

2795055

Registered provider: Kent County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home specialises in accommodating and supporting up to 10 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged under 16 years who are awaiting transfer under the National Transfer Scheme (NTS).

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

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2024.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 January 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: 18 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none



Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2025	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children at this home arrive in the UK as unaccompanied asylum seekers. They are interviewed and assessed by Home Office staff on arrival. Children then come to this home to await a move to more permanent accommodation in England under the NTS, and typically stay for a few days. Decisions on who comes to live in the home are made between the registered manager and social workers. Consideration is given to children's cultures, ages and religion, to increase the chance of their placements being successful and to reduce risk.

Children benefit from a highly personalised and enriching programme of education, life skills and recreation that begins from the moment they arrive. Staff set consistently high expectations for engagement and children respond extremely well. This support enables the children to gain essential knowledge, build confidence and develop the practical abilities they need for the next stage of their journey.

Staff are skilled at creating meaningful relationships during children's short stays. Their skill at recognising and responding to the trauma that children have experienced helps children to immediately feel safe and to have a sense of belonging. As well as engaging in education and life skills, children are encouraged to play and to be children, without any other pressures. They respond well to this and enjoy playing LEGO, dominoes and dancing and singing with friends.

English is not the first language for any of the children. Therefore, staff rely on translators and translation tools to communicate. Children are aware of this and respond well, using whatever option is available. Interpreters are always available, if needed, and are in attendance during all important meetings. Children enjoy living in the home and are clear that staff do all that they can to meet their needs. When children move on, some continue to contact the home, acknowledging how important the staff have been to them during their first few weeks in the UK.

Children's views are integral to both the day-to-day running of the home and the home's ongoing development. Several changes have been made at the request of children, based around food, activities and community access, and these changes are being continued for future children. Children also have regular meetings to share their views. They hear from key professionals, such as local education leads, the Refugee Council and the police, who all provide advice on the key information and support available to establish a successful life in the UK.

Health needs are well met. Staff are skilled at recognising any health concerns and are quick to obtain appropriate support. In some instances, this has resulted in emergency medical care and eye examinations, to ensure that the children are helped to become healthy again. Any information relating to the physical or emotional health of the child is always shared with their next home, so that care can be continued.

Planning for each child's future is at the forefront of practice at the home. Staff work closely with social workers and the NTS to support children in their move on from the home. Staff ensure that the new carers have all the information available, so that the children's likes, dislikes, hopes and anxieties are shared clearly and that the children do not need to repeat their stories.

Staff work closely with social workers, some of whom are based in the home. Social workers praise the work that staff do, highlighting their attention to care and the understanding of trauma. On one occasion, when it was discovered that a child had a brother, who was also making the journey to the UK, impressive multi-agency working led to reunification for the child with his brother, and the opportunity for them to live together.

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

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the home. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a focus in supervisions, team meetings and one-to-one work with the children, meaning that the importance of being safe is shared by all.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of risks and have a clear commitment to the wellbeing and safety of children. Potential conflicts based on race and religion are well known. While this is often not an issue due to the referral processes, staff have clear strategies in place to de-escalate tension and to support the children. As a result, negative behaviour is rare.

When concerns have been raised about a child's vulnerability, such as the potential to be trafficked, a robust safety plan and risk assessments are immediately put in place. These are shared with the child to help them to understand the risk and why staff are taking particular actions. Children respond well to this and are grateful for the support in keeping them safe.

Children do not go missing from the home. A combination of strong relationships, education and the environment support the children to feel safe in the home.

Leaders ensure that effective work with external agencies maintains the focus on safety. Social workers, who complete initial assessments with the children before they move in, share any information with the team and are invited to be part of key meetings in the home, such as handovers and house meetings. This consistent flow of information ensures that any slight changes of behaviour or areas of concern can be responded to immediately.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by an experienced and aspirational manager, who wants her staff team to provide the best care that they can for children. She believes that the children can make progress during their stay at the home, even if they are only there for a short

time. The manager is supported by equally ambitious house managers in a structure that is designed to give staff the best support possible to deliver the highest standards of care.

Staff value both the formal and informal support that is available. Supervision is regular and allows staff to reflect on the challenges of the work, which is vital when caring for children who have experienced high levels of trauma. As well as this, comprehensive handover meetings and an open-door policy ensure that any concerns are responded to rapidly.

Leaders have focused on development of staff. Comprehensive training helps staff to understand the nuances of working with children from a wide range of cultures. Staff can also access bespoke training in areas that support their work. Leaders use regular team meetings to provide learning opportunities, as well as to focus on and review the care that is being provided.

Temporary staff have the same access to training and support as permanent staff, ensuring consistency in how staff are managed. This high level of oversight and management has meant that no staff have left since the last inspection, and the only new member of permanent staff has transferred successfully from a temporary role.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. Managers have made changes to the care planning and reviewing processes as a result of their oversight, and this has supported the positive outcomes for the children.

Any practice concerns have been responded to immediately, and support or monitoring systems have been put in place to avoid any repetition of the issue.

Leaders have used creative methods to seek children's views and to understand the impact of their time in the home such as one-to-one sessions with adults, suggestion boxes, house meetings and mid-point surveys. For children who have left, ongoing surveys are sent to try to understand the impact of their time in the home. These are not sent directly to the child, so the return is inconsistent. However, the attempts being made indicate the lengths that leaders are prepared to go to, to make sure that their care is effective.

There are no requirements or recommendations arising from this inspection.

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: 2795055

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kent County Council

Registered provider address: Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Road, Maidstone ME14 1XQ

Responsible individual: Alison Vening

Registered manager: Rachel Turner

Inspector

Mark Newington, Social Care Inspector

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