



AshdaleCare
Ireland



QUALITY
REPORT
2025



Rebuilding
Lives -
Transforming
Residential
Care



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Foreword



This report provides clear evidence of a year marked by strong governance, regulatory assurance and sustained progress in delivering safe, high quality care, to children and young people with increasingly complex needs.

Throughout 2025, the Board has maintained a strong focus on quality, safety, regulatory compliance and strategic sustainability. We are satisfied that Ashdale Care continues to operate to a high standard across all registered services, with robust oversight arrangements in place to monitor risk, performance and outcomes. The organisation's ability to expand its footprint while maintaining full registration without conditions reflects a mature governance framework and a culture that places quality at the centre of decision-making.

The growth achieved during the year, including the opening of six newly registered homes and the expansion of enhanced services, was undertaken with careful consideration of capacity, workforce sustainability and regulatory readiness. The Board is particularly encouraged by the organisation's disciplined approach to growth - prioritising capability, leadership and therapeutic infrastructure alongside scale.



We recognise the significant challenges facing the wider children's residential care sector, including increasing demand, workforce pressures and the continued reliance on unregulated provision. Against this backdrop, Ashdale Care's continued commitment to regulated, therapeutically supported services, is both necessary and commendable. The Board welcomes the organisation's constructive engagement with Tusla, including at senior leadership level and its contribution to sector-wide discussions on capacity, workforce development and inter-agency collaboration.

The Board has taken assurance from the continued improvement in safety and outcomes, including the further reduction in incidents across services. These improvements demonstrate the impact of consistent practice models, strong leadership oversight and sustained investment in staff capability. We are also encouraged by the organisation's role in supporting innovation within the sector, including participation in the national pilot for Level 5 and Level 6 staffing roles within enhanced services.

In 2025, the Board approved Ashdale Care's five year strategic plan, which sets out a clear and ambitious roadmap for sustainable growth, service development and partnership working. This strategy reflects the Board's commitment to long term planning, responsible expansion and ensuring the organisation is well positioned to respond to the evolving needs of children and young people across Ireland.

The Board also recognises that high quality care is delivered by well-supported, skilled and motivated people. Continued investment in leadership development, workforce supports and organisational infrastructure has been a consistent priority, and the Board welcomes the strengthening of the Senior Leadership Team to support future sustainability and resilience.

I am pleased to acknowledge Ashdale Care's achievement of CARE Fidelity accreditation from Cornell University in April 2026. This independent recognition provides strong assurance to the Board that the CARE principles are deeply embedded across the organisation and are consistently guiding practice, culture, and governance.

We are particularly proud of the launch of Ashdale Care's Educational Bursary for Care Leavers, approved by the Board during 2025. This initiative reflects the organisation's values and its recognition of the enduring responsibility owed to young people as they transition from care into adulthood. It represents a meaningful and practical commitment to improving long term outcomes for care-experienced young adults and aligns strongly with the Board's focus on equity, opportunity and social responsibility.

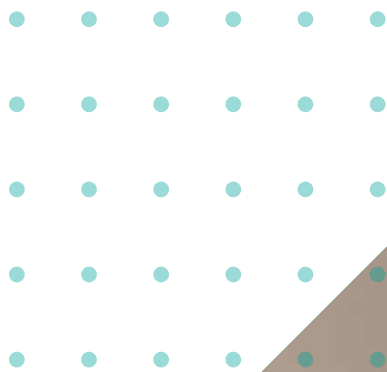
Finally, I wish to acknowledge the dedication of Ashdale Care's staff and leaders, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the achievements outlined in this report. The Board also thanks our partners, regulators and stakeholders for their continued engagement and collaboration.

This Quality Report provides assurance that Ashdale Care is well governed, values led and firmly focused on continuous improvement. The Board remains confident in the organisation's direction and committed to supporting its mission to deliver safe, high quality, regulated care to children and young people who need it most.

Paul Reid - Chairman



Safe, high quality,
regulated care
to children and
young people...





A Message from our CEO

I am pleased to present Ashdale Care's fourth Annual Quality Report, which reflects another year of strong regulatory performance, continued growth and deepened partnership working across the sector. This report provides an honest and comprehensive account of how we continue to deliver high quality, regulated care to some of the most vulnerable children and young people in Ireland, often within increasingly complex and high acuity contexts.

2025 was a milestone year for Ashdale Care. We opened six newly registered homes, bringing our total capacity to 115 registered beds nationwide by the end of December. This achievement represents not just growth in scale, but growth in capability. Further new homes for 2026 are already at advanced stages of fitout to meet the increasing need for high complexity placements associated with our enhanced Service Level Agreement with Tusla.

All our homes are registered without conditions, reaffirming our focus on maintaining the highest possible standards across all homes. Many of the young people referred to our services present with significant complexity, requiring specialised, trauma-informed and therapeutically-supported care. Our ability to respond to this demand while maintaining strong regulatory compliance is a testament to the professionalism, skill and commitment of our people.

Throughout the year, we continued to develop and embed specialist therapeutic placements, supporting Tusla in meeting the needs of higher acuity cases within a regulated environment. These services are underpinned by our wraparound, in-house therapeutic supports, which remain a cornerstone of Ashdale Care's model of care and a key differentiator in a system experiencing increasing pressure and capacity constraints.

Our engagement with Tusla during 2025 was constructive, collaborative and forward-looking. An early year meeting with Tusla's Senior Management Team provided an important opportunity to discuss how Ashdale Care can continue to support the agency in delivering safe, high-quality and regulated services. These discussions focused on shared challenges across the system, including growing demand, workforce pressures, the expansion of unregulated service

provision, and the need for services capable of supporting children with the most complex needs. We also reflected on the significant challenges associated with expanding Special Care capacity and the importance of strong, strategic partnerships between statutory, voluntary and independent providers, as highlighted in the recent Special Care Review process. Ashdale Care outlined how we can continue to assist Tusla in responding to the current capacity crisis in a way that prioritises quality, safety and better outcomes for children.

We also experienced positive and ongoing collaboration throughout the year with Tusla's National Placement Team (NPT) and Separated Children Seeking International Protection (SCSIP) team, including constructive engagement in relation to the SCSIP tender process and regular review meetings where we could showcase our high- quality, regulated services for these young people. These partnerships are essential in ensuring timely, appropriate and well supported placements for children and young people. A significant area of continued progress in 2025 relates to safety and outcomes. Building on research previously presented, we achieved a further significant reduction in incidents across our services, with detailed analysis outlined later in this report. This improvement reflects consistent application of our CARE model, strengthened leadership and practice oversight, and the continued development of staff capability in managing risk and a deep understanding of trauma and its impact.

We were also pleased to work closely with ACIMS during the year, particularly in relation to staffing profiles within enhanced services. This engagement supported the approval of a national pilot project for Level 5 and Level 6 roles, which Ashdale Care is now successfully trialling across two of our homes. This initiative represents an important contribution to addressing workforce challenges across the sector while maintaining quality and regulatory standards.



2025 also marked the launch of Ashdale Care's Five Year Strategic Plan 2026-2031, setting out our ambition to grow sustainably, deepen our expertise and extend our impact into other areas where we can support children and young people across Ireland. This plan is underpinned by clear strategic pillars, a strong values base, and a commitment to partnership, innovation and continuous improvement.



We continued to invest heavily in leadership, infrastructure and people.



We continued to invest heavily in leadership, infrastructure and people. New appointments to our Leadership Team, including a Director of Infrastructure and Sustainability and a Chief People Officer, reinforce our long-term commitment to high quality environments and a supported, skilled workforce. This was complemented by ongoing investment in our people through pay enhancements, manager bonus schemes, expanded long service leave and improved family leave provisions.

2025 was a pivotal year in Ashdale Care's digital transformation journey. We completed the digitalisation of all records across our homes, delivering significant efficiencies for our people while strengthening governance, oversight and regulatory assurance. This shift has enhanced transparency and accountability at every level of the organisation. In parallel, the digitalisation of people records and rostering systems has transformed workforce planning, enabling our teams and managers to plan, manage and track resources more effectively. Together, these investments

represent a critical foundation for sustainable growth, quality assurance and the delivery of safe, consistent care.

There were many additional highlights during the year. Drumbenagh House was recognised as Team of the Year at the CRS Conference, our Therapeutic Support Team presented to an International audience at the Unity Conference on Ashdale's Model of Enhanced Care and Learning Hub, and we successfully requalified as one of Ireland's Best Managed Company's for 2025. Our Leadership Academy saw the graduation of over 60 high-performing colleagues, with exceptionally positive feedback on the quality and impact of the programme.

I am particularly proud to note that in April 2026, Ashdale Care achieved CARE Fidelity accreditation from Cornell University. This significant milestone provides independent validation that the CARE principles are firmly embedded across our services, reflecting our unwavering commitment to safe, relational, and trauma-informed care for children and young people.



We are delighted to launch Ashdale Care's Educational Bursary for Care Leavers, the first initiative of its kind in Ireland. This bursary has been established to provide practical, meaningful support to young people as they transition from care into adulthood, recognising the significant barriers many care-experienced young adults face in accessing and sustaining education, training and further learning opportunities. The bursary reflects our belief that our responsibility to young people does not end when they leave our services, but extends into supporting their aspirations, independence and long term outcomes. This initiative represents a tangible commitment to equity, opportunity and aftercare, and we are proud to take this step in assisting care leavers to build stable, fulfilling, adult lives.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the consistently positive feedback we receive from social workers, Guardians ad Litem, legal professionals, families, schools and other stakeholders. These testimonials, alongside the ongoing positive evidence-based outcomes for the young people entrusted to

our care, provide important assurance that our approach is making a meaningful difference in the lives of the children and young people we support.

I would like to thank our staff, leaders, partners and stakeholders for their continued commitment and collaboration. This Quality Report reflects not only what we have achieved, but our shared determination to continue improving, learning and responding to the evolving needs of children and young people in our care.

