

SC465634

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2025.

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

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2025

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

Date of last inspection: 21 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say that they 'love' living in the home. A consistent team of adults with a strong nurturing approach help and support the children. Children have made measurable progress in all areas of their lives.

Children are attending education and making progress at their individual provisions. One education professional said, 'There has been lots of support from the staff team in order to get [name of child] back into school and they have been successful.'

Both children describe themselves as 'home birds'. Staff offer a range of activities outside the home but often children prefer to stay in the home and do activities with staff. Recently, one of the children has started a garden project at the home with a member of staff. This is helping to develop the child's skills and knowledge, and despite initial reluctance, the child now loves the activity and is proud of the garden.

Consultation with the children is a strength of the home. This takes place in a variety of ways, from individual meetings to questionnaires that cover a range of topics. The registered manager ensures that the children are aware of what has happened as a result of sharing their views and the team makes changes if appropriate.

Care plans and daily records are individualised and detailed. Language used in records continues to be jargonistic and will not help the child to fully understand the contents, particularly in future years.

Staff work with the children on their skills for adulthood and independence. The registered manager produces a newsletter for each child to show them what they have learned, and this is a useful tool to take with them when they move on. The newsletter contains recipes, top tips and an overview of what they have achieved.

Key-work sessions are planned and recorded by staff and link to the children's specific care plans as well as being responsive to incidents or topics that come up.

Family time is well supported by staff. The staff and registered manager advocate strongly on behalf of children to ensure that the rebuilding of relationships is at a pace the child is comfortable with.

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

Children are clear that they feel safe in the home and that they can talk to staff or the registered manager should they feel concerned about anything.

Staff use individualised incentives, praise and positive relationships to manage behaviour effectively. Incidents are rare and risks have reduced for both children.

The team reviews and updates risk assessments at regular intervals and if an incident occurs.

The children rarely go missing from the home. However, if such incidents were to happen, staff are aware of the protocols to follow so that children are returned safely and quickly.

When incidents of self-injurious behaviour take place, these are recorded on accident forms rather than incident forms. This could lead to missing patterns of behaviour that help inform practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and registered managers: good

The registered manager has been in post for six months. She is ambitious for the children and the staff. She is supported by a deputy manager and a consistent staff team.

Staff talk about loving the children and prioritising their needs. They value the changes the registered manager has made in the home and feel that she is supportive and approachable.

The registered manager supports the staff team through regular supervisions and annual appraisals as well as team meetings. Records of both are comprehensive and show discussions about each child. However, attendance at meetings is varied and the notes do not include action planning to help staff know and understand what needs to be addressed before the next meeting.

Staff complete the provider's mandatory training, and the updates when necessary. Additional training specific to the children's individual needs is also provided. However, not all staff have completed this, which could lead to inconsistency in practice and approach.

Formal reviews of the children's care plans take place. However, not all relevant paperwork is on file for each child. There is evidence that the registered manager chases this with the relevant social workers but none to indicate that the issue is escalated when paperwork is not being forwarded. This could lead to information or actions being missed.

The registered manager has completed a quality of care review and forwarded it to Ofsted. However, the report is not fully evaluated and the action plan does not give timescales for completion.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, ensure that staff have training in autism and online safety.	30 September 2025
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c)) In particular, ensure that the escalation policy is followed when chasing up children's records.	30 June 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is an evaluation of feedback received in the Regulation 45 report and that the action plan for the next six months is SMART. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 15.4)

- The registered person should ensure that incidents of self-harm are recorded as such and not as accidents. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.11)
- The registered person should ensure that actions decided in team meetings are recorded to assist those staff who are not in attendance to keep up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.20)

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: SC465634

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: Megan Wise

Inspector

Sue Atkinson-Millmoor, Social Care Inspector

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