

# 1233899

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home has been registered since October 2016. The manager, who registered with Ofsted in October 2018, is suitably experienced and qualified with a level 5 leadership and management qualification in residential care.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

### Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

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

**Date of last inspection:** 13 June 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/06/2019	Full	Good
24/10/2018	Full	Good
16/07/2018	Full	Inadequate
14/03/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children enjoy a nurturing and homely environment. They are happy and settled and making good progress overall since coming to live at the home. One child commented, 'My life has really changed since coming here. I just had my birthday and staff have spoiled me.'

Children's individuality is welcomed and celebrated. Staff are sensitive to children's wishes and feelings, so that children feel listened to and respected and know that their views are important. Equally, staff are respected and valued by the children.

Educationally, children's starting points were low. Both children currently living in the home were not attending mainstream education prior to coming to live at the home. However, the manager and staff team have worked closely with placing authorities and local alternative education providers, successfully re-engaging one child who is now regularly attending school and introducing another to the prospect of attending college locally.

Staff continue to support children's learning at the home, assisting with homework and encouraging children to learn new skills, such as cooking and baking, that will promote their independence.

Staff ensure that children understand the importance of eating a healthy diet and enjoying regular exercise. Staff work in close cooperation with local GPs and practitioners to ensure children's health is monitored and regular services are available and provided.

Children are encouraged to enjoy time in their local community and participate in activities that interest them. For one child, a local youth club has proved to be a good place to socialise, make friends and gain new interests, including becoming a youth team leader.

Staff are proactive in promoting children's time with family and friends and other people who are important in their life. This includes visits to the home and staff travelling with children to make sure they can meet up with friends and family who are some distance away.

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

Children say they feel safe and happy living in this home. Children describe staff in glowing terms, talking about how kind and caring they are and the very positive relationships they share with them.

Children's individual risks and vulnerabilities are well understood by the manager and staff team. Individual risk assessments provide good and essential guidance to

staff to ensure they know how to safely manage children's care. However, in places, risk assessments were lacking supporting detail that would have helped the reader to be clear on how the level of risk had been reached.

Children have previously gone missing from this home, but incidents have significantly reduced since coming to the home. Staff manage individual incidents well and work together with police to ensure that children are returned to the safety of the home at the earliest possible time. One child said, 'I don't go missing from here as I feel safe and happy with staff.'

The use of restraint in this home is minimal and only ever used when necessary to safeguard a child. Detailed records confirm that there is clear management oversight, ensuring that procedures have been followed and staff and children are spoken to following such incidents. Sanctions are also rare, but on the few occasions when they have been given, records confirm the sanction to be fair, appropriate and proportionate.

The home's recruitment and selection processes are robust. New staff recruited since the last inspection have been thoroughly checked and vetted in accordance with safer recruitment practice, minimising the likelihood of children being cared for by an unsuitable adult.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Staff say that they are well supported and led by their registered manager. Regular supervision is provided to all staff and takes place more frequently for those new in post. Despite the recent restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, morale within the home has remained high.

A key strength of the home is the valuable mix of experience in the staff team. Those not yet qualified with a level 3 diploma are enrolled and working towards the qualification. Some others already have teaching qualifications that are of great benefit to children living at the home.

Ofsted has been notified of all relevant incidents as they have occurred. However, the content of some notifications contains insufficient information to reassure the reader that good practice has been followed to achieve a positive outcome. The shortfall has not affected the care provided to children.

Internal monitoring is well established but would benefit from further analysis and evaluation to enable staff to learn from incidents and improve practice. External monitoring reports lack value, as the independent person has failed to consistently provide these to the manager within a reasonable timescale. There have also been considerable delays in sending reports to Ofsted. This has again reduced transparency between the home and Ofsted.

The manager promotes good partnerships and has successfully established highly productive working relationships with a range of professionals. Good liaison has

been established with local police officers to ensure the continued safety and well-being of children living at the home. One social worker commented, 'I have nothing but good things to say about the home. Staff persevere; they have excellent relationships with 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
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to—</p> <p>HMCI;</p> <p>upon request, the local authority for the area in which the home is located;</p> <p>the placing authorities of children;</p> <p>the registered provider and, if applicable, the registered manager; and</p> <p>the responsible individual (if one is nominated). (Regulation 44 (1) (7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that visits occur on a regular monthly basis and that reports reach the provider and Ofsted within the required timescale.</p>	9 May 2022

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. Specifically, ensure that plans are reviewed regularly and contain sufficient detail to assist the reader. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that best use is made of independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. This includes reviewing and evaluating incidents to proactively implement lessons learned. ('Guide to the

Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

- The registered person should ensure that the home's record of an event notified to Ofsted must include a description of the action taken and the outcome of any resulting investigation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.14)

## **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:** 1233899

**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:** Heather Rooke

## Inspector

Gillian Walters, Social Care Inspector



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022