Caroline Gray - CEO



Ashdale Care Strategy Roadmap

Strategic Pillars & Priorities



Growth in Core Services to Children & Young People

Driving significant and sustainable growth in our core service offerings.



People Development

Maintaining a strong culture that acts as a source of sustainable competitive advantage and creates a community of people that are passionate about and respected for the outcomes we deliver for vulnerable children and young people.



Operating Model

Building an efficient operating model that ensures we have efficient processes, benefit from economies of scale and focus on delivering high quality care services.



Stakeholder Focus

Continual focus on delivering high-quality services delivering better outcomes for children; affirming our position as Partner of Choice in the sectors we operate. We are responsive to customer needs for solutions and we use our position to influence policy change & pricing.



Diversification

Expanding our services, using our experience and skills to offer more services for young people.



Future Readiness

Building an organisational structure that supports our ambition and ensures a resilient foundation for long-term, sustained growth, future proofing the organisation to be prepared for future development and continued success.



Voice of a young person





Describe what life was like when you first moved to Ashdale Care?

“It was really weird, I didn’t know anyone here. It was strange.”

Describe what it is like now?

“Good! I know everyone now really well and they know me. It is very homely, the people here make the house a home.”

Can you talk about any memories you have of your experience in Ashdale Care?

“Christmas is really nice here. Love doing the toy show and Christmas eve. We get a takeaway, watch loads of Christmas movies, everyone is always nice and excited for Christmas. We also bake for Santa.”

What makes Ashdale Care different from places you have been before?

“It is homely, it is a home. I can talk with everyone.”

How do people in Ashdale Care help you?

“They have conversations with me and help me to do anything I want to do or need to do.”

Do you feel listened to?

“Yes they do, everyone listens to my voice. If I ask for something they will always book something or take me on an activity.”

Do you feel safe?

“Yeah I feel safe. Staff help me to feel comfortable and do things that I like and make me feel safe like locking the door of my room and saying goodnight to me.”

Would you recommend a house like this to another child if they needed to leave their own home?

“Yes I would, It’s a nice place. Everyone here cares for you and they understand you and what you need.”

Do you have fun here?

“Yeah, people are funny here. We always have the craic and a joke. Some people’s jokes are not that funny but that makes them really funny.”

How would someone outside of Ashdale Care know that you are happy?

“Because I am happy.”

What do you think are the most important things for a person to know before joining our family?

“Our humour. We like to have the craic.”

Do people care here?

“Yeah, I feel like people care here. They always try to understand me and where I am coming from.”

If you ever feel worried or upset are there people you can talk to?

“Yeah I can talk to everyone about anything.”

Do you feel your privacy is looked after?

“Yeah, they all respect my privacy. They listen to me and when I ask them not to go into my room, they don’t.”

Do you feel comfortable talking about your feelings?

“Yeah I do. I can talk to everyone about my feelings and they get it.”

Do people here support you to stay in touch with people you care about?

“Yeah they do encourage me to stay in touch with people. They are all a good influence on me.”

Do you feel comfortable being yourself?

“Yeah, I can be whoever I want to be- there are no filters on me. I am who I am and they love me.”

Do you feel people understand what you need?

“Yeah, I feel like they all do understand what I need. They help me to regulate and they help me to understand what I feel. They understand what I need before I do. They advocate for me, like with school.”

Do people share jokes with you?

“Yeah, they joke with me all the time, we always have great craic.”

Anything else you would like to say?

“I know everyone here cares for me and loves me. I feel happy and safe here.”

Highlights

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Our Accomplishments



CARE Fidelity

The first organisation in Europe to obtain this prestigious certification



Excellent Inspection Results;

complex profile of many of the young people referred to our enhanced services.



requaified

Opened 6 Registered Homes

milestone now supporting 115 registered beds for vulnerable children and young people at end-December 2025.

Renewal of our multi-year SLA for enhanced homes; no new entrants into space; remain only provider of scale, December 2025.

Collaboration with ACIMS

on staffing profiles; this assisted in getting the Pilot Project trialled across two homes.

Staff Survey

Huge commitment to young people.



Drumbenagh House won team of the year in October 2025 at the CRS Awards.



86%

reduction in the average number of incidents per home since 2020

→ **Continuous Investment**

in our people - manager bonus, pay increases, increased long service leave, family leaves.

→ **Positive Collaboration**

with NPT and SCSIP teams throughout the year.

→ **Presentation by our Therapeutic Support Team** at Unity Conference.

→ **New hires**

Director Of Infrastructure and Sustainability and **Chief People Officer**; ensuring ongoing investment in highest quality properties and people.



Developed further specialist placements to support Tusla in high-end cases.



LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Inspirational graduations;
Great feedback on training and coaching.

Celebration of **60 graduates** from the programme.



Company-wide celebrations reflecting a strong sense of community across the organisation.



CARE Fidelity

Ashdale Care continues to sustain the Cornell University CARE (Children And Residential Experiences) model as the central framework guiding our therapeutic practice, culture and daily interactions with young people. CARE provides an evidence-informed approach that prioritises relationship-based practice, trauma-responsive care and the creation of conditions in which young people can feel safe, connected and empowered.

During the last year, we have sustained significant progress in strengthening CARE fidelity across all residential homes. Maintaining fidelity to the CARE model is essential to ensuring that the CARE principles underpin all aspects of practice, from policy development and staff training, to direct work with young people and multi-agency collaboration.

Strengthening Fidelity Across the Organisation

We have implemented a structured programme of activities designed to strengthen knowledge and evidence our alignment with the CARE principles:

- **Organisation-wide CARE training** is delivered to all new staff and refreshed for existing teams, ensuring consistent understanding and application of the six core CARE principles: Developmentally-Focused, Family-Involved, Relationship-Based, Trauma-Informed, Competence-Centred and Ecologically-Oriented.
- **CARE-aligned supervision** supports managers to reinforce reflective practice, promote professional curiosity and guide staff in applying CARE-informed responses to the needs of young people.

- **Integration of CARE into policy and documentation** ensures that decision-making, care planning, risk assessment and daily practice remain grounded in the model's principles.
- **CARE-informed management oversight** enables leaders to monitor the quality of interactions, environmental conditions and the relational climate within each home.
- **Continuous learning and quality assurance processes**, including audits, reflective practice sessions and team reviews, help ensure that CARE remains active, not abstract.

Certified in CARE Fidelity

In April 2026, Ashdale Care achieved CARE Fidelity, formally recognising the organisation's sustained implementation of the Children and Residential Experiences (CARE) model developed by Cornell University. This milestone reflects a comprehensive assessment of practice, leadership, training, supervision and organisational culture, confirming alignment with the six core CARE principles across enhanced services. Achieving CARE Fidelity evidences Ashdale Care's commitment to relational, trauma informed and developmentally appropriate care for children and young people.



The outcome is the result of consistent leadership, robust governance oversight and continued investment in workforce development. CARE Fidelity provides assurance that care practices are embedded, reflective and sustainable, and supports continuous quality improvement by strengthening consistency of care, staff confidence and positive outcomes for children and young people.

Impact on Quality of Care

Embedding the CARE model with fidelity continues to have a positive impact on the experiences and outcomes of young people. Teams report:

- Increased consistency in responses to young people
- Improved quality of relationships and connection
- More predictable, safe and nurturing environments
- Enhanced staff confidence in applying trauma-responsive practices
- Better alignment between home culture, organisational values and individualised care planning

CARE fidelity is a core component of Ashdale Care's governance framework and remains central to our strategy to provide safe, effective and compassionate residential care. Our ongoing commitment to this model ensures that the young people we support experience stable relationships, meaningful connections and opportunities for growth.



College of Human Ecology

**Bronfenbrenner Center for
Translational Research**
37 Forest Home Drive
3M206 MVR Hall
Ithaca, New York 14853
Martha J Holden
Co-Director, RCCP
mjh19@cornell.edu

Caroline Gray, CEO
Ashdale Care Ireland
The Ridge, McGrath Road
Castleblaney, Co. Monaghan
A75 WY97 Ireland

April 20, 2026

Dear Caroline,

Please accept my sincere congratulations to you, Ashdale Care Ireland, the children and families, and your Board of Directors for achieving CARE Agency Certification status. CARE Agency certification and an on-going partnership with Cornell University is designed to assist organizations to sustain the CARE model, avoid program drift and adaptations, and, in partnership with Cornell, develop program innovations that can be included in the model to keep pace with changing influences. This status is also to encourage contributions to the field through publications, translational research efforts, presentations, and communities of practice. CARE agency certification is for a three-year period.

Ashdale Care has fully invested in CARE by embedding CARE throughout the organization including the Board of Directors and developing mechanisms to sustain CARE long term. Since 2019, Ashdale Care has diligently worked to fully implement the CARE model in the face of significant challenges including leadership changes, a global pandemic, staff turnover, and extensive growth. Your commitment to the CARE principles became a point of stability and care championing in otherwise challenging times and an inspiration to other organizations struggling through similar situations.

Thank you and your organization for all of the contributions you have made to children, families, the Residential Child Care Project and the field. We look forward to many more years of productive and enjoyable collaboration.

Sincerely,

Martha J. Holden
Co-director, Residential Child Care Project
Cornell University/BCTR
37 Forest Home Drive
3M206 MVR Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
mjh19@cornell.edu
RCCP Web site: <http://rccp.cornell.edu>

Diversity and inclusion are a part of Cornell University's heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.

Ashdale Care received formal confirmation from Cornell University that the organisation has achieved CARE Fidelity, recognising the successful and sustained implementation of the Children and Residential Experiences (CARE) model across all of our enhanced homes. This milestone reflects Ashdale Care's ongoing commitment to evidence-informed practice, relationship-centred care, and continuous quality improvement for children and young people.



