

2597747

Registered provider: 5ab Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides care for up to three children with complex needs, including learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2025 and is currently on a period of planned leave. An interim manager has been appointed.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 February 2026

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 September 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/09/2024	Full	Good
16/08/2023	Full	Good
08/11/2022	Full	Good
06/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home in a planned way, and one child has moved into the home. At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home. The inspectors spent time with both children.

The home environment is relaxed and welcoming. Children have lots of space to enjoy. Photographs of children, their families and staff are on the walls, providing a sense of belonging for children. Some areas of the home are in need of repair. However, the manager has scheduled the work to be completed. One family member said the home is 'Like a home from home, and staff are their [child's] second family.'

Children's quality of life has improved because they live in this home. Staff arrange for one child to meet with a young adult who previously lived at the home so they can maintain their friendship. This helps children to see the commitment staff have to them even when they move on. Staff organise holidays with children and their families to experience together. Children enjoy attending clubs during school holidays, and this helps the children to maintain meaningful relationships. Children enjoy lots of activities in line with their hobbies and interests. Children have attended their school dance, the gym, have been swimming and for meals out. Staff capture memories for children in books that are lovingly designed.

Staff understand how to encourage children to build on their independence skills at their individual pace. Children have learned to shop for ingredients and prepare meals. Staff have helped one child to learn how to ride their bike along with introducing the use of public transport. This has helped increase children's confidence and has built on healthy daily routines that will support children into adulthood.

Staff appreciate the importance of structure and routine for children. Staff support children to engage fully with education. Children are described to be thriving with their education and enjoy attending school.

Feedback from professionals and family was consistently positive. One family member shared they feel included in all aspects of their child's care, and support from staff has helped them to 're-connect' in a meaningful way with their child. A professional said their child 'shines because of how happy they are living at this home'.

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

Staff are consistent and considerate in how they care for children. Staff are thoughtful and take immediate action to help children regulate using child-focused methods. This demonstrates staff are extremely attuned to children's needs.

Staff understand how to escalate safeguarding concerns in line with the company policy. Leaders and managers take appropriate action to address any shortfalls in staff practice. Learning is shared with the wider team to reduce the likelihood of similar concerns happening again and to upskill staff.

On occasion, staff have held children to keep them safe. This has been reasonable and proportionate. Staff are curious to understand challenges for the children and work hard to overcome them. Children have learned alternative methods to help communicate their worries. As a result, incidents have significantly reduced because children feel well supported.

One child has complex physical health needs. Staff work closely with health care professionals to understand how best to support the child. This includes thorough oversight of the child's diet and exercise programme. This has helped the child to become healthier. However, managers have not taken timely action to seek medical consent and organise a medical test for another child.

Children's plans are individualised and regularly reviewed. One child requires a high level of supervision and is subject to a deprivation of liberty order. Staff use the least restrictive methods available to safely care for the child. However, the home does not have a copy of the order, and details relating to the order are not included in their plans. This means staff do not have access to the court-ordered expectations of caring for the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The interim manager has been in role for 6 weeks at the time of the inspection. She is highly experienced and has the appropriate skills and qualifications. The interim manager is child focused and has a clear vision and a strong desire to achieve positive outcomes for the children. She has already identified areas for further development. The interim manager feels well supported by the company.

The transition between the registered manager taking planned leave and the interim manager taking over has been managed extremely well with very little impact to the children. The interim manager has taken time to build relationships with the children. She enjoys spending meaningful time with them. Children are extremely comfortable in her presence.

Managers provide a good level of management oversight. Managers have a good understanding of the home's challenges and the importance of driving standards and consistency for both the staff and the children. One child has some identified therapeutic needs that professionals agreed some time ago. Managers have not been proactive enough in challenging the local authority to ensure these needs are met.

Communication between managers, professionals and children's family members is good. Children benefit from the manager's approach to close, multi-agency working.

Staff have regular and reflective supervision to help develop their skills. However, staff said they do not always feel supported to share worries and concerns within supervision. The interim manager is eager to build trusting relationships with the staff team to help build their confidence and to make sure the correct policies and procedure are followed.

Staff benefit from ongoing training, including training specific to the varying needs of the children. This ongoing learning helps staff develop their skills and support the care of the children who have complex needs.

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
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; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, staff must be able to access all parts of children's plans including any that are agreed by the courts. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b))	11 March 2026
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience In particular, leaders and managers must ensure information shared by staff within supervision remains confidential, unless further action needs to be taken to address specific concerns. Leaders and managers must ensure staff feel confident to share concerns without apprehension of bias. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	13 May 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff advocate on the behalf of children to help secure recommended health and wellbeing support where necessary and appropriate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.8)

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: 2597747

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: 5ab Care Limited

Registered provider address: Devonshire Business Centre, Unit 27 Works Road,
Letchworth Garden City, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire SG6 1GJ

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Katie Neal

Inspectors

Lexi Mitchell, Social Care Inspector
Sophie Levy, Social Care Inspector

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