

1266838

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. The home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 25 April 2025.

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

Inspection date: 8 July 2025

Date of last inspection: 8 April 2025

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection was triggered by concerns around the safety of children and the management of the home.

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

The inspection identified serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children.

Staff have not prioritised children's safety. For one child, there have been incidents where staff practice was inadequate and left the child at risk of harm.

Risk management plans are not effective. They do not contain sufficient strategies and clear guidance for staff to follow. A child was put at risk of harm because of a lack of clear instructions for staff on how to keep them safe.

Staff have not fully considered one child's health needs during incidents. When a child was intoxicated, staff did not seek medical attention and did not evaluate the impact on the child's medication. This oversight significantly increased the risk of harm to the child.

When a child was assaulted while out in the community, staff did not collect the child or do welfare checks, or consider whether the child required emotional support or medical assessment. Staff demonstrated a lack of curiosity and empathy about the child's experience.

Measures put in place to support one child's time spent in the community are restrictive and are not in line with their age and the development of their independence. The measures used were not effective in reducing the risks to the child. There is a lack of clarity for staff about the arrangements for the child, going forward.

Serious incidents involving children are not consistently reported to Ofsted. This undermines external scrutiny of practice and weakens the safeguards for children.

The registered manager does not have effective oversight of the home. The registered manager does not record her evaluations following incidents. This means that poor staff practice or poor recording are not identified and acted on. The registered manager does not evaluate emerging patterns or themes for children, which may influence children's risks and the quality of care that they receive.

The registered manager has not completed a review of the quality of care provided. This does not support the manager's oversight of the home and shows that learning and development are not a focus for the team.

The team works with other professionals to consider how children's needs can be met. This includes making referrals to external services where appropriate and relates to children's health needs and support around risk-taking behaviours.

Staff have meaningful discussions with children to help them to reflect on their behaviours and to consider alternative coping strategies. They also support the work

of other professionals by using tools and resources with children to help develop their understanding of risk.

Children are supported to share their views. Staff support children to have their views heard by arranging for advocates who can act on their behalf.

Children are supported to develop practical independence skills such as cooking for themselves and learning to drive. Staff support children to spend time with the people who are important to them.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/04/2025	Full	Good
22/05/2024	Full	Good
20/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))	24 August 2025
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—	24 August 2025

promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and	24 August 2025

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

This requirement is restated.

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. Specifically, the manager should speak with the existing group of children's social workers and seek information from professionals and family members of the referred child where appropriate to do so. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4). This is restated.
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people and the regulator. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1266838

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: Sarah Green

Inspector

Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector

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