Learning & Development Team with Cornell representatives, Angela Stanton Greenwood and Laurence Stanton Greenwood

This milestone reflects a comprehensive assessment of practice, leadership, training, supervision and organisational culture



TST with Dr Karen Treisman

Conferences

The Therapeutic Support Team and Senior members from Ashdale Care presented at the Unity Conference in Dublin in November 2025. The theme of the conference was - **Committing to Excellence: Relational Leading and Learning in Challenging Times.**

The event focused on Relational Practice within the caring professions, including child and youth care, social work, education and psychology. Members of the TST presented at the conference, with a lively talk that detailed the interdisciplinary model of therapeutic support that has been implemented in Ashdale Care. The talk described how therapeutic care is woven into the fabric of Ashdale Care, from the simplest, everyday, relational, CARE-based interactions delivered by staff in the homes to the most complex, interdisciplinary interventions provided by the TST. This commitment creates a therapeutic environment for all our young people that enables them to heal and recover from trauma and reach their full developmental potential.

In October 2025, the TST attended a Trauma conference featuring Dr. Karen Treisman, a world-renowned clinical psychologist specialising in trauma and attachment.

The two-day event focused on expanding professional knowledge of trauma-informed therapy through multi-sensory approaches and the power of relational language. This excellent conference provided the TST with valuable insights and inspired the team with new ideas and suggested ways of working that will help the team to improve the support provided for our young people.



TST & Senior Leaders at the Unity Conference



Outcomes, Measurements & Data

Ashdale Care’s commitment to using data-driven approaches has continued in 2025. In the past year we have added to our existing outcomes measures for young people a new outcomes tool called the FACT (Functional Assessment of Child Trauma – see Fig. 1 for example). This tool evaluates seven domains impacted by developmental trauma including Neurological and Biological Maturity, Stress Response, Emotional Regulation, Attachment and Relationships, Identity Development, Behavioural Regulation and Cognitive and Language Development. By tracking progress on these domains and on other metrics, the TST are able to generate valid, reliable data to show how our young people are developing and changing over time.

Our outcomes assessment process is a very powerful example of our commitment to quality within the organisation. We want to be able to demonstrate that living in Ashdale Care, results in positive changes in the functioning and quality of life of our young people. The measuring of outcomes also enables us to ensure we can react quickly and appropriately to change our interventions and supports in the event that we see a deterioration in the presentation of a young person, offering us another quality assurance mechanism.



The scale reflects a comparison against “typical development with low scores indicating a lower level of development/healthy functioning and thus a higher priority for intervention.

5 - Typical Development: Low Difficulty, Low Priority

3 - Delayed Development: Moderate Difficulty, Moderate Priority

1 - Poor Development: High Difficulty, High Priority



Quality Assurance in Ashdale Care

Quality Assurance is often described as a function, a system, or a set of checks. In reality, within Ashdale, QA has become something far more important: a way of knowing our homes, a way of listening closely, and a way of acting early - before issues become crises and before young people feel the impact of drift, inconsistency or uncertainty.

Over the last year, Quality Assurance has grown - not just in size, but in purpose. What we are building is not a culture of compliance, but a *culture of curiosity, accountability and learning*. This chapter tells the story of what Quality Assurance now means in practice, and why it matters.

From Compliance to Confidence

In 2025, Ashdale Care was issued 10 ACIMS inspection reports for our Enhanced Homes. On paper, the average number of actions issued was **4.8 per inspection**.

Two homes received **no regulatory actions at all**. Several others received only one to three actions. In homes facing higher complexity, inspectors consistently acknowledged that weaknesses were **already known internally**, already under review, and already being worked through.

This is the quiet but significant shift that strengthened Quality Assurance brings:

- Inspections no longer tell us what we already know *after* the fact - they reflect what we have already been paying attention to.
- Quality Assurance is not about avoiding findings. It is about making sure nothing important is missed, minimised, or explained away.

Quality Assurance as Ashdale Cares Early-Warning System

One of the clearest signs of an effective Quality Assurance system is not the absence of issues - but the accuracy of what it sees.

Across multiple inspections in 2025, inspectors explicitly referenced:

- Internal audits
- Annual reviews of compliance
- External Quality Assurance input
- Pre-inspection oversight activity

In some homes, inspectors relied on this work as evidence of governance and monitoring. In others, they challenged us - but crucially, they challenged us on pace, escalation and ownership, not on awareness or neglect.

That distinction matters. It tells us that Quality Assurance is doing the right job: identifying risk early, naming it clearly, and placing it where responsibility can sit.



Where actions are issued, they increasingly reflect:

- System pressure
- Workforce instability
- Complexity of need, rather than unseen or unmanaged practice failure

This allows leadership to focus effort where it genuinely counts.

Strengthening Ashdale Care's Line of Sight

Over the past year, the expansion of Quality Assurance and regional oversight functions has changed how Ashdale Care sees itself.

Quality Assurance now implements all recommendations from inspections carried out in 2025.

This means we no longer rely on informal reassurance or fragmented information. We have evidence, patterns, trends - and the confidence to act on them.

In several inspections, Quality Assurance activity didn't just exist in the background, it shaped the inspection narrative itself. Inspectors commented on strengthened audit arrangements, governance oversight and evidence of action tracking.

That matters because trust with regulators is built, not on perfection, but on credibility.



Strong Regulatory Performance

What Has Improved for Young People:

Inspection narratives across multiple homes consistently describe:

- More stable routines and relationships enabled by workforce strengthening
- Improved child-centred practice, with young people reporting they felt listened to, respected and involved
- Safer behaviour support, with inspectors noting reductions in incidents and improved consistency



One young person described staff as:

“Easy to talk to, respectful and helpful,” noting that staff listened and supported predictable routines that helped them feel safe.

In larger homes, Inspectors observed that children were: **“Thriving in their education placements,”** with attendance and progress described as excellent, supported by stable staffing and good management oversight. Inspectors explicitly acknowledging Quality Assurance oversight.

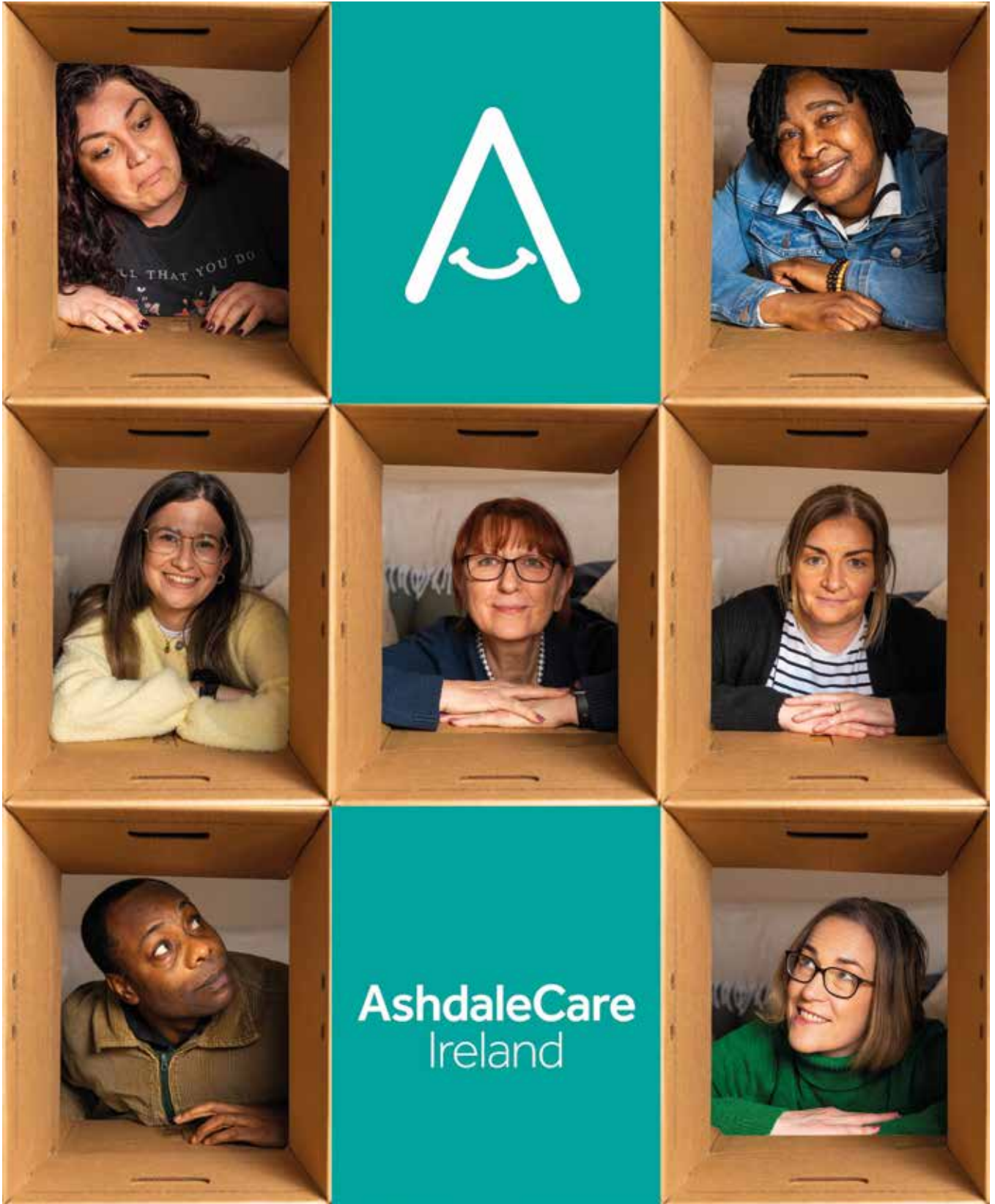
A particularly strong indicator of maturity in the quality system is inspectors referencing and relying on Quality Assurance activity within reports.

Examples include:

- Inspectors explicitly commended the organisation’s annual review of compliance, stating it was effective and formed part of governance oversight “recognised as a strength”
- Inspectors referenced completed external audits and acknowledged QA activity prior to inspection
- Inspectors explicitly noted that QA-led changes had contributed to improved outcomes, with governance oversight described positively throughout the report

This level of recognition reflects growing regulatory confidence in the organisation’s internal quality assurance systems.





