

1233899

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home and is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in October 2016 and the manager registered in October 2018.

One child was living at the home at the time of this inspection and spoke with the inspector.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 September 2024

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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/09/2023	Full	Good
14/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/11/2022	Full	Inadequate
02/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The same child has remained living in the home since the last inspection. The child has continued to make good progress. The manager and staff provide individualised care and support to the child. Regular reviews of the care provided ensure that the manager and staff continue to meet the child's needs.

Staff build strong, trusting relationships with the child, which supports their emotional and social development. As such, staff have not had to physically intervene to hold the child to keep them safe.

The child benefits from access to all local health services and is up to date with routine appointments. However, on two occasions the manager and staff failed to seek health advice when the child returned home with some small tattoos to ensure that the child remains in good physical and emotional health.

The child has sporadic attendance in education. The manager liaises and advocates on behalf of the child with the local authority and education professionals to seek the most appropriate education establishment for the child. The child feels reassured that the manager is listening to them and seeking their views, wishes and feelings around their education. This supports the child to feel heard and ensures that there is limited drift in education.

Informal learning opportunities are provided to the child. This includes, attending places of historic interest and developing their independence skills. The staff also encourage the child to attend army cadets regularly. This supports the child to prepare for the future and develop their hobbies and interests.

Staff support the child to see and remain in contact with their family and friends. This helps the child to develop their identity, sense of belonging and build relationships with those whom they are connected.

The home is welcoming, clean, tidy, furnished and decorated to a good standard. The child likes their bedroom and takes pride in this. However, some minor shortfalls are identified in one of the bathrooms, this requires attention.

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

Managers and staff are aware of the child's risks and vulnerabilities and are clear about their roles and responsibilities for keeping the child safe. Risks and vulnerabilities are highlighted in the child's risk assessment and are understood and consistently implemented by managers and staff. This supports the staff to meet the needs of the child.

Staff give the child verbal praise and rewards for positive behaviours and celebrate their achievements. Consequences are rarely used and only when necessary, however, it is unclear when the child has been spoken to about consequence and when the manager has recorded their oversight.

On three occasions the child has been missing from care. Staff are proactive in their approach to try and locate the child and work with the police to return the child home safely in line with protocols. A return home interview is offered and staff speak to the child to try to identify triggers, so that further strategies can be put in place to reduce the risk.

The child's social worker shared that they felt that the manager and staff manage safeguarding concerns well and communication is good. Staff are trained in a variety of safeguarding practices. This means that staff are skilled in identifying risks and ensure that child is supported to become increasingly safe.

Leaders and managers carry out the necessary safer recruitment checks to ensure that staff are suitable and remain safe to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is an experienced manager in post, who has a relevant childcare and management qualification. The manager is committed, passionate and has high aspirations for the child in her care and for the development of the staff team. The child shared that they get on well with the manager. The manager leads by example and knows the child well. They are able to balance management duties alongside spending time with the child.

Most staff have worked in the home for a long time, one new member of staff has joined the team since the last inspection. New staff receive a thorough induction that provides them with a detailed programme of training and guidance in their new role. This leads to consistency in care and support for the child.

Staff receive regular supervision, have an annual appraisal of their performance and receive training in line with procedures. They also attend regular team meetings. This allows the manager and staff to reflect on their practice to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the child.

The independent person visits the home monthly and provides a clear overview of the service and any areas for development. The manager is proactive in addressing any recommendations made. However, the independent person did not carry out a visit on at least one occasion and failed to send a report into Ofsted on another occasion. This does not enable the regulator to have effective oversight of the home.

The manager has recently introduced research in staff practice. This supports the staff to be up to date with any new developments, ideas and strategies for further supporting the child in their care.

One family member spoken to said, 'I can't fault them, I am happy with the care they are providing [name of child], I have no concerns at all.'

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
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (2)(vii)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to ensuring the redecoration around the window and skirting board in the child's bathroom is completed. This requirement is re-sated.	20 October 2024
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1) (4)(a)(b) (7)(a))	20 October 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to: respond to the health needs of children; in particular when to seek medical advice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 34 paragraph 7.12)
- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour should be written up within timescales recorded in regulation 35. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 46 paragraph 9.38)

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: 1233899

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Registered provider address: Active Ark, Unit E, Baron Way, Kingmoor Business Park, Carlisle CA6 4SJ

Responsible individual: Louise Matthews

Registered manager: Heather Rooke

Inspector

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector

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