

2506856

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. The home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The home and the manager registered with Ofsted on 22 January 2019.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home. The inspector spoke with all three children during the visit.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 September 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 13 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/06/2021	Full	Good
18/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's plans are individualised, understood and followed by staff. The manager and staff have aspirations for the children and their futures. This means that the children are receiving consistent care that meets their needs.

Children have good routines and structure in place. Staff support the children to attend all routine health appointments and to develop their independence skills in line with their age and abilities. This helps the children to remain healthy and develop the necessary skills for adulthood.

Staff and the children enjoy various activities together, such as going to theme parks, go-karting and music festivals. This supports staff to build positive relationships with the children. One child said, 'I have done things I never thought I would do.'

The manager and staff have supported the children to make significant progress in their education. Two children, who have been out of education for several years before moving to the home, now attend full-time school and are making good academic progress.

Staff support the children to keep in contact with their family and friends. This encourages the children to keep in touch with people who are important to them and supports their identity and sense of belonging.

A family member gave positive feedback to the inspector and said, 'They are like different children since moving into [name of home]. The staff are absolutely fantastic, the children class them as family not carers, they have come on in leaps and bounds.'

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

Children are very settled in the home. Incidents are rare. However, when they occur, staff respond effectively to ensure everyone's safety.

Staff understand and follow risk management plans to support the children to remain safe. Children do not go missing from the home and staff have not had to physically intervene to manage the children's behaviour. Staff are effective at using de-escalation techniques.

Staff receive training in safeguarding and additional training around risks such as online safety, county lines, exploitation, knife crime and self-harm. However, they would benefit from receiving training around substance misuse.

Staff use key-work and direct work sessions to inform children of the dangers around social media, substance misuse, smoking and vaping. This helps the children to keep themselves safe. One child has significantly reduced their substance misuse since moving into the home. The manager would benefit from reviewing all incidents and having more oversight of the key-work and direct work sessions with children.

All professionals who work closely with the children have no concerns about their safety or welfare.

The home is set in a location with plenty of space. It is clean and tidy, in good repair and free of hazards.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager is passionate and enthusiastic about improving the lives of children. The manager has not completed his management qualification within the required time frame; however, the inspector was assured that this would be completed by the end of September 2023. The manager also needs to update his training in self-harm.

One requirement raised at the previous inspection has not been adequately addressed. The manager needs to ensure that any consequences given to the children are proportionate and recorded in line with regulation.

Professionals, staff and children speak highly of the manager. One child said, 'He is class, he's got banter, he can take a joke, he's fair.' Staff members spoken to said that they feel supported in their role by the manager.

The manager's six-monthly review of the quality of care is completed within the required time frame and provides some detail about children's outcomes. However, the review would benefit from more evaluation, clearer plans for development and feedback from stakeholders. This would support the home's ongoing development and improvement.

The manager and staff receive regular supervision and appraisals. New members of staff receive a thorough induction. This supports the manager to evaluate staff's practice to assure himself that staff continue to meet children's needs.

The staff team is stable and shows good morale and consistency. One member of staff said, 'I feel staff get on really good, it's the best team I have worked with period, everyone brings something different.'

The shortfalls identified in the leadership and management have not impacted negatively on the outcomes for the children.

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
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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	12 November 2023

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 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that consequences are recorded. This requirement is restated.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3))	12 November 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. This specifically relates to ensuring that staff receive training in substance misuse and that the manager updates his training in self-harm. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should make best use of internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement, specifically by having oversight of key-work sessions with children and of all incidents to consider staff practice and children's views. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 2506856

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: Simon Matthews

Inspector

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector

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