“



The company
is evolving
continuously,
with **new**
homes, new
systems, and
supports...



People Team Update

People Department

We have made significant progress in strengthening our culture, enhancing workforce capability and improving the overall employee experience which supports high-quality care, regulatory compliance, and our long-term growth ambitions.

We appointed a new Chief People Officer in September 2025. Since then, the HR function has been restructured and rebranded, transitioning into a strategically aligned People Team that better supports our business and reflects a more partnership-driven approach to workforce culture, support and development.

The People Team has been focused on modernising core systems, building consistent and transparent processes, expanding recruitment pipelines and investing more deeply in employee engagement, development and retention.

A major milestone was the successful 'go-live' of the new digital platform, as work continues across the team on fine-tuning employee data, workflows, compliance and reporting. We have already improved visibility and accuracy from recruitment and onboarding to performance, leave and policy management and we will continue to reduce the administrative burden on managers and increase access to value-adding people data.



We have completed a refresh of our Employee Handbook, several key policies and procedures and will soon launch a new Ashdale Code of Conduct. This brings us up to date with current legislation, strengthens our culture and encourages best practice in children's residential care. The new handbook and accompanying policies provide clearer expectations for staff, more consistent guidance for managers, and a stronger foundation for fair and transparent people management practices. The People Team will support the organisation through these changes by facilitating regular communication, awareness sessions and an accessible suite of policies which will soon be available within the HRIS.



To meet the rising demand for high-quality care and to support the opening of our new homes, we have broadened our recruitment strategy, with a targeted focus on European Talent Attraction. Dedicated Talent Agents and Sourcers are building partnerships across European markets, enhancing our ability to proactively pipeline skilled and values-aligned candidates. These efforts are helping reduce agency reliance and improve stability across homes, which is critical to providing continuity of care for young people and supporting future expansion.

In the last year we have **onboarded and welcomed 255 new employees** to the Ashdale Care Community and are aiming to **onboard a further 215 employees in 2026.**

The People Team is also working to strengthen our full talent lifecycle by:

- Streamlining recruitment workflows
- Analysing exit interviews to identify root causes of turnover
- Developing Talent Packs and a People Team Training Series
- Making improvements to reward, recognition, and wellbeing support

These initiatives are designed to ensure that employees are well-supported and equipped to deliver exceptional care. This has been a transformative period for the People function, a more strategic approach to innovation, change and adaptability will continue to strengthen our capability and enhance our culture, The Ashdale Way!





Best Managed Company 2025

It is with great pride and gratitude, that Ashdale Care was named one of Ireland's Best Managed Companies for 2025!

This marks our second consecutive year receiving this prestigious global honour. Ireland's Best Managed Companies programme, run by Deloitte, promotes and recognises excellence in Irish/Northern Irish owned and managed companies. It is the only awards scheme on the island of Ireland that considers a business's performance from every perspective. Entrants to the programme competed for this designation in a rigorous process that evaluates the calibre of their management abilities and practices.

A thorough judging process precedes the recognition each year, evaluating the entire management team and the business strategy of each company. The judges examine a wide range of areas when assessing Ireland's top companies, evaluating us on strategic planning, governance standards, financial performance, in addition to each organisation's culture, talent strategy and how we are innovating year on year.

Over the past year, we've continued to grow, evolve and deepen our impact. Our values remain at the heart of everything we do, guiding our culture and shaping the care we provide. We've





strengthened our systems, expanded our services, and stayed true to our commitment to trauma-informed care, all while keeping the needs of the children and young people we support front and centre.

This award isn't just about leadership or strategy, it's about every single person across our homes and support teams, who have played a part in this. Their dedication, professionalism and heart are what make Ashdale Care so special.

So let's take a moment to celebrate and also use this as motivation to keep pushing forward. We're building something truly meaningful here and it's making a real difference. Let's keep innovating, collaborating and leading with care, "The Ashdale way".

Thanks to all the staff in Ashdale Care we have continued our commitment to our shared vision. Together, we are shaping brighter futures and being recognised on the global stage for doing so.





Leadership Team





Ashdale Care is led by an experienced and multidisciplinary Leadership Team that provides strong strategic direction, operational oversight and clear accountability across the organisation. The team works collectively to promote a culture of quality, regulatory compliance and continuous improvement, ensuring that safe, effective and therapeutic care remains central to all decision-making.



LEADERSHIP

A C A D E M Y

Investing in Our People:

Our Leadership Programme continues to reflect our commitment to developing confident, skilled and values-led leaders at every level of the organisation.

The programme is designed to support staff to grow in their roles, strengthen decision making and lead teams in a way that is consistent, supportive and child-centred. Strong leadership is central to safe, high-quality care. By investing in leadership development, we are strengthening not only individual capability but also the consistency and quality of care across all homes and departments. Following the launch of the Leadership Academy in October 2024, the first 3 Sustainable Leadership and 2 Future Leaders Programmes ran from December 2024 – June 2025 and 60 leaders graduated at Graduation Events held in the Garage Theatre in Monaghan. Each graduate either presented their leadership learning experience or submitted written reflections in order to achieve accreditation. Those with the highest grades were awarded Sustainable and Future Leader awards. There were also awards for the Learning Leaders of the year, nominated by the

groups themselves. Submissions and presentations were of a very high quality, showing high levels of vulnerability, honesty, growth and progress. Naoise Blake of Naoise Blake Learning & Development advised that...

“It is unusual that there was such a high performance across all of the leadership population. Ashdale Care can be proud of the leaders working on your behalf.”

She continued with...

“The CEO and Senior Leadership Team must be commended for their absolute commitment and support for the Academy activities. Their attendance, feedback and support throughout gave credibility to the process and demonstrated the extent of buy-in and full commitment to developing the people potential at Ashdale Care.”



Ashdale Care Ireland

Ashdale Care Ireland

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Ashdale Care Ireland

#AshdaleCare#AshdaleCommunity#AshdalePeople!
#LeadershipAcademy#Leadership#GraduationDay



#AshdaleCare#AshdaleCommunity#AshdalePeople
#LeadershipAcademy#Leadership#GraduationDay

100 likes | Comment

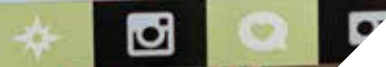
Ashdale Care Ireland

Ashdale Care Ireland



#AshdaleCare#AshdaleCommunity#AshdalePeople
#LeadershipAcademy#Leadership#GraduationDay

133 likes | Comment





behaviours influence organisational culture, team wellbeing and outcomes for children and young people. The inclusion of guest speakers added depth to the graduation events and strengthened the Academy's impact by linking theoretical learning with lived leadership experience.

Leaders and team members from every home and department were involved, from the needs analysis stage, right through to graduation and were fully engaged. In one way it wasn't surprising that our leadership participants adopted the learning and reflection, given that it is an organisation based on the fundamentals of CARE. What was even more rewarding was the level of recall and implementation reported at the comeback and refresher sessions 6 months later. Learning doesn't stop there though; it will be continuous.

The key learnings reported by the overall group of leaders included moving from operational to strategic, sustainable leadership, self-awareness, increased confidence, establishing accountability, developing the team and delegation, giving feedback and handling challenging conversations as well as time management and prioritisation tools and processes. The aspects of the programme that the participants found most beneficial were the role-plays, group sessions, one-to-one coaching and presentations. There was feedback that the learning was greatly enhanced by the level of psychological safety created in the group sessions.

The Leadership Academy graduations were enhanced by the contribution of external guest speakers **Heather Humphreys, Paul Flynn, Sammy Leslie** and **Joanne Brennan**, who each shared their leadership journeys across the fields of politics, sport, hospitality and the arts. Their reflections provided graduates with diverse, real world perspectives on leadership development, highlighting themes of resilience, ethical decision making, adaptability and personal growth. The breadth of experience shared reinforced the importance of values led, relational leadership and supported participants to reflect on how leadership





Ashdale Care's Participation in Tusla's National Pilot Programme for Level 5/6

In 2025, following a period of ongoing discussions regarding staffing challenges, Ashdale Care was selected by Tusla to participate in a national pilot programme aimed at enhancing regulatory alignment, improving consistency of practice and strengthening outcomes for young people across residential care services in Ireland. Being chosen as a pilot site reflects both the confidence Tusla places in Ashdale Care and the organisation's reputation for high-quality, evidence-informed practice.

As part of the pilot, Ashdale Care engaged in structured testing of revised regulatory processes, updated assessment tools and new approaches to quality oversight. This included providing real-time feedback on the feasibility, clarity and impact of proposed changes, ensuring that national learning was grounded in the realities of frontline practice. Ashdale Care also collaborated with Tusla and peer organisations to share insights, identify challenges and co-develop solutions that support more consistent experiences for young people across the sector.

Participation in the pilot has already had a meaningful impact across our governance, quality and practice frameworks. It has informed internal improvements in documentation, quality assurance cycles and staff training, ensuring Ashdale Care remains at the forefront of best practice. Additionally, involvement in the programme strengthened our partnership with Tusla, promoting transparency, shared accountability and system-wide learning.

Ashdale Care is proud to contribute to shaping the future of residential care regulation in Ireland. Our participation underscores our commitment to innovation, continuous improvement and delivering safe, stable and therapeutic environments where young people can thrive.

Drumbenagh House

CRS “Home of the Year Award”



In 2025, Drumbenagh House achieved the prestigious Home of the Year Award from Children’s Residential Services (CRS), a recognition that reflects the exceptional quality of care, leadership and practice consistently demonstrated within the home.

This award is a testament to the dedication of the Drumbenagh House team, whose commitment to creating a safe, nurturing and developmentally-focused environment has set a benchmark for excellence across the sector.

Drumbenagh House distinguished itself through its strong culture of teamwork, high standards of governance, and unwavering focus on the wellbeing and outcomes of the young people in its care. The CRS assessment highlighted the home’s strengths in relational practice, individualised planning and the embedding of Ashdale Care’s CARE-informed model throughout daily interactions and routines. Judges noted the team’s reflective approach, the quality of their engagement with young people and the warm, respectful relationships that underpin the home’s positive outcomes.

