

2526920

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home is registered to provide care for up to five children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties. The home consists of a hub property in which one child lives, and four additional outreach properties providing solo crisis placements.

The home has a registered manager.

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: 9 and 10 March 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 30 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children live in five individual homes that are under one registration. Each home has a manager and a core staff team who work together with the registered manager to stabilise and support each child's placement. As part of this inspection, an inspector visited each home to speak to all of the children.

Children engage well once they have settled into the homes, and they make exceptional progress from their starting points. Although for some children progress may be slower, all achievements are recognised and celebrated. There is significant evidence of change and improvement because of the excellent quality of care provided.

Children all spoke positively about their care and experiences, and the difference that living in the homes had made to their lives. One child said, 'I can't believe what I achieved. Before coming here no one listened to what I wanted. For the first time I feel safe, happy and have adults around me who care.'

Children have excellent relationships with staff, and benefit from the family atmospheres in the homes. Children develop strong attachments to the homes' stable, consistent staff teams. This is enabling children to build trusting relationships in which they can be confident that their needs will be met.

Children are welcomed into the homes, and positive endings are celebrated. Robust and thorough risk assessments completed using a multidisciplinary approach ensures that the transition for children moving in and out of the homes is successful.

Children's identity and culture are promoted to help them understand their heritage and backgrounds. Managers and staff have high aspirations and consistently encourage the children's learning in the homes. This is remarkable progress, as most of the children have had negative experiences of education, and have previously struggled to engage with learning.

Children enjoy activities which are exciting, educational and fun. They have extensive opportunities to take part in a wide range of physical activities which make use of the home's rural location. These include kayaking, abseiling, ghyll scrambling, open water swimming, camping and mountain biking. Through achieving in education and activities, and by developing strong, positive relationships with the adults around them, children make significant progress, for example in building their confidence, self-worth and self-esteem.

Children are supported to lead healthy lifestyles. Their emotional, psychological and physical health needs are met. Meetings are held with the home's therapists and registered nurse on a regular basis, to review the needs and progress of each child.

Family time for children is actively encouraged, in line with the child's care plan. Staff work closely with children and families to promote family time and re-establish relationships that may be fractured. This is another considerable strength of the service. One parent said, 'I can't thank the staff team enough for the amazing job they do and the difference they have made in looking after my not so little boy. It has made it easier knowing he is in safe hands and that staff really do care.'

In all the homes children are at the heart of practice and achieving success is consistently promoted. As a result, children feel safe, valued and respected.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Children all said that they are happy, safe and well cared for in each of the homes. They said that this is because they know staff care about them. They also said that they trust staff to work well with the important people in their lives, and to represent their views openly and honestly.

Children become significantly safer because of living in the homes. They benefit from stability and, over time, the care provided for them by their staff is very effective in breaking the cycle of criminal and/or risk-taking activity.

Professionals said that staff provide safe and nurturing care, and promote transparency in their relationships. When allegations are made in the home, safeguarding procedures are followed in a timely way. Managers provide good-quality information about incidents and difficulties experienced by children, to enable external professionals to assess the quality of safe practice in the home.

Children have detailed risk assessments and risk management plans in place. Children are encouraged to contribute to their risk management plans and understand the strategies that are in place to keep them safe. These typically include measures that encourage children to identify risks themselves and manage them safely. Individual placement plans reflect the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of each child, and help staff to safely care for each child in line with their individual needs.

Children rarely go missing from home. When this occurs, staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, and they implement the missing-from-home procedures immediately. The staff work very closely with parents, carers, out-of-area police and social workers to ensure the swift and safe return of the child. Detailed records are maintained.

The provider employs staff by using safer recruitment processes that help prevent unsuitable adults from working in the home. In addition, thorough and demanding induction assessments ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to work safely and children. Continuous supervision and feedback from managers

underline the importance of open, reflective and transparent practice, to help keep children safe.

Staff use restraint rarely, and usually within the settling in period for children. It is monitored and reviewed by the homes manager and the registered manager, to ensure that children are spoken to afterwards and all incidents thoroughly reviewed.

The homes provide a safe and secure physical environment. All required health and safety checks and procedures, including the routine servicing of equipment, are up to date. Fire safety precautions are explained, practised and understood by the children and any new staff starting in the organisation. Damage to property and wear and tear of fixtures and fittings are quickly addressed. The homes are warm and welcoming, and provide the children with a comfortable and homely environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A dynamic, experienced and suitably qualified registered manager has been in post since January 2021. She is supported by a committed deputy manager. Together, they provide consistent visionary and enabling leadership to an extremely stable, committed and competent staff team.

Staff respond enthusiastically to the managers expectation that they will deliver outstanding care to complex and vulnerable children. Extensive training and developmental opportunities are provided for staff, in order to develop their knowledge and skills. They use this knowledge well so that they can assess the risks posed to individual children and create strategies to minimise them. When required, immediate training is provided for staff, to further develop their knowledge of safely caring for children.

Parents and professionals who are involved in the children's lives said that the home exceeds their expectations for the quality of care provided. Managers and staff are extremely supportive of parents' and professionals' roles, and always contribute to a holistic approach to meeting individual need. Placing authorities were equally complimentary about the home, and said that staff are highly skilled in offering safe and individualised care to children.

Managers conduct thorough and transparently recorded monitoring of the home. Through reflective discussions and carefully planned approaches, the homes continue to develop and deliver services that have proven benefit to children. Children see the managers as central to their lives, and speak warmly of them and the efforts they make on their behalf. Because staff focus on individual need in a highly skilled and consistent way, the development of the homes continues when those living in the homes change.

When children experience barriers to success, the managers and staff's natural 'can-do' attitude, alongside their excellent analysis of the difficulty, helps them to overcome those barriers.

Staff benefit from regular and developmental supervision. They said that that this helps them to reflect on their performance, and ensures that they continually improve the quality of care they provide.

Staff maintain records of excellent quality that capture each child's progress and experiences. They share information appropriately with relevant professionals. This ensures that all parties understand the children's lives, experiences and plans for the future. The highly effective partnership working that the home promotes underpins the excellent progress that children are making.

Managers and Staff are extremely motivated and have high aspirations for children. Promoting positive outcomes is central to the work and ethos of the home

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: 2526920

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Limited

Registered provider address: Stoneybeck, Bowscar, Penrith CA11 8RP

Responsible individual: Simon Barton

Registered manager: Kathryn Seal

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, Social Care Inspection Manager

Jessica Higginson, Social Care Inspector

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