

1275649

A Wilderness Way Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a number operated by a private company. The home provides care and accommodation for up to six children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2020.

Inspection date: 11 February 2021

The off-site visit was prompted by notifications in relation to children leaving the home together on a number of nights and a further incident that took place whereby a child left a caravan in the middle of the night. All of these incidents occurred without staff's knowledge. Following the visit, two compliance notices have been served under regulations 12 and 13.

Preventative measures to safeguard children from leaving the home without staff's knowledge have not been implemented. Staff provided the inspector with different accounts of how they would monitor children's whereabouts in the night and when they would get up to check that children were safe in their bedrooms. As a result of concerns raised by the inspector, the manager has directed staff to always visually check on children when they get up in the night.

A child was reported missing from home while residing at one of the organisation's respite caravans. The staff member failed to risk assess the situation effectively or supervise the child to prevent them from going missing from home. The child was placed at significant risk while missing from home. The manager's evaluation of the missing-from-home record does not identify staff's failure to safeguard the child by leaving them unsupervised during the night. Consequently, action has not been taken by the manager to address this issue with staff. A return-home interview between the child and an independent person has not been evidenced.

Some children's risk assessments do not contain up-to-date chronologies or proportionate gradings of risk-taking behaviour. They include conflicting information about how staff should manage and reduce children's risks. An example of this is a

child having earned trust, so their phone does not require daily checks. In contrast, their impact risk assessment says that the child's phone should be checked daily and the child must hand their phone in at night. This provides staff with inconsistent guidance to help the child to manage their phone safely. The inspector spoke with staff, and they gave different accounts about how staff monitor the child's phone and if the child was expected to hand the phone in at night.

Impact risk assessments to consider the suitability of children living together have failed to demonstrate effective planning to ensure that children can live together safely. Careful consideration has not been given to children's historical risk-taking behaviour.

In response to the incidents, the manager has taken appropriate and prompt action to ensure all safeguarding professionals and placing authorities have worked together effectively to safeguard the children. This included separating the children, who no longer live together. A team meeting and group supervision have also been facilitated with all staff to address the safeguarding concerns and the serious lessons learned.

Improvements have been made to the security of the home since the incident. The closed-circuit television (CCTV) has been updated, an internal buzzer has been fitted to a door between the two separate floors that children sleep on, and tamper-proof window restrictors have been installed. Staff have been directed to check the CCTV daily and they complete twice daily perimeter and window-restrictor checks to ensure that the children are safe in the home.

An Ofsted staff survey provided feedback that the home requires a regular staff team to ensure the consistency of care and stability for children. A social worker and staff spoken to during the visit reported that there is not always a consistent staff team working in the home. Senior managers are planning a staffing restructure in March 2021, which will mean a permanent staff team will be implemented to ensure consistency for children and staff.

Care support sessions completed with children are focused and address key risks for children, such as forming positive relationships and sexual health. Children actively engage in the sessions and explore their feelings in relation to specific incidents. The sessions evidence that children can talk to staff honestly and openly about sensitive issues.

Social workers reported that there is an effective level of communication with the manager. Social workers say that children have positive relationships with the staff team and that children are listened to. Social workers feel that children are safe in placement, now that the safeguarding incident between children has been resolved.

Staff told the inspector how they follow the changes implemented in relation to security and safety checks, to safeguard children following the safeguarding incident.

Staff also demonstrated that they understand children's risk-taking behaviour. Staff say that they feel supported by the manager, receive regular practice-related supervisions, and attend regular team meetings.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/07/2019	Full	Outstanding
19/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/11/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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
*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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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)(iv)(v)(b))	28 March 2021
*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; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	28 March 2021

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) Specifically, when planning children's admissions to the home, that preventative measures and strategies are implemented to minimise any risks identified within children's impact risk assessments. This is to ensure that when children present risk-taking behaviour that may impact on other children living in the home or vice versa, that staff have clear direction on how to effectively safeguard and manage children's risks when living together.	28 March 2021

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return-home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Specifically, this should be evidenced within missing-from-home records as having taken place with an independent person or social worker and action taken to address any concerns raised in the interview.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1275649

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Ltd

Registered provider address: Manor House, Brisco, Carlisle, Cumberland CA4 0QS

Responsible individual: Jacqueline McCann

Registered manager: Kathleen Walker

Inspector

Cheryl Field, 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 looked after children, 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

<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.

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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2021