This achievement is not only a reflection of the staff working directly within Drumbenagh House but also of the organisational support structures surrounding them, including the Leadership Team, Quality Assurance, Training and Development, and Clinical supports. The award reinforces Ashdale Care’s ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality, evidence-informed residential care and showcases the impact of consistent practice, strong governance and values-led leadership.

Ashdale Care is proud of the Drumbenagh team for their exemplary work and for representing the organisation with such professionalism, warmth and integrity. Their success provides a model of best practice and inspires continued excellence across all our homes.

Spotlight

WITH EMMA HARKIN

I began working in Ashdale Care on 6th August 2011, joining as an unqualified Residential Care Worker with a Level 5 Access Diploma in Social Studies. Before this, most of my experience had been in bar work, so stepping into residential care was both a huge change and an exciting opportunity. Ashdale Care supported me from the very beginning, encouraging my development and enabling me to begin a part-time Bachelor's degree in Social Work while continuing to work full-time. When I first started, Ashdale Care had just two homes, and I was proud to work in both of the original houses as the organisation began to grow. As Ashdale Care expanded its services, I moved into one of the newer homes and continued to develop both personally and professionally as part of a team dedicated to creating safe, nurturing, environments for young people.

I worked as a Residential Care Worker, and it was a role I genuinely loved. Understanding how to support young people with complex emotional and behavioural needs and building a foundation of knowledge and care and applying these as a Residential Care Worker was one of the most meaningful parts of my career. I built warm, trusting, relationships with the children, always treating them with dignity, respect and genuine care. Watching them grow in confidence, feel safe and begin to thrive continues to be the most rewarding aspect of my work. Acting as a key worker was especially meaningful to me, as it allowed me to build even deeper connections and advocate for what each child needed. It was something I cared deeply about, and I'm proud of the positive impact I made in their lives.



I built warm, trusting relationships with the children, always treating them with dignity, respect, and genuine care.



Over time, I progressed from my role as a Residential Care Worker into a Deputy Manager position. Working closely alongside the Home Manager as their Deputy was one of the most influential parts of my development. They taught me so much about the type of manager I wanted to become - one who always held both the young people and the team in mind, who led with warmth, reflection and genuine care. Together, we continually looked at how we could support one another and the young people to create a nurturing, stable, environment where everyone felt valued and had the opportunity to grow and thrive. This experience shaped my leadership style and deepened my passion for creating spaces where both staff and young people could flourish.

I have been a Home Manager for over eight years now, during my time as a home manager I have been working alongside children with complex needs who continue to stretch my skills, deepen

my insight and teach me how to keep a team connected through even the most challenging times. The company is evolving continuously, with new homes, new systems and supports such as CARE and the Leadership and Development Programme, and our home recently winning the award for "Best Team 2025." All of this supports me greatly in my role.

The home I manage has developed too, growing from a single-occupancy home, into a busy home caring for four children aged 9 to 17. I absolutely love my job, my staff team and the fantastic working relationship I have with my Deputy Manager, who is my right-hand support every day. Combined with the love and dedication of the team towards four very special children, this role feels far more than just a job - it is something I genuinely enjoy doing every day. I look forward with pride and excitement to the future for our young people, our team, myself and our organisation.



Employee Engagement

Ashdale Care remains strongly committed to employee engagement, recognising that a supported and valued workforce is fundamental to delivering safe, high-quality, care for children and young people. Throughout the year, a range of measures were implemented to strengthen staff wellbeing, retention and organisational loyalty, reflecting Ashdale's ongoing investment in its people.

Key initiatives focused on enhancing terms and conditions, supporting family life and recognising long-term commitment to the organisation. These included the introduction of enhanced family-friendly benefits, the implementation of revised pay scales and an increase in annual leave entitlements linked to long service. In

addition, Ashdale Care expanded access to educational assistance, supporting employees who wish to further their studies and professional development. Structured staff feedback and engagement mechanisms continue to ensure that employee perspectives inform organisational decision-making and continuous improvement.

These initiatives demonstrate Ashdale Care's commitment to fostering a positive, respectful and supportive working environment, aligned with organisational values, the CARE model and regulatory expectations



Introduction of enhanced family-friendly benefits



Implementation of new and improved pay scales



Increased annual leave entitlements recognising long service



Provision of educational assistance to support further education



Ongoing staff engagement through structured feedback mechanisms



Annual Survey Feedback

Feedback Report 2025

This Feedback Report 2025 presents a consolidated analysis of feedback gathered from:

- Young People (under 11 years)
- Young People (ages 12–18)
- Parents and Carers
- Social Workers and Guardians ad Litem (GALs)

The purpose of this report is to reflect the lived experiences of those engaging with the service, highlight areas of strength, identify learning opportunities and inform continuous service improvement.

Methodology

Feedback was collected using structured surveys tailored to each group. Surveys included both quantitative rating scales and qualitative comment sections. Response rates were strong across all groups, providing a robust and representative evidence base for analysis. Where individual concerns were identified, these were followed up through appropriate forums (e.g. keywork sessions or management review).

Young People (Under 11s):

9 responses

Young People (12–17):

83 responses from 93 surveys issued (89%)

Social Workers & GALs:

47 responses

Parents / Carers:

24 responses



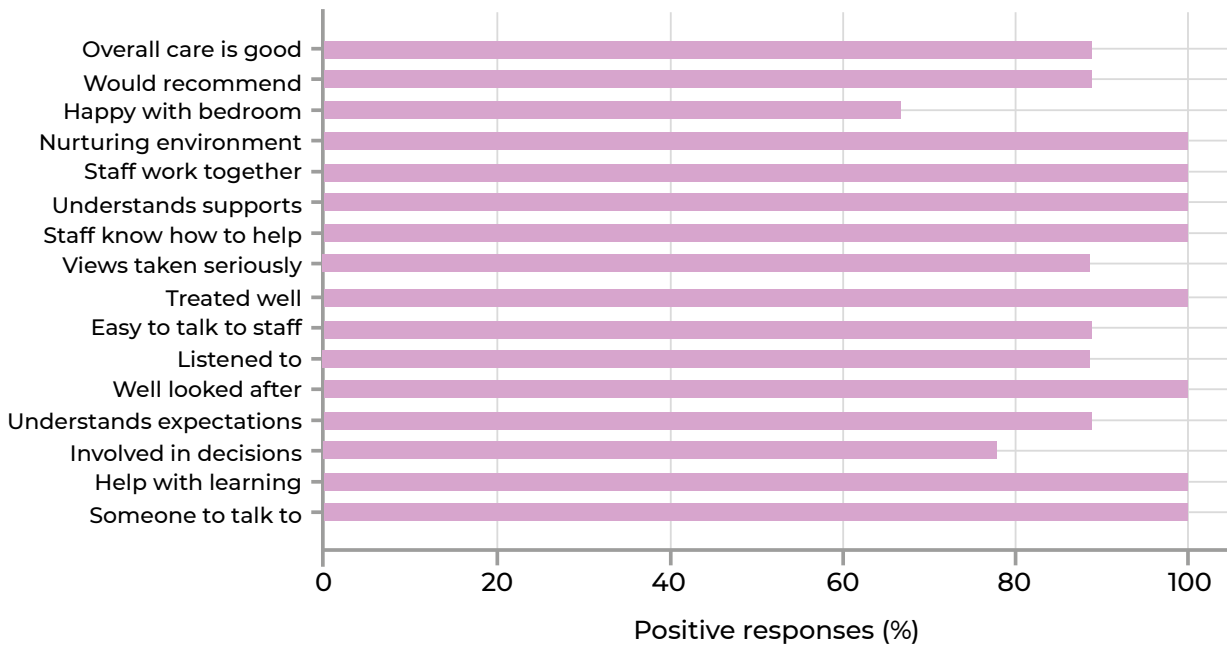




SURVEY FINDINGS

Young People Aged Under 11

Feedback from younger children was overwhelmingly positive and highlights a nurturing, supportive, care environment.



Key Themes:

- All children reported feeling cared for, supported and safe.
- Very strong relationships with staff were consistently identified.
- Positive experiences relating to learning, emotional support and daily care.
- Some mixed feedback around involvement in decisions and bedroom personalisation, indicating areas for ongoing focus.

Qualitative Feedback: Children spoke positively about activities, celebrations, time with staff and feeling supported to maintain family relationships.

Actions Taken: Any “no” or “don’t know” responses were explored during keywork sessions, with individual actions agreed, where appropriate, to support each child’s experience.

