

# 1233899

Registered provider: Active Ark Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

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

There is a manager in post who registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

### Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

**Date of last inspection:** 2 March 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/03/2022	Full	Good
13/06/2019	Full	Good
24/10/2018	Full	Good
16/07/2018	Full	Inadequate

## **Inspection judgements**

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

Children's experiences and progress are limited due to ineffective care planning and significant shortfalls relating to safeguarding practice and the leadership and management of the home.

Staff do not understand children's individual needs and they do not have access to children's relevant plans. This includes placing authority care plans and individual health assessments. Ultimately, children do not make progress in relation to their education, health, and wellbeing.

Children are not helped to follow good routines. Poor routines for children are having a detrimental impact on their daily experiences and do not promote children leading healthy lifestyles.

Educational outcomes for children are varied. One child has improved attendance at school, and one child is not in education or training. The manager and staff do not have a good understanding of this child's educational needs. This does not demonstrate that the manager and staff prioritise children's education or demonstrate high aspirations for what they can achieve.

Staff do not meet children's health needs. Children are not helped to attend routine appointments, such as optical appointments. Children are not receiving help and advice in relation to their specific health needs and how to address them.

The manager and staff do not ensure that the home environment is clean in all areas. Children's bedrooms are not cleaned to a good standard and children's bathrooms are dirty. Therefore, the children do not live in a clean and homely environment.

Children told inspectors that they like living at the home because they can see their families. Staff help children spend time with their families. However, staff do not follow one child's plan for family time. They have not adhered to the agreed plan to support safe time between the child and their family.

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

Serious shortfalls were identified in relation to safeguarding practice. Staff do not respond well when children are missing from home. Staff are not provided with strategies to follow to reduce the risks to children when they go missing. For example, a safety plan for one child was agreed during a strategy discussion. This information was not shared with staff; therefore, staff did not take effective action to safeguard the child.

During a period when a child was missing, the child was assaulted in the community. The manager and staff did not take action to get medical attention for the child. This left the child at risk of harm.

Risk management plans are ineffective as they do not contain relevant and current information about children's known risks. Significant information about one child's current risks is not included in their risk plan. Therefore, staff do not know or understand the child's risks and vulnerabilities and are not able to take effective action to safeguard them.

Children are not receiving consistent help and support to help them understand how to keep safe. There has been no meaningful work with children to talk about their risks and vulnerabilities. For example, children are not supported to recognise that some relationships may be exploitative and harmful.

Children are not being helped to develop their understanding about acceptable behaviour. Incidents of children being threatening towards peers are not challenged by staff. This is not helping children to develop the skills to manage and resolve conflicts safely and positively. When staff give children consequences the manager does not evaluate the incident and records do not include the child's views about the measure. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that consequences are helping children to learn from and improve their behaviour.

Children's health is compromised due to poor standards of hygiene in their bathrooms. Failing to maintain standards for children, including promoting good hygiene practices, compromises their health and well-being.

Processes for administering children's medication are not robust. Staff have administered medication without having the relevant training to do this safely. Although there are no documented medication errors, this poor practice could place children at risk of harm.

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

There is an experienced and qualified manager in post. Staff spoke highly of the manager and praised her for the support that they receive.

Professionals spoken to said that the manager attends all meetings for children and that communication is a strength. However, the manager does not ensure that information from multi-agency meetings is included in children's plans. This contributes to ineffective and unsafe care practices.

Leaders and the manager have not implemented effective monitoring systems to ensure improvements in the quality of care provided to children. Oversight of children's records has not identified shortfalls in staff practice or care planning for children.

The manager's oversight of serious incidents is poor. The manager's oversight is not robust. Opportunities to identify weaknesses in safeguarding practice have therefore been missed. As a result, the registered manager cannot identify any patterns or triggers in respect of incidents.

Staff do not have the knowledge and skills to meet the specific needs of the children living in the home. For example, staff have not received training in epilepsy or domestic abuse. This limits staff ability to respond effectively to children's identified needs.

Staff have had training in key areas such as county lines. However, staff do not demonstrate an understanding of this area and have not recognised the signs that a child may be subject to exploitation.

Staff are not receiving practice-based supervision and are not encouraged to reflect on significant incidents in the home. This is a missed opportunity for staff to reflect upon and improve their practice. This poor practice is not driving improvements in the quality of care provided to children.

The manager has failed to notify Ofsted of all significant events in the home. The regulator cannot effectively monitor the home to ensure that children are safe.

The manager has not sent the statement of purpose to Ofsted in line with regulation. This is a breach in regulation and means that Ofsted do not know who is working in the home.

## 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;</p> <p>help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(v)(vi)(c)(i))</p> <p>In particular the registered manager must ensure that staff help children to understand their past experiences of abuse and neglect and the potential impact on their well-being.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that children are helped to develop the skills to live independently.</p>	15 December 2022
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p>	15 December 2022

<p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment;</p> <p>help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(ix)(x))</p> <p>In particular the registered manager must ensure that staff understand children's educational needs and how to support them to achieve in education.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that children are helped to follow good routines which facilitates engagement in education and training.</p>	
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>

<p>well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that staff understand children's health needs and how to meet them. Further to this, they must ensure that children receive appropriate help and encouragement to address their own health needs.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that children attend all routine appointments. When children are reluctant to attend, staff must help children to attend and make repeat appointments to encourage children to attend.</p>	
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;</p> <p>help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful;</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>



<p>help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;</p> <p>understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)(vii))</p>	
<p>*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(d))</p> <p>In particular the registered manager must ensure that children’s risk assessments contain clear details about the risks to children and the steps that staff must follow to reduce these risks. The registered manager must ensure that staff take effective action, in line with these plans, to safeguard children.</p> <p>Further to this, the registered manager must ensure that children are helped to understand risk and how to keep safe.</p>	<p>27 November 2022</p>

<p>The registered manager must also ensure that children's bathrooms are clean and do not present hazards to children's health.</p>	
<p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that staff receive training in matters that are relevant to the needs of children. Including domestic violence and epilepsy training.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that they are developing staff skills and knowledge through effective training, practice-based supervision and regular team meetings.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that there is effective oversight of significant incidents in the home and evaluation of staff practice.</p>	<p>27 November 2022</p>
<p>*The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home;</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p>	<p>27 November 2022</p>

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that staff have access to the children's relevant plans, this includes placing authority care plans, education plans and individual health assessments.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that children's plans are up to date and include relevant information provided from professional meetings.</p> <p>The registered manager must ensure that staff have read and understand children's plans and are able to follow these in practice.</p>	
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p> <p>This relates to staff not administering medication unless they have undertaken training to do this safely.</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>

<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>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.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>This relates specifically to the use of consequences. The registered manager must ensure that these are reviewed for effectiveness and that the child is spoken to about this.</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p>	<p>15 December 2022</p>

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;

a child protection enquiry involving a child —

is instigated; or

concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.  
(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(d)(e))

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## 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

## Inspectors

Emma Thornton, Social Care Inspector  
Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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