

2775980

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for up to six children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, in four buildings under a single registration. The home offers short-term intensive stays, typically lasting 17 weeks.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in December 2023.

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

Inspection date: 25 March 2025

Date of last inspection: 23 July 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Several children have had well-planned moves in or out of the home. Children's needs are prioritised, and their views are acted on. This has resulted in positive goodbyes for children, with some children remaining in contact with the team after they have moved on. Staff and children have a clear understanding of the plans for permanence.

Children are building positive relationships with staff. This helps them to feel secure and supports meaningful discussions about their experiences and risk-taking behaviours.

Staff have responded well to children's risk-taking behaviours. The team has sought the advice and involvement of the police where necessary. There are good working relationships with professionals around safeguarding. One child's risk assessment did not clearly identify the use of room searches to remove items that the child might use to self-harm. However, staff used room searches effectively to keep the child safe. The manager reviews incidents to identify areas of learning for staff.

Arrangements in place to support children to make meaningful progress in education is improved. Children are encouraged to share their aspirations for the future. There are detailed education planners in place, with activities which benefit children's physical and emotional well-being as well as developing their independence skills. The education lead has a good understanding of children's specific needs and tailors the approach to tutoring to them.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff have shown vigilance in considering potential symptoms for one child that led to emergency healthcare and a diagnosis. Staff have been trained by a specialist nurse to ensure that they understand the child's needs. Children benefit from regular sessions with staff from the specialist well-being team to support their emotional needs.

Staff work hard to support children to have healthy routines. They understand the triggers that can lead children to disengage and look for ways to encourage their involvement. Children take part in a range of activities which are tailored to suit their interests. This includes producing music, motorcross (off-riding racing), visiting horses, walks on the beach and arts and crafts.

One child's cultural needs are not being met. The child explained how the lack of specialist hair products is affecting the condition of their hair and skin. They did not feel that staff had supported them with making meals from their culture.

The manager has additional support in place, with two new assistant managers. This enables her to have more oversight of the service. The manager makes use of incident trackers as part of her oversight. However, there are shortfalls in the monitoring of patterns and trends to improve practice. The manager and responsible individual said a new system is being developed which should support this element of their work.

One assistant has taken the lead on ensuring staff training is prioritised. Bespoke training has been put in place to meet children's needs, including bereavement training and safer handling. Team meetings involve activities to develop staff knowledge and understanding in an interactive way.

Staff supervision takes place regularly. Supervisors use a detailed template which supports reflective discussion with staff. One session took place in a public venue. The manager states the child's name was not used, however, the discussion included confidential information about the child's care plan.

Staff feel well supported and there is good team morale. Staff take on champion roles to develop their strengths and they are encouraged to take up development opportunities.

The quality and accuracy of some meeting minutes on the system are poor and some minutes are hard to understand. The children's guide was tailored in preparation for one child moving into the home, however, this does not account for all children living in the homes. The previous recommendation for the guide to be reviewed is therefore restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/07/2024	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, The 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iv)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that care meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account the child's gender, ethnicity and cultural needs.	30 April 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should review and update the children's guide as necessary, and make sure children are given an explanation of any changes. Specifically, this relates to the length of time for which the provider will offer care and support to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.23)
- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled at considering patterns and trends to identify areas of learning and proactively

implement lessons learned and sustain good practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

- The registered person should ensure that where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their plans and assessments include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. This specifically relates to the use of room searches when there is a concern that a child may have items that could be used to harm themselves or others. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that there are good employment practices in place. They must ensure that supervision of staff takes place in a private place which safeguards children's confidential information and privacy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's records are clear and carefully written so they can be easily understood by others, including children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2775980

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Ltd

Registered provider address: Stoneybeck, Penrith CA11 8RP

Responsible individual: Adele Pemberton

Registered manager: Kirsty Walker

Inspectors

Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector

Anna Belshaw, Social Care Inspector

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