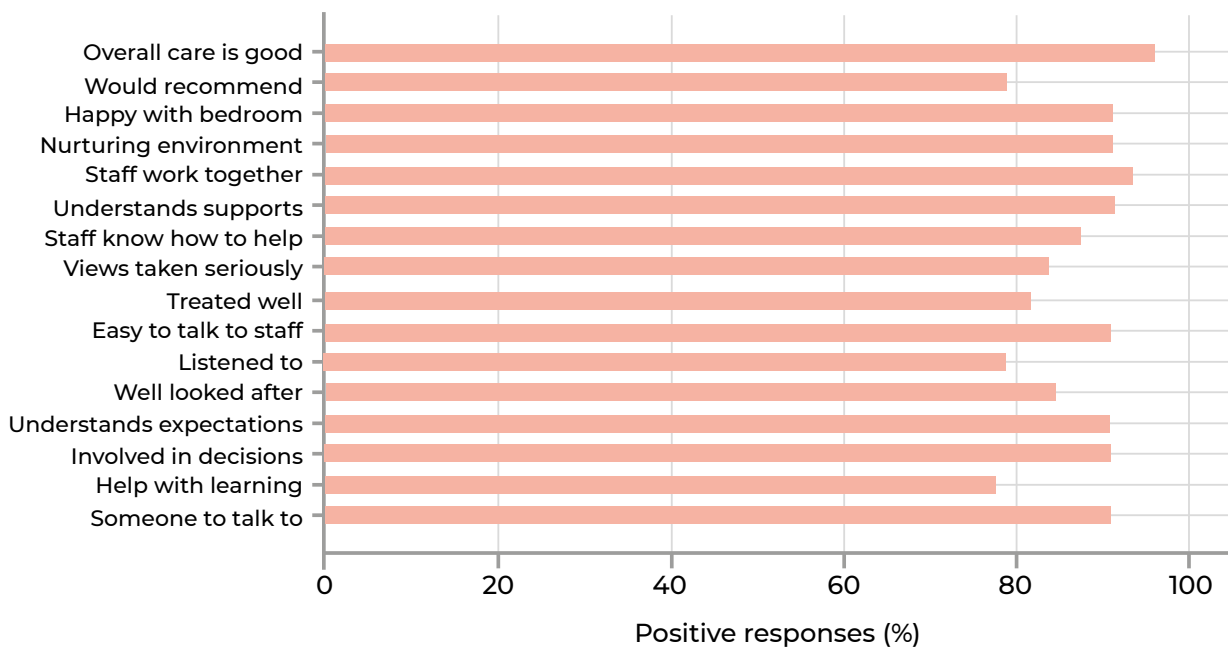




SURVEY FINDINGS

Young People Aged 12-17

Feedback from older young people demonstrates high levels of satisfaction with care, relationships, and feeling listened to.



Key Themes:

- Strong positive responses across care, safety, relationships with staff and support.
- Young people reported feeling respected, understood and able to talk to staff.
- Bedrooms and the environment were described as welcoming and personal.
- Slightly lower confidence was noted around involvement in care planning and willingness to recommend the service, suggesting opportunities to further strengthen participation and voice.

Qualitative Feedback: Young people highlighted feeling supported in achieving personal goals and valued strong relationships with staff. Suggested improvements related mainly to rules, consistency and personal space.

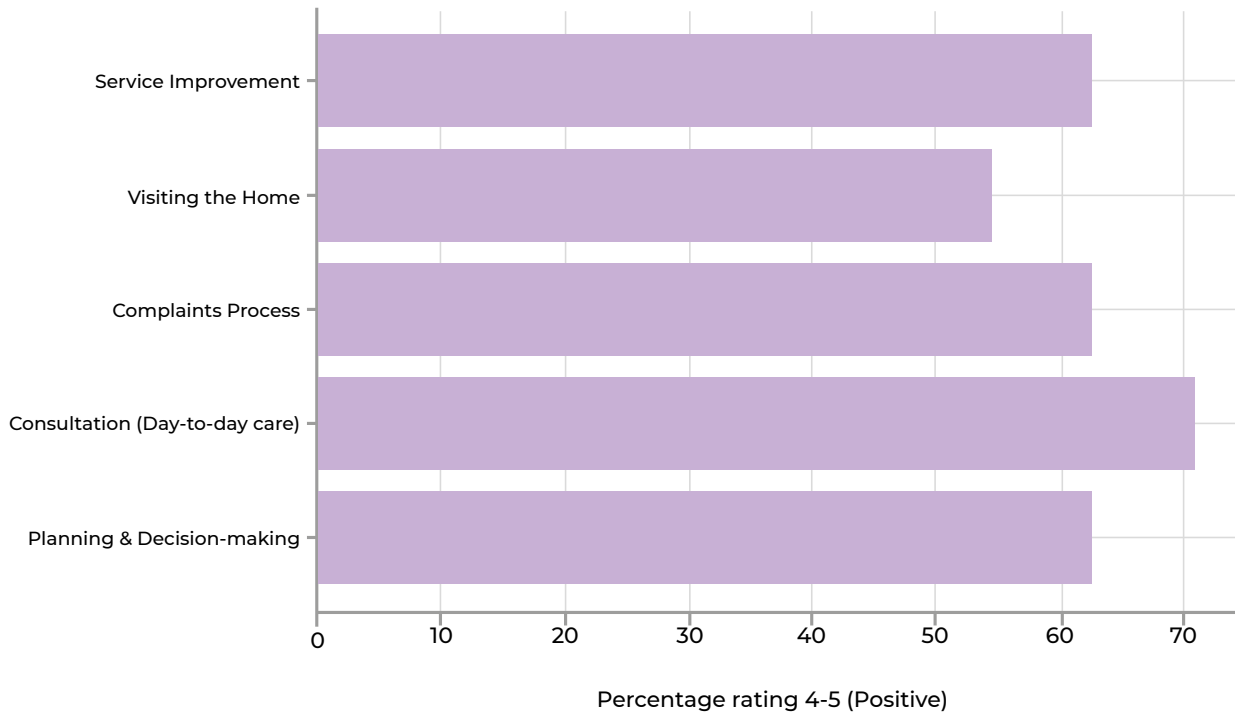




SURVEY FINDINGS

Parent / Carer

Feedback from parents and carers was strongly positive across all assessed areas.



Key Themes:

- High levels of satisfaction with day-to-day care and consultation
- Parents expressed confidence in the care provided to their children
- Visiting arrangements and the complaints process, while positively rated overall, were identified as areas with potential for further enhancement

Qualitative Feedback: Parents and carers consistently highlighted staff commitment, welcoming visits and appreciation for the quality of care and communication provided.

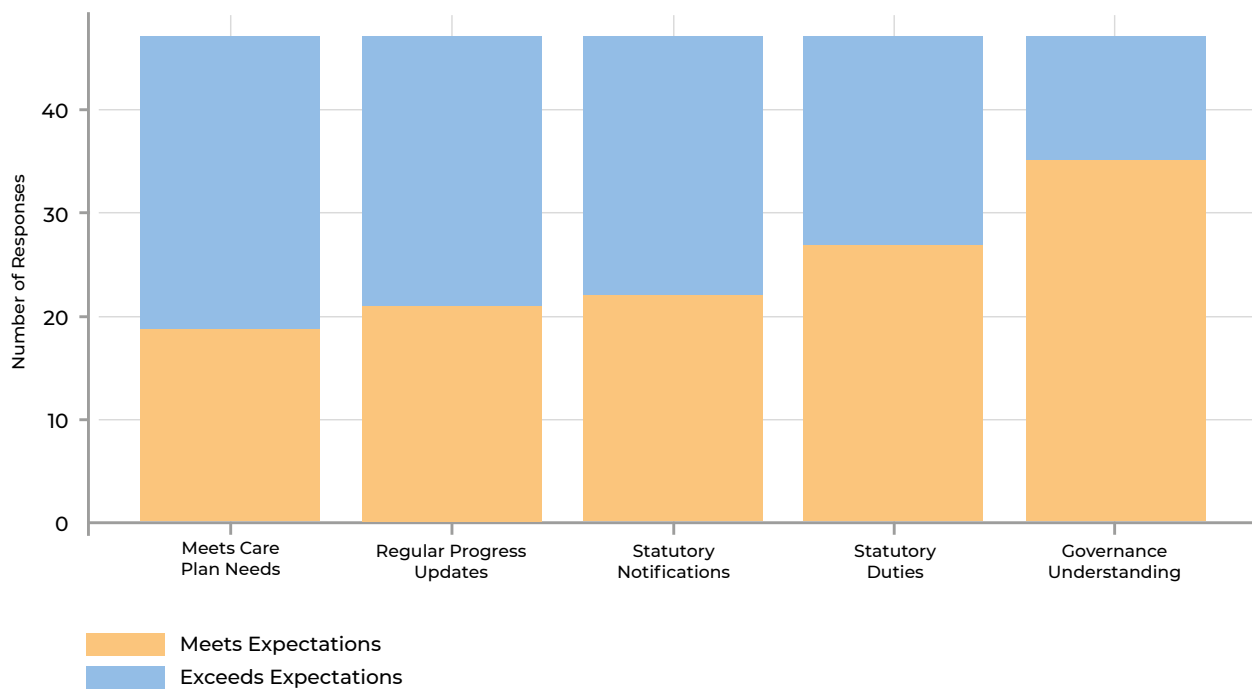




SURVEY FINDINGS

Social Workers & Guardian ad Litems

Professional feedback was extremely positive and reflects strong partnership working.



Overview:

- All respondents confirmed they would both use and recommend the service.
- Strong performance was recorded across statutory responsibilities and care planning requirements.

Development Area:

- A small number of responses indicated lower confidence in understanding governance structures, highlighting an opportunity for clearer communication and information-sharing.

Key Strengths:

- Meeting young people's identified needs attracted the highest number of 'Exceeds Expectation' ratings.
- Positive feedback regarding progress updates, statutory notifications, and duty compliance.





Strengths Identified Across All Feedback

Several consistent strengths emerged across all groups:

- Strong, trusting relationships between young people and staff
- A safe, nurturing and supportive care environment
- High levels of professionalism and commitment from staff
- Positive communication and partnership with families and professionals
- Evidence of reflective practice and responsiveness to feedback

Areas for Development and Continuous Improvement

While overall feedback is highly positive, the following areas have been identified for continued focus:

- Strengthening young people's involvement in care planning and decision-making
- Enhancing clarity and accessibility of governance information for external professionals
- Ongoing review of visiting arrangements and the complaints process to ensure they remain transparent and user-friendly
- Continued work on consistency, house 'rules' (expectations) and personal space, as identified by young people

Action Planning and Next Steps

Feedback outcomes have informed the service's Quality Improvement Plan.

Actions include:

- Embedding participation tools to increase young people's voice in planning processes
- Reviewing communication materials for professionals regarding governance and oversight
- Using feedback themes in team learning, supervision and reflective practice
- Maintaining routine follow-up mechanisms to ensure individual concerns are addressed promptly
- Progress against actions will be monitored through internal audits, management oversight and future feedback cycles

Conclusion

The Feedback Report 2025 demonstrates a strong, consistent picture of positive experiences across all stakeholder groups. Young people feel safe, supported and cared for; parents and carers express confidence in the service; professionals report high levels of satisfaction and trust.

