

SC023746

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private organisation that runs a number of children's homes within the local area. This home provides care for up to three children who may experience emotional and social difficulties. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 May 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: 28 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/05/2025	Full	Good
04/06/2024	Full	Good
11/10/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/07/2023	Full	Inadequate

Summary of findings

The home is led by an experienced manager and supported by a stable and consistent staff team. Children make good progress from their starting points. Staff know children well and provide care that is responsive to their individual needs.

Children benefit from a range of positive experiences and feel safe and well cared for. They are encouraged to share their views and raise any concerns.

Safeguarding practice is effective and supported by strong multi-agency working.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most children living in the home are making good progress from their starting points, particularly in relation to their emotional wellbeing. One child said that staff are understand their individual needs, enabling the staff to provide personalised support. As a result, the child has been able to better understand and manage their emotional responses.

Professionals say that children receive a high level of care from staff who show a genuine commitment and interest in them. One professional stated, 'They have taken the time to understand [child's name] needs and have responded in a way that is right for them. They have provided them with a home where they feel safe and they have been able to experience being loved and nurtured'.

A particular strength is the staff's commitment to supporting children to spend time with their families. Staff and managers take a proactive approach, communicating directly with parents and taking responsibility for planning family time arrangements. One parent praised how staff help create a more natural and comfortable experience through their friendly and supportive approach.

Staff encourage children to take part in activities that reflect their individual interests. As a result, children get to try new things and regularly take part in a range of experiences, including days out, hobbies and holidays.

Children enjoy warm and trusting relationships with staff, who respond to them with affection and show genuine interest in their day-to-day experiences. Children are actively spoken with about their care through regular discussions with staff, children's meetings and consultation documents. Children say that their views are consistently listened to and acted on and that the best thing about living in the home is the staff.

One child has moved into the home since the last inspection. Careful consideration was given to the child's needs prior to them moving in. Managers visited the child and

provided information about the home in advance. As a result, the child was well prepared, which supported them to settle quickly.

Most children are attending school and making good progress in their learning. However, one child's attendance has recently declined due to their individual circumstances. While staff initially made efforts to promote attendance and maintain a routine, this has not been consistently sustained over time, resulting in periods where the child has experienced a lack of structure to their day.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's individual risks and what is required to keep them safe. They take proactive steps to educate children about risks, including online safety and healthy relationships. Children identify staff to be the main adults they would share any concerns with, which acts as a protective factor in promoting their safety.

Staff understand that children's behaviour is a form of communication. Staff consistently take time to explore the underlying meaning of behaviours. This enables them to respond effectively and support children to develop safer and more appropriate ways of expressing their needs and emotions.

Staff ensure children are clear about the rules in the home. All children describe these as fair and understand that they are in place to help keep them safe. Most children have good routines, with staff promoting healthy habits around bedtime, personal care and independence.

Staff take proactive and timely action to safeguard children. When concerns arise, they arrange multi-agency meetings to ensure a coordinated approach to risk management and safety planning. The manager has established effective working relationships with the police, enabling a better understanding of community risks.

Managers respond appropriately to allegations made by children and consult with relevant external professionals to agree actions to safeguard them. Proportionate risk management measures are implemented, and investigations are completed thoroughly. Outcomes demonstrate that children's concerns are taken seriously.

When children are missing from home, staff take proactive steps to locate them and support their safe return. On their return, staff check on children's wellbeing and take time to understand the reasons for the incident. However, despite individual risk assessments being in place, one child was not reported missing in line with their plan. In addition, a parent raised concerns about a delay in being informed when their child had been missing from home for an extended period.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a committed and visible manager. They promote a positive culture and are consistently present alongside staff, which strengthens relationships with children and contributes to the overall quality of care provided. The manager works closely with the area manager to help identify improvements for the home.

Care is delivered by a consistent and dedicated staff team. All staff describe a positive working environment in which they feel well supported in their roles by the manager. This support has enabled staff to remain optimistic and child-focused when faced with times of challenge.

Staff are supported to develop the skills and knowledge they need. They receive regular training, including bespoke training tailored to the specific needs of children living in the home. This enables staff to respond effectively to children's individual needs.

Managers work effectively with others. They build positive relationships with parents, children's social workers and education professionals to help secure good outcomes for children.

Professionals frequently describe communication with staff and managers as 'excellent'. As a result, they are kept well informed about children's progress and any safeguarding concerns. Although most families say they receive regular feedback and updates, one parent reported that communication can at times be inconsistent, with no clear structure in place.

Although monitoring systems are in place, these are not yet fully effective. This is particularly evident in the quality of the reports completed by the independent visitor, which continue to provide limited scrutiny. A new independent visitor has been recently appointed by the provider.

In addition to daily catch-ups, team meetings and annual appraisals, staff receive regular formal supervision. However, records of these meetings are not always completed promptly, which limits effective oversight of staff development and progress against agreed actions.

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, 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 prepare and implement a policy ("the missing child policy") setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. Before implementing, or making an amendment which the registered person considers to be substantive to, the missing child policy, the registered person must— consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	15 May 2026
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;	22 May 2026

help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(viii))	
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b)) In particular the registered person must ensure the independent persons reports provide sufficient scrutiny and supports improvement for the home.	26 June 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision should be kept for staff. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33.
(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through engagement with each child’s family where appropriate.
(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 54, paragraph 10.23)

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: SC023746

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited, 17 Leigh Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 5EU

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Toby Marzetti-Mercer

Inspectors

Kerry Howarth, Social Care Inspector
Lee Muchmore, Social Care Inspector

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