

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 experience social and emotional difficulties.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 February 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

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

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 14 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following a full inspection on 14 November 2022, three compliance notices were issued due to serious shortfalls identified in safeguarding practice, leadership and management and care planning. At a monitoring visit on 1 December 2022, these notices were deemed to be met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2022	Full	Inadequate
02/03/2022	Full	Good
13/06/2019	Full	Good
24/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

There are two children living at the home. Their overall experiences and the quality of care that they receive are not good. Staff have been working to improve the quality of care provided. Over the past few weeks, some gradual improvements and progress have been made.

Some areas of the home require attention. Not all children's bedrooms are maintained to an acceptable standard of cleanliness. Both children's bedroom carpets need replacing as they are heavily stained. One child's bedroom needs to be repainted and maintenance is needed to fix missing plasterboard on the walls. The dining chairs require replacing as they are unstable. The manager has a programme of work in place to address these issues.

The children living in the home are not supported to engage in activities. Staff do not provide a range of recreational opportunities for children to participate in. Staff do not identify any strategies to encourage the children to take part in any hobbies or interests. This does not provide children with positive experiences.

Staff support family time to ensure that all children spend quality time with people who are important in their lives. Feedback from a parent is positive. They speak about the daily communication they have with the staff team. This ensures that the child is fully supported.

Children's engagement in education and learning is improving. One child's attendance in school has recently improved. Staff understand children's plans and have been proactive in securing an opportunity for both children to look around the local college. Staff support children to be healthy. Since the last inspection, children have attended routine medical appointments, such as optician and dental appointments.

Children's achievements are celebrated through 'shout-outs'. These small pieces of paper are displayed in the kitchen and are then collected into jars as memories of children's time in the home. This gives children a sense of pride and recognition for a task well done.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The manager has improved the quality of children's risk assessments since the last inspection. However, risk assessments do not consistently contain up-to-date information to reflect the child's current situation. For example, there is no guidance for staff on the use of ligatures, and missing-from-care risk assessments do not include up-to-date strategies and guidance for staff to follow in practice. As a result,

one child's missing-from-care plan is complicated and confusing for staff. This does not help to keep the child safe.

Children say that they feel safe. They can identify trusted adults who they can talk to about their worries or complaints. Positive relationships were observed between the staff and the children.

Medication practices are safe. The staff have recently had training in epilepsy awareness. There is a clear health plan in place and staff can describe what they need to do in the event of such medical issues arising.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities. They know what action to take should they encounter a child protection concern, which includes reporting matters without delay.

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

The manager is experienced and has worked in the home for several years. She knows the children well. Staff say that she is approachable and always available.

There is a lack of management oversight in the home. For example, the manager does not always share risk assessments with staff in a timely way. Additionally, staff are required to carry out daily cleaning tasks in children's bedrooms, in line with their plans. However, inspectors found that these are not taking place and children's plans are not consistently signed by all staff. The manager was not aware of this. This demonstrates gaps in the manager's monitoring and oversight.

Leaders and managers have taken action to improve the quality of their external monitoring systems, and a new independent visitor is due to start this month. The manager carries out a review of the quality of care provided for children. This does not include an evaluation of the quality of care provided or an action plan with a timescale to address the areas that need to improve.

Managers ensure that there are suitable levels of staffing in the home. However, the working hours and full names of staff are not recorded on staff rosters. This is a breach in regulation and there is not a clear record of who is working with the children.

The manager has a home development plan in place and is working on areas of development. However, she is yet to complete a workforce development plan to identify the arrangements for staff induction, probation, supervision and training. A recommendation has been made to address this.

Staff benefit from regular supervision. There is good use of reflective practice, and the manager ensures that all staff receive annual appraisals. Team meetings are regular, and a range of issues are discussed. This helps to promote good communication across the team.

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>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (2)(vii)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that: children's bedrooms are repainted; children's bedroom carpets are replaced; dining chairs are replaced; and the redesign of the kitchen is completed.</p>	31 March 2023
<p>The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.</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>develop the child's interests and hobbies;</p> <p>participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences; and</p> <p>make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community; and</p>	31 March 2023

<p>that each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child's interests and hobbies. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))</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>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that up-to-date risk assessments are in place that provide clear guidance for staff on the use of ligatures and what to do when a child is missing.</p>	<p>31 March 2023</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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that she has effective monitoring and reviewing systems in place to oversee the day-to-day running of the home.</p>	<p>31 March 2023</p>

<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that staff's full names and actual hours worked are recorded on the home's roster.</p>	31 March 2023
<p>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.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>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)(c) (3))</p>	31 March 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a statement of purpose that is child focused and indicates how individualised care is provided to meet the quality standards for the children living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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

Judith Birchall, Social Care Inspector

Nicola Shaw, 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.

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, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023