

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/young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2020.

Inspection date: 31 March 2021

This monitoring visit

This visit was to monitor two compliance notices that have been served under regulations 12 and 13 at a monitoring visit on 11 February 2021. The compliance notices related to the failure to safeguard children living together or take appropriate action to prevent children from going missing from home. The manager's oversight of risk management was also not robust. At the visit, the inspector found that suitable action has been taken to meet both compliance notices.

Since the last monitoring visit, children have not left the home without the staff's knowledge, nor have they been reported missing from home. There have been no serious incidents. Children understand the reasons for the new boundaries in place and told the inspector that if they try to leave the home without permission, staff follow them to ensure their safety.

Electronic sensors have been installed in the home to ensure that children are safe during the night. Staff understand and follow the manager's guidance to ensure children's whereabouts. This includes checking closed-circuit television (CCTV) and the perimeters of the home daily. However, the manager does not have written consent from children's social workers for the use of the sensors. The manager should also regularly review the suitability of the monitoring in relation to children's level of risk-taking behaviour.

There have been no children admitted to the home since the last visit. A robust matching risk assessment has been used to consider the suitability of placing

another child at the home. Children's individual risks were considered at length and strategies identified to safely manage the children living together in the home. However, the potential impact on the child living in the home meant another child's placement was not agreed by the manager.

Staff provided the inspector with clear accounts of the action they would take should a child try to leave the home without permission. The manager has revisited a previous incident with staff, where they failed to prevent a child from going missing from home. This has enabled the manager to address the roles and responsibilities of staff to ensure that children are kept safe.

The manager has introduced a fixed agenda for team meetings, which includes safeguarding practice and policy review. The manager has conducted a team meeting to address the changes to be made to the operation of the home because of the compliance notices. In team meetings, staff have worked through scenarios set by the manager to highlight the manager's expectations of safe practice.

The manager reviews risk assessments with the staff team in weekly signs of safety meetings. This ensures all documents include up-to-date strategies, accurate risk gradings and, furthermore, support staff to make appropriate decisions about children's safety. Staff said that their involvement in the meetings has improved their understanding of children's risks, and this was reflected in their discussions with the inspector.

A mentor system has been implemented in the home, which means that when staff sign on to the system, they must read and sign any updated documents, such as updated risk assessments and policies. The manager is notified if staff have failed to read key documents by a specific deadline.

All staff have received additional supervision to revisit their understanding of children's risk assessments and their understanding of the safeguarding policy. Staff have also attended a safer working practice training session, as part of the compliance notice action plan.

There is now a set staff team in place, which means improved continuity of care for children living in the home. As a result of these changes, staff reported that communication levels have improved, and the staff team are working together consistently with the agreed structures.

The manager has completed her own reflective work by reviewing previous missing-from-home reports and identifying any shortfalls that she should have identified in her original oversight of the records. She has also engaged in some coaching sessions to develop her ability to triangulate incidents and improve her scrutiny of records.

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 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 safeguard and manage effectively children's risks when living together.	28 March 2021
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)) Additionally, the registered person should ensure that the use of monitoring devices in the home is reviewed regularly in	19 May 2021

relation to the level of risk for children and in accordance with their care plans.	
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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 provides 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. Specifically, this should be evidenced within missing-from-home records as having taken place with an independent person or social worker, and the action taken to address any concerns raised in the interview. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

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

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