

SC439956

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home registered with Ofsted in May 2012 and is operated by a private provider. It offers care for one child who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home. The child shared their views with the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2026

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: 16 December 2025

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
16/12/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/09/2025	Full	Inadequate
02/07/2024	Full	Good
22/08/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

The child is making good progress in their education, engaging in positive activities and learning new independence skills. Staff know the child well and are able to support them effectively in overcoming barriers to learning and preparing for their future.

The child feels safe and has trusted relationships with carers. These relationships have had a positive impact, enabling the child to express their views confidently. This helps to keep the child safe.

There is effective multi-agency communication, with strong working relationships between staff and external professionals. External agencies are complimentary about the support provided by staff and recognise the progress the child has made.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff support children to settle into the home, helping them to adjust and make progress in all areas of their lives.

Staff have positive relationships with the child, which helps to keep them safe. These supportive relationships encourage the child to share their experiences, both positive and negative, with staff. This helps staff to understand the child's needs and provide effective, individualised care.

The child engages in education and has made considerable progress. Staff ensure that consistent routines are in place, helping the child to maintain good attendance and achieve positive outcomes. Education professionals value the support provided by staff and recognise the positive impact this has had on the child. Clear and achievable plans are in place to ensure that the child continues to succeed in the future.

Staff encourage the child to participate in activities that promote their emotional wellbeing. Where specialist support is required, staff ensure that the child can access appropriate services. This helps the child to develop coping strategies while also having access to additional support when needed.

Staff have supported the child in preparing for independence. They have created a child-friendly 'My Plan' that is written in language the child can understand. Transition planning is supported through professional meetings, ensuring that appropriate support is in place for their future. As a result, the child feels equipped with the skills needed to move on and is well prepared for this transition. The local authority has confirmed that all identified goals have been achieved, acknowledging the child's progress and noting that they are thriving.

The child says that living at the home has been a success for them and that it has changed them as a person. The child feels safe with staff and says that they are always there for them.

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

Missing-from-home incidents have reduced significantly, and the use of restraint is rare. When restraint is necessary, there is oversight from the manager, and follow-up discussions with the child take place. This helps the child to understand why particular actions were taken, ensures that they feel valued and listened to and supports the maintenance of positive relationships.

Staff help the child to navigate relationships and ensure that family time arrangements are appropriate. When concerns escalate, staff respond promptly and work in partnership with other professionals to keep the child safe. The support from the staff ensures that the child remains safe while spending time with those who are important to them.

Staff encourage the child to participate in child-friendly risk assessments. This helps the child to feel involved in decision-making and understand their plans. Risk assessments are supported by a tracking tool that demonstrates positive progress, helping staff to monitor changes and remain aware of emerging risks.

Staff carry out key-work sessions tailored to the child's specific needs. The sessions are monitored and reviewed during regular management meetings, ensuring that interventions remain consistent and relevant.

Behaviour support plans are updated; however, not all staff are familiar with them. Although risk assessments are revised in response to changing risks, some plans lack sufficient detail and do not anticipate potential concerns. This can lead to an over-reliance on staff judgement during missing-from-home incidents, which may increase risk, particularly when unfamiliar staff are on shift.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are committed to the child and dedicated to ensuring that they make progress and have positive experiences while living in the home. The manager is actively involved in the child's care and consistently seeks their views. The child knows they are important to both the manager and staff, meaning their voice is heard and they feel valued.

The home has a warm, homely atmosphere, providing the child with a welcoming environment, stability and a sense of belonging. The physical environment is well maintained, and there is a good outdoor space that the child can use for recreation, exercise and seasonal activities. As a result of the strong relationships and nurturing environment, the child describes where they live as their 'home'.

The manager and staff have developed positive relationships with external professionals and families. Feedback is consistently positive; professionals describe the care provided as 'exemplary' and recognise its contribution to improved outcomes for the child.

Staff say that they value the support provided by the manager, recognising that they are approachable and available when needed. Staff development is encouraged, and all staff have access to regular supervision and training. This helps to ensure that staff have the skills and confidence required to support the child effectively. However, this is not always consistent, as some supervision records lack reflective discussion or sufficient focus on the child. This may result in missed opportunities for learning and professional development.

Leaders and managers do not consistently provide appropriate challenge to the local authority. Following a missing-from-home incident, important information was not adequately followed up or shared with staff. In addition, work to prepare the child for their transition into adulthood has not been carried out. These shortfalls reduce the effectiveness of staff support and limit the child's resilience and preparedness for adulthood.

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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vii)(e)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that risk assessments and care plans accurately reflect the needs of children in their care and that staff are fully aware of the risks that children face.	31 July 2026
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs. (Regulation 5 (a)(b))	31 July 2026

In particular, the registered manager must provide appropriate challenge to the placing authority when services or support are not delivered in line with children's needs.	
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that effective systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, allowing them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children in their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC439956

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

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

Responsible individual: Louise Matthews

Registered manager: Sarah Green

Inspector

Shaun Martin, Social Care Inspector

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