

2842493

Registered provider: Ascent Fostering Agency Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in August 2025 and is privately owned. It provides care for up to five girls who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2025.

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

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the home was opened in August 2025, one child had lived at the home for four months and then moved out. Another child moved in during October, and a third child recently moved in.

Staff help children to have thoughtful and well-planned moves into the home. They provide opportunities for children to meet with them and visit the home in advance, and gather information so that items they like are provided when they move in. This helps children to feel warmly welcomed into the home and helps them to settle well. An Independent Reviewing Officer commented on the remarkable turnaround when they first visited a child who initially did not wish to move into a new area and saw how much they liked living in the home.

Children make progress in their education. Staff work in close partnership with education providers to plan children's reintegration when they have been away from school and maintain good oversight of their arrangements. Staff encourage children to engage with their education through conversations and by offering incentives.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff help them to attend their routine appointments and ensure that specialist support is in place when needed. They have focused conversations with children to promote their health, for example dietary choices.

Staff develop positive relationships with children. The home's therapeutic ethos is embedded into staff practice and helps children to express their feelings and build trust. This means that staff know the children well which supports their sense of security and safety in the home. This was reflected by one child who said that the staff take care of them and shared an example of a time that they helped them.

Staff are proactive in advocating for children. Examples of this include escalating a request for a safeguarding meeting to a placing authority after a child made a disclosure and there was initially no response, and mediating for a child when they received a difficult telephone call. This approach helps to safeguard children and makes them feel protected.

Children live in a home that is of an exceptionally high standard. It is very spacious, clean, comfortable, and well maintained throughout. Some staff wear keys and a lanyard around their necks, which undermines the family feeling of the home.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's vulnerabilities and strategies for reducing their risks. This is underpinned by thorough risk assessments that are kept up to date and give staff clear guidance on potential triggers and protective factors as well as

positive behaviour strategies. This enables staff to have the ability to effectively support children's safety.

Staff manage incidents well. They clearly record events, and managers' oversight is in place. Each incident has a reflective discussion which involves the home's therapeutic consultant. This ensures that staff have ongoing learning and the opportunity to develop their practice and reduces the likelihood of incidents reoccurring.

Staff engage children in regular, purposeful discussions to enhance their safety. These are individualised to their current needs and cover a range of topics relevant to their wellbeing. As a result, children are well supported to understand risks and how to keep themselves safe.

Staff know what to do when children are missing-from-home. They follow children's protocols and make timely reports to the relevant agencies. The registered manager works in partnership with the local missing persons coordinator, who has provided training for staff. Staff always have discussions with children when they return home. However, they do not request independent return home interviews from children's placing authorities.

Staff carry out bedroom searches to safeguard children when necessary. An explanation of the reason for the search is provided, and a manager's decision is in place. However, efforts made to obtain children's consent are not recorded. This compromises the capacity for managers to have oversight of this area of practice.

The home's safer recruitment process is not robust. Although all the relevant checks are completed and references are verified, gaps in applicants' employment history are not accounted for in writing, and one staff member's Disclosure and Barring Service was over three years old when they started work in the home. These shortfalls could increase the risk of unsuitable adults working with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home has excellent leadership. The registered manager knows the children very well and has a deep understanding of their individual needs and vulnerabilities. She is supported by a highly experienced and knowledgeable responsible individual. Together they are effective in recognising the team's achievements, which builds confidence and motivation for staff.

Staff feel highly valued and supported by leaders and managers. They are provided with regular, good quality supervision, and are proud of the home's teamwork. One worker said, 'As a staff member, I have always felt strongly supported by both the team and the management. The culture of teamwork, guidance, encouragement, and the openness to change makes it, in my view, an excellent place for both children and staff.'

The home has an experienced therapeutic consultant who works closely with staff and children. She assesses children and supports staff to understand and apply the most

effective behavioural support strategies to help them. This work develops practice, increases staff' resilience and helps to embed the home's therapeutic approach throughout the team.

Team meetings are very effective. They include detailed discussions about children and cover all aspects of the running of the home. In addition, night staff have their own team meetings. Together, the meetings help to align the team's care of the children and strengthens their accountability for their practice.

Communication with external agencies is a strength. Staff are proactive in providing timely reports and updates which ensure that children's networks are kept well informed of their progress in the home. The team works in close partnership with children's networks to keep their wellbeing and risks under very regular review.

Leaders and managers encourage professional growth for the team. The home's traineeship programme provides leadership training for staff, which enables them to progress within the organisation. This commitment to staff development contributes towards a positive culture within the home and promotes stability for the children.

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 recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that - full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (3)(d)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that they have undertaken appropriate DBS checks prior to staff starting work in the home. Leaders and managers must ensure that they obtain a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing.	27 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. The home should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that all bedroom searches are appropriately recorded, including the efforts to seek the child's consent to carry out a search. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that as far as possible the home maintains a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression, and staff do not wear keys or lanyards around their neck. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2842493

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ascent Fostering Agency Ltd

Registered provider address: Ascent Fostering Agency, Suite 5, 1st floor Hillcrest House, 51 Woodcote Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 0LT

Responsible individual: Mark Pomell

Registered manager: Tia Parris

Inspector

Jo Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

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