable time frame.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The staff and leadership team have worked in the home for several years. Staff view themselves as a strong team that works well together to care for the children. This provides consistency for children.

Staff are happy with the support they have from leaders and managers. Team meetings are an opportunity to discuss the dynamics between children and their progress. Staff are up to date with training that leaders have deemed mandatory as well as training specific to the children's vulnerabilities. Staff have regular supervision meetings with managers, and they appreciate this dedicated time. Appraisals take place; however, feedback from children and professionals is not included in the reviews. This is a missed opportunity to help staff develop their practice.

Children's families describe communication from leaders and staff as 'brilliant'. Professionals view the leaders and staff as reliable in how they support children.

Leaders and managers' oversight of children's documents is inconsistent. Therefore, some documents, such as records of when children are missing from the care of staff

and daily logs, lack information about children's experiences and staff practice. There is not yet a central monitoring and review process to support leaders and managers to have effective oversight. Leaders and managers do not have all children's up-to-date local authority care plans to inform the care they provide to the children. They have not escalated this concern effectively to ensure this essential information is received.

Not all staff have obtained the required qualification for the role within the appropriate timescales.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they escalate any concerns to local authorities when return home interviews do not happen and when children's plans are not received on time. The registered person must also ensure that staff include all important information about children when they report them as missing to the police.	1 December 2025
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 (4)(a) (5)(a))	2 February 2026

In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff working in the home have completed the required qualification within the expected timescale.	
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 (2)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home's fire risk assessment is carried out by an appropriate qualified body or individual.	1 December 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when staff have their yearly appraisals, the views of other professionals and children are included in the performance management process. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children's case records are an accurate reflection of children's time in the home. They should be kept up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that they have regular and effective monitoring and oversight systems to ensure that staff provide high-quality care for all children living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)

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 Lodge Road, Croydon CR0 2PH

Responsible individual: Kevin Henry

Registered manager: Paul Rhys-Taylor

Inspector

Chelsea Agyeman, Social Care Inspector

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