

Maple Rise, Stakeholder Meeting
26th August 2026 at 14:00 pm
MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
KCC, Councillor
Kent Police

Kent County Council (KCC) – Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UAS Children) – Ashford Borough Council (ABC)

Welcome and Introductions
The meeting commenced with introductions, and the agenda was shared with all attendees.
Update on Operations
An update was provided since the previous meeting. During this period, eight children moved in and 12 moved on. The average stay remained approximately nine days, although some children left sooner following successful family reunification or transfer through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) to areas closer to their families. The service continued to meet the expected timescales for children remaining at the home. A question was raised about cases where a planned NTS transfer might not proceed. It was confirmed that no recent transfers from the home had failed to go ahead as planned, so no specific example was available. Any alternative arrangements would depend on the child's individual circumstances and the reason the transfer did not proceed. A further question concerned the types of placements offered to children transferred through the NTS. A KCC representative responded that children predominately go to foster care, but some do get placed in children's homes. Placement decisions depend on the Local Authority on what placements they can source for the child. The meeting also considered whether there had been any infectious illness cases at the home since the previous meeting. No recent concerns had arisen regarding children arriving with potentially infectious illnesses, and no children were being cared for in isolation at the time. This was noted positively. A KCC representative reported that the home had experienced a slightly busier period, with some children testing boundaries and displaying typical adolescent behaviour. In response to a KCC councillor's question, examples included challenges during off-site activities, attempts to purchase vapes, and difficulties during English lessons that sometimes required staff to separate children and manage group dynamics. Staff responded appropriately by assessing relationships between the children, reinforcing behavioural expectations, and maintaining suitable supervision. Two of the children involved had since moved on, while one remained in the service. At the time of the meeting, two children were living at the home. An update was provided on the garden improvement project. Progress remained gradual but positive. The external organisation supporting the project would be contacted to confirm when it would next attend and continue the work.
Update of Inspections
A recent Reg44 visit was discussed, which was reported to have been positive overall. The documentation and incident recording were found to be appropriate, with positive feedback provided regarding the records maintained by the home. The main area identified for further development was ensuring that children's voices and views were captured more clearly within child debriefs. Work had already commenced with managers and staff to

strengthen this area, with the expectation that it would also be reinforced through individual supervision sessions.

Update on Safeguarding and Community Concerns

It was confirmed that there had been no recent pop-up protests or significant incidents affecting the home. A Kent Police raised about new flags being put up in the area and a KCC councillor confirmed that these were to still be left up. It was suggested that staff remained aware of the need to monitor any developments and respond appropriately should circumstances change.

Any other business

A KCC councillor was curious about any potential challenges for the service. It has been confirmed that no significant concerns were anticipated at present. The previous experience of a pop-up protest had been identified as one of the more challenging situations for staff, particularly as it was an unfamiliar experience at the time. However, staff had learned from experiences across other homes and centres and had demonstrated that they could manage such situations appropriately. The ongoing priority remained maintaining the high standard of practice within the home and continuing to build on the positive work already being undertaken.

No further concerns or matters were raised. The meeting concluded with thanks to all attendees and confirmation that the service would continue to monitor operational, safeguarding and community matters closely.