

2706341

Registered provider: 5ab Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to 4 children who may have emotional and social needs. Children may also have learning disabilities.

There were 3 children living at the home at the time of the inspection. Their views were sought during the inspection.

The manager is suitably qualified and registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 March 2026

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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Good
08/08/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are very settled and like where they live. Two children have lived at the home for many years and said they wish to remain there until adulthood. They consider staff their family and have warm and reciprocal relationships with them.

Children are well supported when they move in and out of the home. Planning for these moves focus on the impact for children and how they can be emotionally supported to navigate these changes. Children's voices are listened to and their preferences supported where possible.

Children live in a home that is warm and inviting and feels like a family home. They enjoy being with staff and enjoy cooking and eating meals together. Children's bedrooms are well kept and personalised to their tastes. Children regularly take part in activities in the community with staff, and these are tailored to their interests.

Staff understand the children in their care well and have a naturally nurturing style. Children's needs are documented thoroughly in care plans. These guide staff on the aims of children's care and a personalised approach to working with children. Plans are updated regularly; they are added to as children are better understood and the effectiveness of behaviour support strategies is established.

Two children are regularly attending school and college and are making progress. Both children's attendance has significantly improved since they began living at the home. Children are aspirational for their future. One teacher said their student was 'one of our greatest success stories and a really important member of our community'. One child is not in education and concerns have been appropriately raised by the manager. This child does not have structured educational activities at the home during standard school hours and is not therefore being prepared for their return to school.

Children have several ways that their voices can be heard by staff. Staff work hard to ensure children are engaged in meaningful discussions and children's meetings. Children are kept up to date on agreed actions from meetings. However, records of children's meetings are not clear about who said what or who attended the meeting.

Children are supported to see people who are important to them. Staff often support with these meetings to ensure that they can proceed calmly and safely. One parent said their child was now better able to regulate their emotions and that as a result their once 'fractured' relationship is improving.

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

Risk assessments and behaviour support plans offer staff clear and pragmatic advice on how best to work with children when they become upset or display behaviours that

challenge. Importantly, they also focus on maintaining behaviours when children are calm and engaged. Learning from historical incidents informs adaptation to staff practice. Consequently, serious incidents are rare.

Children do not regularly go missing from the home. When children have gone missing, staff have showed good intuition and have responded effectively. Children have been quickly located and willingly return to the home. Records of incidents are clear and detail important contextual information about what may have led to the missing episode. Staff have trusting relationships with children and, as a result, missing episodes for one child have reduced since they moved to the home.

Children understand that they can speak openly with staff about their feelings and that staff care for them. Staff are curious and nurturing with children and promote healthy ways to manage their emotions.

On occasion, holds have been used to keep children safe. These are low level and used after distraction or calming techniques have been ineffective. The manager ensures that both staff and children can talk about their experiences of the incidents and there is a focus on learning from events.

Children receive consequences when agreed rules or boundaries have not been adhered to. In some cases, the consequence given does not clearly link to the behaviour or sends confusing messages to children. The manager has acknowledged this and has worked with the staff team to ensure consequences are more proportionate and relevant moving forward.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

External professionals consistently recognise the manager as a strong advocate for children. Staff and the manager communicate effectively with safeguarding partners and appropriately challenge when required. Professionals said children like living at the home and are making good progress.

Staff love working at the home and feel well supported by the manager. They find the manager to be fair and someone who leads by example. As a result, there is a stable staff team which offers consistency to children.

There are appropriate support systems in place for staff. Staff value their team meetings and supervisions as times when they can reflect and learn. Minutes of these meetings capture collaborative discussion and show a staff team that is child centred.

The manager has good oversight of incidents such as holds and missing episodes. Her oversight offers clear reflection and thoughtful insight about what could be done differently. This informs further discussions with staff and adaptations to practice. The manager has high expectations for staff and is ambitious for the children in her care.

The manager has developed systems to oversee and audit the home, in collaboration with the responsible individual. A recent behaviour analysis for one child was valued by staff and supported them to understand a contextual pattern in behaviour.

The home is visited regularly by an independent visitor. However, reports rarely include required consultation with the children, parents or involved professionals. The independent visitor reports are sent to Ofsted and the provider, but not in a timely way. This means the independent scrutiny of the care offered at the home is not to an acceptable level.

The manager has completed a review of the quality of care report as required. This does not yet include the views of children or stakeholders, although attempts have been made to gain their views. The manager has already taken steps to strengthen this area of the report in future.

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 registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI; the registered provider and, if applicable, the registered manager; and the responsible individual (if one is nominated). (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a) (7)(a)(d)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure the independent visitor seeks appropriate stakeholder feedback and reports following visits are received in a timely way.	4 May 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child is not participating in education, they and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. If no education place is identified by the placing authority, the registered person must challenge them to meet the child's needs under regulation 5 (engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of the information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. This specifically relates to the home's development plan. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: 2706341

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: 5ab Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Lyndsay Bryden

Registered manager: Rhia Edwards

Inspector

Louise Copping, 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 looked after children, 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 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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026