

Maple Rise, Stakeholder Meeting
25th June 2026 at 14:00 pm
MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
KCC, Councillor
ABC, 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
A KCC representative provided an operational update for the home, since the previous meeting, 11 children had arrived at Maple Rise, and 8 children had moved on. The average length of stay was reported as 7.5 days. The service is currently operating at a high occupancy level and has entered its traditionally busy period across all homes and centres. Two children had left during the week, with a further two scheduled to leave the following day. It was anticipated that vacancies would be filled quickly due to increased arrivals expected during the summer period. A query was raised regarding the reported average length of stay of 7.5 days. It was explained that one child's stay had been extended while reunification arrangements with family members were being explored. Despite this, the service continues to meet the Home Office target of completing transfers within 10 working days. Another query was raised regarding isolation case related to infectious disease. A KCC representative confirmed that there had been no recent incidents requiring isolation measures and no significant infectious disease or health concerns reported within the service. An update on the garden development project was shared. Work had commenced with support from an external organisation, Uprising, and an area for a planned pond had been excavated. Further work is scheduled to continue the following week. Once the pond area is completed, development of additional outdoor learning and forest school facilities will begin, including plans for a wigwam and other educational features. An external forest school specialist had contacted Maple Rise offering voluntary support. Arrangements are being explored for the specialist to provide staff training and contribute ideas for enhancing the outdoor learning environment. A number of suggestions and resources have already been shared, and it is hoped that a visit can be arranged towards the end of July to support both staff development and children's engagement with outdoor learning opportunities.
Update of Inspections
An update was provided regarding the recent Regulation 44 inspection. The inspection resulted in no recommendations, and a positive report was submitted to Ofsted. Recognition was given to the management team for successfully overseeing the inspection process and maintaining standards during a period of annual leave.
Update on Safeguarding and Community Concerns
Discussion took place regarding reports that a local hotel previously used to accommodate asylum seekers would be returning to standard hotel operations. It was confirmed that this change was understood to be taking place.

No anticipated impact on Maple Rise was identified, and it was noted that there had been no negative effects on Maple Rise arising from local accommodation arrangements to date.

Any other business

The meeting considered opportunities for children to participate in local activities during the upcoming summer holiday period. Information was shared regarding a local youth festival scheduled for early August, and details had already been circulated within the service. Attendees were encouraged to continue identifying and sharing suitable community-based activities and events.

It was noted that the National Transfer Scheme continues to operate effectively, with children moving through the system promptly. No additional issues specific to Maple Rise were raised. The meeting concluded with thanks to all attendees for their contributions and ongoing support.