The organisation remains committed to using feedback as a central driver for learning, development and continuous improvement, ensuring that the voices of children, families and partners remain at the heart of practice.



Strengthening young people's involvement in care-planning and decision-making.



Launch of our Strategy Roadmap

We launched Ashdale Care's Strategy Roadmap in September 2025, which clearly sets out our ambition, direction and priorities for the years ahead. Grounded in our purpose of rebuilding lives and transforming care, this strategy reflects our collective commitment to delivering the highest quality residential care for children and young people.

Our CEO has personally delivered the Strategy Roadmap to all departments and homes across the organisation, ensuring that every member of staff understands their role and feels connected to the journey ahead. This shared approach reinforces our commitment to working together in a consistent and values-led way - The Ashdale Way.

Our Purpose, Vision and Mission guide every aspect of our work, shaping how we support

young people, develop our teams and continuously improve the services we provide. The Strategy Roadmap demonstrates how our ambitions are translated into practice, with a strong focus on excellence in care, positive outcomes, learning, innovation and robust governance. As we look to the future, we remain proud of our heritage, confident in our direction and committed to making a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of those we support.



Ashdale Care Strategy Roadmap

Our Ambition



Sector Leader: We will maintain our position as the Number 1 provider of specialist care to vulnerable children (in terms of quality, outcomes and scale) and the partner-of-choice for key agencies.



Number of Homes: We will expand our footprint to 50-60 homes across Ireland and our range of service offerings.



Diversified Business: We will diversify our service offering introducing new services to complement our existing core services.



Culture as a Competitive Advantage: We will ensure our organisational culture is a source of competitive advantage attracting and retaining great people and providing long-term career pathways.



Platform for Long-Term Sustainable Growth: We will build our business to ensure we have a long-term sustainable operating model to future-proof the business for continued long-term growth.



Digital transformation

Since last year we explored a range of innovative platforms which would act as an integrated system for managing documentation. Through this process, we identified the need for a system that is easy to use, aligned with our organisational values, strengthens governance and oversight, ensures compliance with legislation, enhances efficiency and improves case monitoring-ultimately contributing to better outcomes for the young people we care for.

Following extensive consultation with our management teams, we selected a user-friendly, cloud-based documentation and care management platform. This system consolidates records, risk assessments, care plans and communications into one secure, centralised system.

Key features include:

- Instant access to up-to-date care plans for staff
- Secure information sharing with social workers, therapists and other professionals
- Integrated safeguarding alerts and incident tracking
- Daily logs and progress notes linked to child-specific outcomes
- Use of nationally and internationally recognised outcomes tools
- Risk management forms tailored to residential care
- Mandatory fields that enforce regulatory compliance, improve transparency, and ensure forms are fully completed before submission
- Easily generated reports with extensive filtering options

The new digital system has now been **fully implemented across all Ashdale Care homes** as part of our wider digital transformation programme. While we continue to build and refine the system to meet our specific organisational needs, its implementation has already strengthened efficiency, enhanced communication and improved continuity of care - particularly during staff transitions or multi-agency meetings. The system directly addresses the challenges identified by our teams and supports our commitment to delivering safe, consistent, and high-quality care.

The implementation of the new digital system represents a meaningful advancement in our governance, quality assurance and service delivery frameworks, supporting our commitment to providing safe, transparent and outcome-focused care to all young people.



In February 2026, we were delighted to introduce our new integrated Human Resources and Time & Attendance system. This marks a significant step forward for Ashdale Care as we continue modernising and digitalising our core processes. This system brings together all company and employee HR information in one place; while also transforming the way we manage rostering across the organisation.

A More Efficient, Connected Way of Working

For **Managers**, this new system provides:

- Greater visibility of teams and staffing levels
- Clearer, real-time information
- A significant reduction in administrative tasks
- This means more time can be spent supporting people, delivering quality care and focusing on leadership — not paperwork.

For **Employees**, the new system offers:

- A simple way to request and track leave
- Easy access to up-to-date rosters
- A reliable digital clock-in/clock-out process

Together, these improvements make day-to-day tasks faster, clearer and less burdensome for everyone.



Looking Ahead: Digital Mileage & Expenses

As Ashdale Care continues to grow across Ireland, we are pleased to share that **digital mileage and expenses claims** will also be introduced in the near future.

This next phase of digitalisation will:

- Eliminate manual forms
- Reduce processing time
- Improve accuracy and consistency
- Further reduce administrative workload for staff and managers

Testimonials



You do a great job of stabilising, of creating for the young person and he really responds to that.

External Therapist

Quality of Care given to the young person and her progress noted despite regression recently. Very happy with the home and the support given to her.

Social Worker, Tusla

Support, care and advocacy for the young person over the past year is exceptional.

Team Leader, Tusla

It was a pleasure working with Aspall House staff team. They were hugely committed to young person and a credit to your service.

NIAPP Representative

Wanted to acknowledge the incredible work done by the staff team and management in Foremass in relation to the young person at the Child in Care Review.

Chairperson of the CICR

I was amazed by how the young person owns his own therapeutic journey and is so invested in doing well. It is a credit to the staff team in Lisdrum.

Social Worker, Tusla

The young person is so lucky to have everyone providing her with the support that she needs. I really appreciate your constant communication with the school.

School Principal

The Social Work team are delighted with the work that has been done with the young person and how well she has been doing over the past 4 weeks.

Social Worker, Tusla

The Child Centred Care practiced within Oghill was amazing.

ACIMS Inspectors





My Voice
Matters



I AM
STRONG



I Believe
in Myself

Be You



You are
amazing



Launch of the Ashdale Care Bursuary for Care Leavers

Ashdale Care Is Proud to Launch a €20,000 Educational Bursary for Care Leavers - A First of Its Kind Initiative in Ireland.

This bursary has been established to provide practical and meaningful support to young people as they transition from residential care into adulthood, recognising the significant barriers that care-experienced young adults often face in accessing, sustaining and progressing within education, training and further learning opportunities.

The initiative reflects Ashdale Care's commitment to ensuring that our responsibility to young people does not end when they leave our organisation, but continues through active support of their aspirations, independence and long-term outcomes. It represents a tangible demonstration of our values in promoting equality, opportunity and strong aftercare supports.

We are delighted to announce that, two young people from our organisation were successful in securing the Ashdale Care Educational Bursary, enabling them to pursue further education and training opportunities. This achievement highlights the positive impact of the initiative and reinforces our commitment to supporting care leavers in building stable, fulfilling adult lives.





Outcomes Data (Incidents): 2020 to 2026

Ashdale Care is committed to maintaining and improving quality outcomes throughout our service. A key example of this commitment is our focus on reducing the number of incidents involving aggressive or violent behaviour towards staff working in our homes. Last year we conducted a review of our incident data as it related to the previous 5 years. Our findings demonstrated that we had achieved a very significant reduction in the number of incidents during that time. This year, we have updated our review to include the most recent available data from 2025. We are extremely pleased to report that in 2025, Ashdale's performance has continued to improve on this important metric and we have achieved an even more significant reduction in the number of incidents since 2024. There are multiple factors that have contributed to this improvement over the years, all of which are examples of our efforts to improve the quality of life and the overall outcomes for our young people and our staff.

These include:

- Our rollout and ongoing implementation of the CARE programme led by the Learning & Development Team and other important organisational training.
- Our comprehensive admission and matching processes for new referrals.
- The work being done by the Therapeutic Support Team to help guide and support the practice of the home practitioners.

- The high standards of care practices in the homes that are consistently being provided by dedicated staff and supported by their management teams.
- The audit of quality and governance provided by our quality assurance team.
- The development and implementation of policies that ensure high quality and standards.
- The leveraging of well-designed governance systems including client-management software and a suite of other governance processes and risk-management oversights built into the work of all staff.

As a result of all of these efforts, since 2020 we have seen a reduction in the average number of incidents per home from 59 to only 8, which constitutes a remarkable 86% reduction in this important measure. By working together in a collaborative, committed way, these improvements show how Ashdale has become a safer, better place for both young people and staff. (See Outcomes data graph)

86%

reduction in the average number of incidents per home since 2020



Incident Data Tracking: 2020-2025

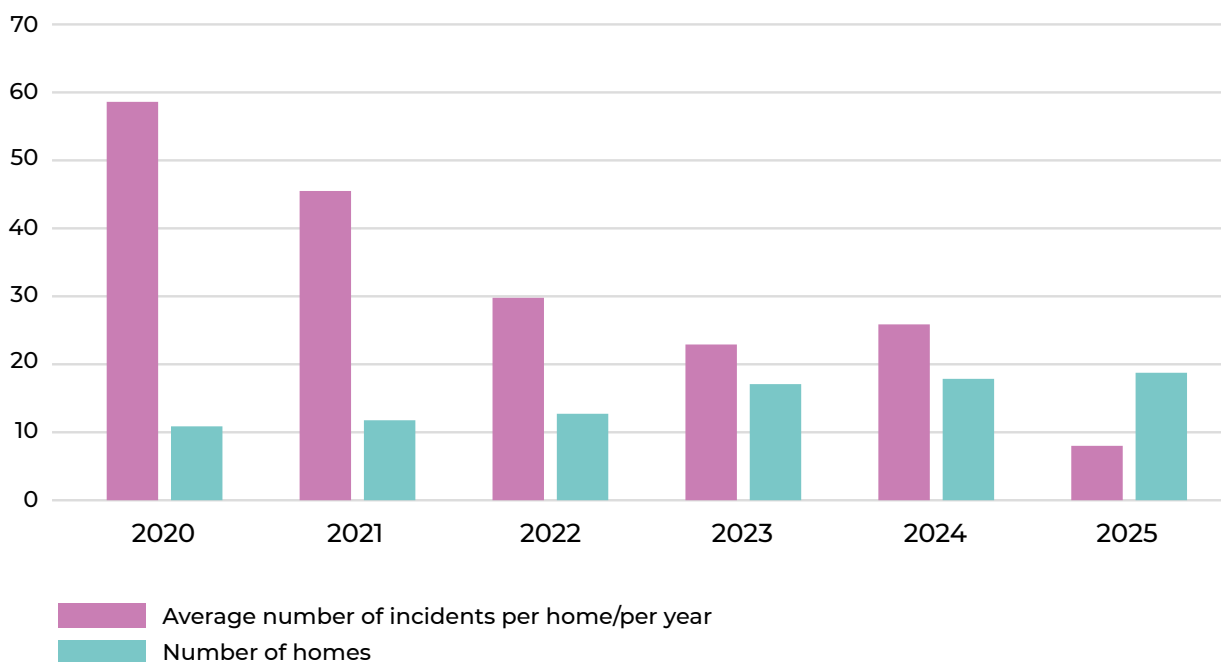
76%

reduction in overall number of incidents
from 2020 to 2025





Average No. of Incidents Per Home Annually & Total No. of Ashdale Care Homes - 2025



- Average number of incidents per home per year shows an even stronger consistent downward trend with an 86% reduction over 6 years (from 59 to 8 incidents per home per year). In 2024 we saw a temporary increase in Average no. of incidents per home due to STEP homes. By 2025, this had reduced again by 70% in one year.

