

1266838

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. It 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, no children were living at the home.

Inspection date: 25 September 2025

This monitoring visit

An assurance visit took place on 8 July 2025 due to escalating concerns regarding the safety of children and the management of the home. The inspector identified serious and widespread shortfalls in relation to safeguarding practices and ineffective leadership and management arrangements.

Following the inspection, two compliance notices were issued under Section 22A of the Care Standards Act under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, and regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. A restriction of accommodation notice was also served.

This visit was carried out to monitor the provider's compliance with the restriction of accommodation notice and progress with the compliance notices.

Following a case review held on the 29 September 2025, it was agreed that the provider has taken sufficient action to manage and reduce the risk of harm to children. Therefore, the restriction notice has been lifted.

Risk management plans include clear and comprehensive strategies designed to help staff effectively handle risks. The registered manager is responsible for regularly reviewing and updating these plans, ensuring that they offer strong and practical guidance that assists staff in protecting children and promoting their well-being. Leaders and managers have clarified their roles and responsibilities to enhance the effectiveness of decision-making. Additionally, the newly implemented monitoring and review systems offer improved management oversight.

The registered manager has completed a thorough and evaluative quality of care review, which demonstrates reflective practice and a commitment to continuous improvement. The review is of a good standard and is scheduled for submission within the required timescales.

The registered manager has a clear understanding of the procedures for notifying the regulatory body of serious incidents and ensures that such notifications are made promptly and without delay.

Staff have undertaken additional safeguarding and child protection training, which has enhanced their ability to identify and manage risks to children effectively. This reflects the setting's commitment to maintaining a safe and protective environment. Staff knowledge is routinely tested through team-based quizzes and further explored during individual supervision sessions, ensuring that staff remain competent and confident in applying safeguarding procedures and protocols.

All staff and managers sign in at the start of each shift. This ensures that there are clear systems in place to record who is on duty, including the presence of management.

Staff spoken to demonstrate a clear understanding of how to identify and respond appropriately should a child present under the influence of alcohol. They are aware of the correct procedures, including contacting NHS helplines without delay. This approach is supported by a recent update to the organisation's safeguarding policy.

Monitoring and review systems have been strengthened. The responsible individual and registered manager undertake regular weekly and monthly audits to review incidents and oversee day-to-day operational management. In addition, the deputy manager provides consistent oversight of the daily monitoring and evaluation of the quality of care, offering an additional layer of scrutiny and assurance.

Revised processes have been implemented to help leaders, managers and staff to consider the known and potential risks and vulnerabilities for new children moving into the home. These strengthened processes also help leaders, managers and staff to consider the risks posed to the children already living in the home.

Leaders and managers have demonstrated a reflective and proactive approach to improving staff practice. They have thoroughly analysed and evaluated previous weaknesses in the management of safeguarding incidents and have implemented targeted actions to address identified shortfalls. This has led to improved staff understanding and more robust safeguarding responses.

Children's time in the community is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains appropriate to their age, stage of development and individual needs. Staff are supported to record key information relating to these activities, enabling effective oversight. Where concerns arise, they can be escalated to the on-call manager, who provides guidance and supports decision-making, including when a notification to Ofsted under Regulation 40 is required.

Reflective sessions have been embedded into team meetings, providing staff with opportunities to discuss practice and learn from safeguarding experiences. Staff report increased confidence in their roles, and they acknowledge that leaders and managers now provide more robust oversight of safeguarding practice, contributing to a safer and more responsive care environment.

The home has recently undergone a full redecoration, resulting in a more welcoming and homely environment. This contributes positively to the overall atmosphere and supports children's sense of safety and emotional well-being.

The requirements raised at the full inspection were not reviewed at this visit. These will be reviewed at the next full inspection.

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 with 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))	21 September 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— promotes their welfare.	21 September 2025

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 a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;	21 September 2025

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.

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)
- 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)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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

James Meeks, Social Care Inspector

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