

2795302

Registered provider: Alentar Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is managed by a private company. It provides care for up to 2 children with social and emotional difficulties.

One child was living at the home at the time of the inspection and was spoken to.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024. She is also a manager for another home within the organisation.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 April 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	requires improvement to be 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: 13 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/05/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

Children benefit from a caring, stable and supportive environment where they make good progress. Relationships between the staff and children are a strength of the home, as are the good leadership and committed staff team. However, safeguarding practice is not consistently robust. Significant shortfalls in response to a serious incident and delays in reporting an allegation highlight the need for improvement. Managers have taken appropriate action to address these concerns, but further work is required to ensure that safeguarding practice is consistently effective.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home, and 2 children have moved out of the home.

The home provides a warm, nurturing and welcoming environment for children. When children move into the home, this is carefully planned and child focused. For example, one child's move was well coordinated, involving the registered manager, social worker and parent. The child was given the opportunity to visit the home prior to moving in.

Children develop positive and trusting relationships with staff. One child reported that they feel listened to and valued, and they are confident in approaching staff when they feel worried or upset. Staff put the child's voice at the centre of their practice.

Staff promote the importance of education effectively. One child, who was previously not in education, is now attending an alternative provision regularly and engaging well. This has been supported through a structured reward system. Another child, who has since moved out, made good educational progress during their time at the home.

Children benefit from a range of enjoyable experiences and activities. These include holidays abroad, spa days, theme parks, horse riding and community-based activities, such as dog walking. Individual interests are encouraged; for example, one child regularly plays football and attends sea cadets. Staff and children are also participating in an event to raise money for a cancer charity, promoting social responsibility and community involvement.

A parent spoke positively about the home and staff. Another parent reported good communication and stated that their child has made significant progress since living in this home.

Children's health and emotional wellbeing are well supported. For one child, there has been a notable reduction in both the frequency and severity of self-harm. The child's mental health has improved, and there has been a reduction in the need for medication. The child engages well with specialist mental health services.

Two children have moved on from the home due to safety concerns outside of the manager's control. Where appropriate, staff maintain positive relationships with children who have left the home. The deputy manager has become a child's independent visitor. This provides continuity and demonstrates the value placed on relationships.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Safeguarding practice is generally effective. Staff have appropriate training, generally understand safeguarding procedures and implement appropriate measures. However, there have been some incidents that indicate shortfalls in practice.

In one serious incident, there were multiple failings. These included not prioritising the immediate safety of children, not seeking additional support from staff and failing to adequately implement identified risk-reducing strategies. Basic safeguarding procedures were not followed, and the recording of the incident was delayed and contained inaccuracies. Children were not harmed.

At the time of the inspection, an investigation into the incident was ongoing. However, the manager has responded appropriately by initiating a review, implementing changes in practice, providing additional training and creating opportunities for staff to reflect on the incident and their actions.

There has been one allegation involving a staff member. A member of staff delayed reporting the allegation. Once informed, the manager took prompt and appropriate action. Additional safeguarding training has since been provided, and there are examples of improved reporting practices.

Behaviour management is positive. Staff use a reward-based approach with children and consequences are rarely required. When used, these are appropriate and overseen by the manager. However, the consequences are not routinely evaluated to determine if they are effective.

Children have been missing from the home. These incidents are generally managed appropriately. Staff take proactive steps to locate children and work collaboratively with individuals in the community. Children are welcomed back to the home and are offered independent return home interviews. Staff also complete key work with children to explore the risks associated with going missing and the potential long-term impact on their future.

The child is engaging with youth intervention services. Being proactive with early intervention demonstrates effective multi-agency working and is reducing the risk of involvement in criminal activity.

There have been no incidents requiring physical intervention. Staff have a clear understanding that this should only be used as a last resort. Instead, they apply a therapeutic approach to managing behaviour.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an experienced and committed registered manager, who is currently completing a relevant level 5 qualification. She is supported by a capable deputy manager.

Leaders and managers create a positive and supportive environment. Staff morale is high, and staff report feeling valued. Initiatives, such as team brunches and employee recognition, contribute to this. Children benefit from the care of a consistent and motivated staff team.

Staff receive regular supervision, including therapeutic and reflective supervision. This provides staff with a safe space to reflect on their practice and the challenges of their role.

Training is of a high quality. Staff and managers benefit from regular input from an experienced therapeutic consultant. Staff understand and implement the home's therapeutic model underpinning the home's practice. Staff either have or are working towards a relevant level 3 or 4 diploma, and some staff are working towards a level 5 qualification.

A social worker spoke highly of the managers and staff. They are impressed with the care that they provide. They said that communication is 'excellent', the child is 'thriving' and that the manager and staff team understand the child's complex needs.

Managers are strong advocates for children. They challenge other professionals when necessary. For example, they have escalated concerns regarding cancelled appointments and the appropriateness of remote interventions from external services. This advocacy ensures that children's needs remain a priority. There has been a complaint involving the police where their response was not considered helpful for vulnerable children. The manager has appropriately advocated on behalf of children in response to this.

There have been some notifiable incidents. The manager generally ensures that Ofsted is notified. However, on 2 occasions, notifications were not made. The manager took appropriate action to safeguard children, but not notifying incidents can limit regulatory monitoring.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(b)) In particular, the manager must ensure that appropriate procedures are always followed and that the management of risk is effective in relation to safeguarding children. Incident records must be updated promptly and be accurate.	23 May 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences given to children are reviewed for their effectiveness. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that all notifiable incidents are notified to Ofsted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.3)

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: 2795302

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Alentar Care Limited

Registered provider address: Tree Holdings Ltd, 71 Knowl Piece, Wilbury Way,
Hitchin SG4 0TY

Responsible individual: Chukwukem Mafe

Registered manager: Zoe Whitbread

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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