Note: Inclusion of SCSIP homes results in further reduction to an average of 6 incidents/per home/per year. An incident means anything that involves harm coming to a staff member as a result of aggression, violence or other actions by young people.

86%
reduction in the number of incidents
per home over 6 years



The Lakehouse

During 2025 the Ashdale Learning Hub (ALH) has continued to provide education and direct therapeutic input to young people across our homes.

This year, more than 70% of our young people accessed the services in Lakehouse at various times during the year and we've had on average 12-14 young people attending the ALH daily for education or therapeutic support during school term time. The young people who attend are taught within small groups or in one to one sessions depending on their needs and also attend therapeutic sessions with different disciplines from the Therapeutic Support Team (TST) e.g. Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Behaviour Therapy, Art Therapy.

These therapeutic and educational sessions typically last for one hour and provide our young people with rich educational and therapeutic experiences where they can develop a broad range of academic, social, emotional and behavioural skills. They can also learn how to manage difficult feelings and behaviours in a supportive setting. A key innovation this year has been the widespread implementation of Forest School, which has been facilitated by our ALH Teachers. Six groups of young people have taken part in Forest School throughout the year.

Sessions in Lakehouse vary depending on the age and stage of the young person but most sessions consist of practical activities, academic tasks, play and a variety of different therapeutic approaches. The teachers and therapists all use a relational, attachment focused, trauma-informed approach with the young people they teach. This helps to

develop rapport with the young people, build trust and ensure they feel safe and secure within the educational and therapeutic environment.

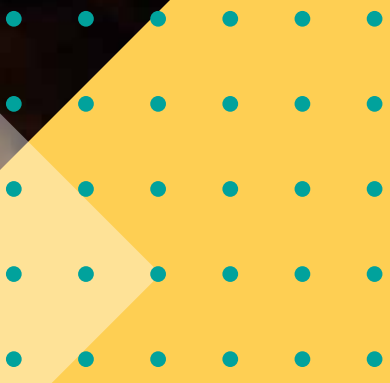
During the school holidays, our ALH-based teachers organise community activities that are open to all young people within the organisation. These range from water sports to cooking, hikes and games. Many of our young people have historically found it challenging to engage successfully in these activities with others due to difficulties in managing the social demands required. By creating an accepting, attuned, co-regulating, supportive environment, the TST members give our young people the chance to further develop their social and emotional skills while taking part in fun and engaging activities.





More than 70%
of our young
people accessed
the services in
Lakehouse at
various times
during the year





Review of Forest School Year 1

Forest School is a therapeutic, child-led outdoor learning approach set in woodland environments. Originating in Scandinavia and introduced to Ireland and the UK in 1993, it prioritises regular sessions, nature-based settings, community building, holistic development, supported risk-taking and qualified facilitation.

What have the Young People engaged in?

A typical Forest School 'block' is run over 6 weeks, one 2-hour session a week. Lots of our young people took part in Forest Schools sessions last year and these are the activities they did:

Tools

Young people were taught how to use tools such as the bowsaw, the craftsman knife, secateurs, loppers and the mallet, correctly and safely. They were taught how to whittle tent pegs, roasting sticks, woodland jewellery, wizard wands, swords and bow & arrows.

Fire

The young people learned how to use a fire steel to create a fire. They learned how to fuel and maintain a fire and to ensure it was hot enough to cook on. They also looked at fire safety within the woods and how to extinguish a fire. The group had the chance to roast s'mores and breadsticks, make popcorn and brew nettle tea on a fire.

Foraging

The children learned how to look for and forage for food safely. There were a range of plants, berries and nuts that could be eaten in the forest. The group learned how to identify some of these, learned some folklore behind them and cooked using them.

Knots

The group learned several knots that were used to make swings, play equipment and for setting up a tent/shelter.

Shelter Building and Survival Skills

The young people learned how to construct different types of shelters (debris shelters and tarp shelters). They had the opportunity to build these, play games associated with them, learn about the wildlife in the woods and how to leave the forest as they found it by following the principles of Leave No Trace.

Play

Lastly and most importantly was play. The young people had the choice and freedom to play at various times throughout the sessions. This included using the equipment provided such as swings, bug hunts, relaxing on the hammock, swinging on the high and low ropes or simply climbing trees and exploring.

Key findings and learning from year 1



Young People have learnt a range of new skills;

Using tools like bow saws, craftsman knives, fire & steels and secateurs. We noticed a real improvement in confidence and self-esteem through these activities.



Development of friendships

This has been huge for some of our young people who have such limited peer-to-peer interaction. They have learnt and developed new social skills and have had some truly formative experiences.



Knowledge and respect of nature e.g. trees, plants, animals

They have learnt the names and identification skills needed to recognise different plants, trees and native animals. They have a new appreciation for the natural world around them and their place in it.



Improved focus

It has been great to see some of our Young People, especially those that struggle in school, demonstrate high levels of focus and attention. Especially in the use of tools, it was incredible to see some of our Young People who can't manage mainstream education being able to sit and focus on using the craftsman properly and safely.



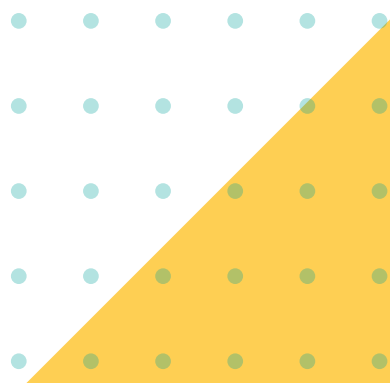
Rapport building with staff

Play and freedom of choice is essential in Forest School. This ensures that whatever the young person does, they are engaged in. By 'doing with' the young person in their chosen activity led to great relational development between staff and young people.



Positive Risk Taking

- There was no doubt that bringing our young people together in a group setting created inherent risks, particularly when combined with the use of tools, knives, and fire-making activities. However, this ultimately became one of the most significant areas of learning during Year 1 of Forest School.
- By completing thorough Risk Benefit Assessments (RBA's) and developing the confidence to support our young people in taking managed risks, we created meaningful opportunities for holistic growth. Forest School provided them with valuable chances to navigate challenges. Whether through peer-to-peer interactions, group dynamics, using a knife, lighting a fire, or engaging in activities they had never experienced before.
- We observed our young people grow in confidence, self-esteem and resilience. They learned from one another, developed friendships and strengthened their ability to recognise and respond to social cues. Most importantly, we witnessed them genuinely enjoying their time together.



We are eager
and looking
forward to
Year 2 of
Forest School





Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)

It was a very busy year for our ESG Team. We successfully completed our inaugural companywide ESG audit, conducted in partnership with an external consultancy. This comprehensive assessment covered Scope 1, 2, and 3 carbon footprinting across all Ashdale Care operations. The insights and data gathered from this audit will play a pivotal role in shaping Ashdale Care's sustainability strategy, guiding our future plans and enabling us to monitor progress and key performance indicators effectively in the years ahead.

For instance, in response to the audit's findings, Ashdale Care took significant steps in 2025 to reduce their Scope 2 emissions by switching to a new electricity supplier. This supplier certifies that all electricity provided is sourced entirely from renewable energy. As a result, every Ashdale Care-controlled electricity supply will now transition to this provider, bringing the organisation much closer to achieving near-zero Scope 2 (market-based) emissions. This demonstrates our commitment to environmental responsibility.

In 2025, every newly acquired property was proactively prepared for the installation of photovoltaic (PV) systems and electric vehicle (EV) chargers. Additionally, several PV installations are already scheduled to take place in the coming months, further advancing our commitment to sustainable infrastructure.

We have continued to deploy electric robot mowers throughout our portfolio, effectively eliminating Scope 1 emissions from this aspect of our operations. By utilising electricity now sourced entirely from renewable energy through our new supplier, we are further enhancing our sustainability efforts and maximising the benefits of our transition to greener practices.

In 2025, Ashdale Care expanded its fleet exclusively with petrol hybrid vehicles, demonstrating a commitment to reducing emissions and enhancing sustainability. Looking ahead, the organisation is preparing to pilot its first fully-electric vehicle in 2026, marking a significant step forward in our ongoing transition towards greener transport solutions.



Presentation to Claslough Youth

Engagement in the community



Attendance at local Women's event



Partaking in a local Christmas raffle



'Ideas Over Coffee' session at the Local Enterprise Office - Monaghan



OHK purchased presents for our young people in place of their office Kris Kringle



AshdaleCare
Ireland

Ashdale Care Ireland, The Ridge, McGrath Road, Castleblaney, Co. Monaghan, A75 WY97
Telephone: +353 42 967 4198 | Email: info@ashdalecare.com

[AshdaleCare.com](https://www.AshdaleCare.com)