

2588753

Registered provider: Acorn Homes (UK) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation that runs several registered children's homes. It provides care for up to 6 children who may experience social, emotional or mental health difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, 4 children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2025.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection, and care.

Date of last inspection: 26 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2025	Full	Outstanding
30/05/2023	Full	Good
10/08/2022	Full	Good
09/06/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children are making exceptional progress. Their respectful and consistent interactions with staff underpin their development. Staff provide thoughtful and well-informed care to children, which helps them feel safe and settled. Children value the nurturing and positive relationships they have formed with staff.

Children are happy and feel supported. One child who recently moved into the home described the support they receive from staff as 'really good' and said, 'Staff really care.' The child attributed the support they receive to the reason they have settled so quickly and said, 'It feels like I have been here for years, which is really good.'

Moves into the home are well planned and child centred. The work staff carry out before children arrive helps them settle quickly. When children move on, they are well prepared, and their progress and achievements are celebrated and captured in memory books. When endings have been impactful for children, they have been managed effectively. Staff communicate positively with children to help them understand why they are moving on and what to expect.

Children live in a well-decorated home that feels warm and inviting. Photos of the children and staff participating in various activities are displayed on the walls. This provides a homely atmosphere while reflecting the children's identities and interests. Consequently, the children have a sense of familiarity and belonging.

Most children are in full-time education and are achieving their academic goals. This is due to the encouragement and high ambitions of the staff, who want the children to do well. For one child, who does not yet have an identified school, staff provide a comprehensive daily plan with educational activities that the child enjoys.

Children are in good health. Staff help them attend health appointments and encourage healthy lifestyle choices. This support has a positive impact on children, promoting their overall wellbeing and setting a foundation for healthier habits in the future.

Children are encouraged to spend time with family members and other important people in their lives. Families and loved ones visit the home, providing positive experiences for children. As a result of staff's support, children feel their relationships are improving. Children establish positive relationships outside of the home and have fun with friends.

Staff listen carefully to the children and value their opinions. This creates an environment where the children can express themselves. Regular 'cake and catch up' meetings provide a platform for discussing topics that are important to the children. The meeting notes are captured in a child-friendly format, ensuring that children's voices are clearly heard.

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

The children feel safe and are safer because of living at the home. The good-quality work that the staff carry out with the children helps them better understand and manage risks, including online risks and self-harm. Staff help children develop the skills to build positive personal relationships.

Safeguarding processes are clear. The manager and staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and ensure that they work with other professionals to keep the children safe. They manage incidents effectively and take necessary actions to ensure the children's safety.

Staff know the children well and respond effectively to their needs. When children are missing from home, staff respond swiftly, with the children's best interests and safety at the core of decision-making. Staff maintain positive relationships with partner agencies to review plans and facilitate coordinated responses and timely information-sharing. Staff demonstrate their care for children through supportive discussions when they return home. For one child, this approach has supported a significant reduction in incidents where they go missing from home.

Staff balance the need to manage online risks with the opportunity for children to learn to navigate the internet safely. Staff support children in learning about the risks of using mobile phones and accessing the online world.

Children's risk assessments include relevant history and consider the appropriate risks for children. There are clear strategies for responding to immediate risk and good evidence that managers are closely liaising with professional services to consider how children's risks can be reduced.

Children receive the support they need to manage their emotions. If restraint is required, it is a reasonable and proportionate response to the behaviours and risks displayed. Managers take time to sensitively explore incidents with children, which helps them understand their feelings and feel valued by the staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager and acting deputy manager lead by setting a positive example. The managers are supportive of each other and work well together to provide high-quality care to the children. Managers are reflective and show insight into the challenges and positives the home has experienced. Staff work well together and understand the children's needs.

Staff and managers interact with children and speak about them with respect, empathy and pride. All the children can identify the favoured staff they trust and would approach for help. Managers are present and available for the children, and they treat them with unwavering positive regard.

Managers advocate strongly for the children and promote all aspects of their care from education to future care plans. When necessary, the manager ensures that children have independent advocates to give them a voice in their wider professional network.

Staff receive regular supervision and feel appreciated by managers. Additional support and training are provided to help boost confidence and enhance staff's skills.

Recruitment processes are effective. This ensures that only suitable individuals work at the home and provide care for the children. Managers understand their health and safety responsibilities and ensure that effective processes are followed.

Professionals are highly positive about the care children receive and the progress they make. They praise staff and managers for their excellent communication and care. A social worker said, '[Name of child] is absolutely thriving at [name of home], and I feel it is as close to a family home as could be possible.' Professionals also commend staff and managers for their understanding of the children's needs.

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: 2588753

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Acorn Homes (UK) Ltd

Registered provider address: Units 73 and 74 Maple Leaf Business Park, Manston, Ramsgate CT12 5GD

Responsible individual: Sophie Wood

Registered manager: Charlotte Gallup

Inspector

Gemma Bullen, Social Care Inspector

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