

SC023737

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three children with social and emotional needs.

One child was living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has returned to work in the home following an extended period of leave.

Inspection dates: 30 September and 1 October 2025

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: 17 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

This children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 18 June 2025. A monitoring visit was carried out on 12 August 2025, during which significant concerns remained. As a result, a compliance notice was issued in relation to regulation 12, the protection of children standard.

At a case review following this inspection, it was agreed that the compliance notice issued was deemed to have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/06/2025	Full	Inadequate
12/12/2024	Full	Good
20/03/2024	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child living in the home reported noticeable improvement in the care provided to them since the last inspection. They described the home as being more settled and a calmer place to live.

The child spoke positively about their relationships with staff, identifying some as significant adults in their life. They are confident in raising concerns, trusting that staff would listen and take appropriate action. They specifically highlighted one staff member and the team manager for how they advocate on their behalf, stating, 'They get things done.'

Since the last full inspection, significant improvements have been made to the home environment. The home is now clean, tidy and well-maintained. Additional touches, such as framed photos, lamps and soft furnishings, contribute to a more homely and welcoming atmosphere. The child's bedroom has been redecorated, with the child actively consulted during the process to ensure that chosen colours and decor reflect their preference.

The child is attending school regularly and making steady progress. They enjoy school and have good attendance. A school representative said that communication from staff is detailed, and staff keep them up to date with incidents and difficulties, which 'allows us to ensure that the right level of support is in place during school hours'.

Staff ensure that the child attends all routine and necessary health appointments. Staff work closely with mental health services to identify and provide the most appropriate therapeutic support for the child.

Staff ensure the child has routines. When the child is not at school, staff provide a range of activities. The child is supported to try a variety of hobbies, which has allowed them the opportunity to explore their interests. While the child has input into the planning of activities, they often choose to spend time in the home with staff instead. This is reflective of both their age and the relationships they have developed.

Staff have both natural and planned discussions with the child. These ensure regular opportunities for staff to offer guidance and reassurance. This supports the child's emotional well-being and helps educate them about general risks, as well as those specific to their individual circumstances.

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

Senior managers have taken significant steps to improve the organisation's response to allegations. The safeguarding policy has been reviewed to ensure that all concerns are treated with the seriousness they require. Managers have ensured that staff are familiar

with the updated procedures by requiring them to read and understand the revised protocol. Additional measures, such as tailored training, discussions during team meetings and supervision sessions and the use of flowcharts, have been implemented to ensure staff are clear about the steps in the event of any allegations.

On the rare occasions when staff have used physical intervention, it has been solely to safeguard the child from immediate harm. These two interventions were proportionate to the risks presented and were carried out by trained staff. After each incident, the child was spoken to to support their understanding of why the intervention was necessary and to ensure their emotional and physical well-being. Medical attention was offered in both instances. The manager maintains oversight of all incidents, enabling the identification of learning opportunities and promoting continuous improvement.

There have been occasions when the child has been missing from the home. On each occasion, staff have responded promptly, informing managers and taking proactive steps to locate the child, including searching known areas. The child has been reported missing to the police in line with their individual plan and with consideration of the specific circumstances, ensuring a timely response. On their return, staff provide reassurance and seek to understand the reasons behind the incident, with the aim of preventing recurrence. In addition to these discussions, staff ensure the child is spoken to independently by their social worker.

There has been a clear focus on establishing consistent boundaries for the child, which has led to care that is more reliable and predictable. As a result, the child now demonstrates a clear understanding of the rules and expectations in place.

While safeguarding concerns are appropriately responded to, there have been some gaps in recording the steps taken by staff to support children's immediate safety. This includes documenting how advice from other professionals has informed safety planning.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager demonstrates a strong commitment to both the child and the staff. She has a comprehensive understanding of the child's background and recognises how certain behaviours are rooted in past experiences. She uses this insight to guide staff in implementing effective strategies that support the child's individual needs.

The manager promotes a culture of openness, encouraging discussions to address any issues in the home. On one occasion, the manager supported a child in raising concerns directly with a staff member, creating an opportunity for meaningful conversation and enabling the staff member to respond to the child's views. This approach helps children develop constructive ways to resolve issues.

The manager has adapted her approach to seeking the child's views, acknowledging that traditional forums, such as weekly children's meetings, are not appropriate in a single-child setting. Nevertheless, the child's voice continues to be heard through daily

discussions, as well as consultation forms. The child confirmed that their views are listened to and acted on and was able to identify changes made in response to their input, such as to meals, activities, home decor and some adaptations to rules and routines.

Staff now receive regular supervision. Records of these meetings are detailed and reflect a range of discussions, including children's progress and staff development. Supervision is also used as a space to reflect on practice and reinforce safeguarding procedures, ensuring staff are clear on processes. Staff feel supported and report an overall improvement in staff morale.

The reintroduction of the home's management monitoring system is proving effective in identifying shortfalls and areas of improvement for the home, which the manager ensures are promptly addressed.

Some professionals say communication is improving. They describe it as being inconsistent and fragmented due to information being shared and responded to by multiple managers. They also highlighted instances when decisions about children were made in isolation. However, since the manager's return, professionals have noted improvements and expressed confidence that communication will continue to strengthen now that there is a main point of contact.

While managers speak positively about the support received from the home's independent visitor, the reports from these visits do not contribute to scrutiny and improvement for the home. Additionally, there have been inconsistencies in the timing between visits and delays in reports being submitted to Ofsted.

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 maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that all information relating to the protection or safety of children is clearly documented.	28 November 2025
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodate. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(d))	7 November 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should seek independent scrutiny of the home and ensure that reports from these visits clearly reflect this and actively support improvements within the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: SC023737

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Leigh Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5EU

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Alisia Whiteman

Inspector

Kerry Howarth, Social Care Inspector

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