

SC030797

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care for up to nine children with social and emotional needs. At the time of the inspection, there were six children living in the home.

The manager of the home registered with Ofsted in May 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 February 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: 21 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2025	Full	Good
11/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/05/2023	Full	Inadequate
21/03/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children seek support and affection from staff, who are attentive and respond warmly. Children are happy living in the home and say they can approach staff when they have worries or concerns. One child said, 'I get on well with the staff and I like doing my clubs. They are probably my favourite things about living here'.

Staff make thoughtful efforts to ensure children feel valued and recognised. This includes purchasing items linked to children's interests, providing personalised notes of encouragement, and offering rewards and letters that acknowledge children's progress. As a result, children consistently experience nurturing relationships with staff.

Children benefit from being supported by committed staff who are focused on promoting their welfare. When describing the staff one parent said, 'he has a good relationship with all of them. They are very caring about the children'.

Children are encouraged and supported to develop skills in preparation for their independence. Staff use pathway plans to help children learn important life skills, such as meal planning, budgeting and household tasks.

Children take part in a range of activities and hobbies that reflect their individual interests. Their personal choices are encouraged, while shared experiences are also promoted. Regular events, such as parties, film nights and daily meals eaten together, help create positive shared experiences that replicate family life.

Most children attend school regularly and are making good progress. For the one child who is not currently engaging with education, there are clear proactive plans in place to support them. Staff advocate for children's education and consistently promote their learning needs. They work closely with external agencies to secure the right support and when necessary, challenge decisions to ensure plans are based on what is in children's best interests.

Staff have a detailed understanding of children's needs and backgrounds. This enables them to provide personalised and responsive care to each child. As a result of the care provided all children are making progress from their starting points, including in their emotional wellbeing. One parent described how their child is now more settled and better able to manage their emotions since living in the home.

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

Staff fully recognise the risks for children and are clear about the actions needed to support their safety. Children say they feel safe and well supported in the home. Families and professionals also express confidence in the staff's ability to safeguard children effectively.

Staff educate the children through conversations to help them understand and manage risks. This includes education around online safety, healthy relationships and other areas relevant to the children's needs. This support is well planned and delivered creatively, taking into account of each child's age and level of understanding.

Managers take prompt action to safeguard children and ensure that any allegations are prioritised and dealt with sensitively. When children raise concerns, investigations are completed in line with guidance and relevant agencies are notified without delay. On one occasion, the manager did not record the rationale for deciding not to carry out an investigation. However, they were able to explain and provide alternative evidence to demonstrate how this decision had been reached.

On the occasions when children have been missing from the home, staff respond quickly and take action to search for them. Most children remain in contact with staff and feel able to reach out for support, which helps them return safely. However, on one occasion, there was a delay in notifying both the manager and the police, despite the increased risks linked to the timing of the incident. The manager's subsequent review did not acknowledge this delay. Following the incident, the manager provided support to both the child and staff to help reduce the possibility of a repeat incident.

Physical interventions are used proportionately and only when other strategies have been unsuccessful. The manager reviews all incidents and identifies learning to improve practice and minimise the need for future restraint. Children's well-being is checked after every incident and debriefs are routinely completed with children and staff. On one occasion, the staff member involved in a physical intervention also completed the debrief with the child afterwards. On review this was identified as inappropriate and a further discussion was held with the child to ensure their well-being.

The quality of safeguarding records is variable, particularly in missing-from-home records. These records do not consistently capture sufficient detail about children's presentation, well-being, or the actions taken by staff when children are located.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has both a registered manager and a home manager. Since the last inspection, there has been a change in the home manager, and the new manager has now completed their induction. The home manager intends to apply to register with Ofsted. In preparation for this, they have gradually taken on increased responsibilities while working under the oversight and guidance of the registered manager.

The manager has quickly gained a sound understanding of the children's needs and has invested time in building positive relationships with them. They speak with commitment about the home and demonstrate aspirations for its continued development and improvement.

Staff speak highly of both managers and the support they receive. They describe managers who are approachable, available and who provide regular, consistent supervision. Staff report improved communication since the new home manager started. New staff also describe a supportive induction process, with managers ensuring they have sufficient time to learn and gain confidence before taking on responsibilities.

Staff are happy working in the home and describe a supportive team that share a commitment to providing good care to the children. Staff morale is high, and this is reflected in the low level of staff turnover.

Professionals consistently speak positively about their relationships with managers and staff. They report being kept well informed and consulted about children's progress and plans. Parents also share positive views about the staff and commend the commitment they show in supporting and promoting family relationships.

Children's views are regularly sought through informal discussions, planned children's meetings and routine feedback forms. Children report that they feel listened to and that staff take appropriate action in response to their wishes and feelings.

Since the last inspection the responsible individual has visited the home and is now providing regular supervision to the registered manager. However, none of the children were aware of who the responsible individual is or understood their role. The lack of engagement with children reduces opportunities for concerns to be raised and restricts the responsible individual's ability to effectively monitor the quality of care and practice within the home.

There has been a recent change in the home's independent visitor. The new visitor has proactively sought more feedback to inform their monthly monitoring, which has contributed to some improvement in the quality of reports. However, the reports continue to lack sufficient depth and scrutiny to effectively support the home's development.

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.

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. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b))	27 February 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h)) In particular, the Responsible Individual must have sufficient oversight of the quality of care provided to children, enabling the Registered Manager to identify areas for improvement. To achieve this, they should routinely seek feedback from both children and staff. The Registered Manager must also ensure that the Independent Person effectively evaluates the quality of care and safeguarding	27 February 2026

responses taken by staff, providing assurance around the safety and welfare of children.	
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))	6 February 2026

Recommendation

- The home's record of significant events, including any allegations made against staff, should clearly detail the actions taken in response and the outcome of any investigation, including the rationale when a decision has been made not to investigate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.14)

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: SC030797

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: Gordon Shaw

Inspectors

Kerry Howarth, Social Care Inspector
Sheniz Hudaverdi, 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