

2778387

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted as a multi-building children's home in January 2024 and provides care for up to six children in four separate houses.

There has been no registered manager since 18 June 2024. A new manager has been appointed. They have submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home.

Inspection date: 11 March 2025

Date of last inspection: 23 September 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.

A new management team has been in place for around three months. It has worked hard to address most of the requirements and recommendations raised in the last inspection. There is a positive atmosphere among the managers, which is reflected in the wider team.

Children are making progress with the objectives set out in their care plans. Improvements have been made to children's informal learning to support their formal education. Learning plans are produced for children on a four-weekly basis that set out a mix of creative and interactive activities. Staff produce detailed logs after an activity to capture the child's learning. This shows how children's learning contributes towards other areas of their progress, such as their independence and well-being.

Staff work hard to support children to address the barriers to improving their health. Staff provided information and reassurance to help alleviate one child's fears of the dentist, which meant they could access much-needed dental treatment.

A child recently moved into the home but was moved to another of the provider's homes following an incident on a nearby road. Referral information shared by the child's placing authority minimised the risk posed by the nearby roads. Staff reduced the risks to the child by following the clear strategies set out in the risk assessment.

Police provided support to keep the child safe, but the incident resulted in the child being arrested while they were in crisis. Staff did not challenge this to ensure that the child's mental health needs were prioritised. The child's move to the new home was supported by their care team.

When children have gone missing from the home, staff have followed protocols and shown persistence in their communication with the child and their family members to return the child safely to the home.

There is a clear rationale in place for the use of door sensors. These are reviewed and removed where there is no longer a need for them. Children understand why changes are made.

Children are actively engaged in sharing their views on the care they receive and on their plans. The manager seeks children's feedback following incidents through debriefs, and there are planned key-work sessions to support children. Staff share information with children to help them understand the progress they are making against their objectives. This helps children to feel proud of their achievements and involved in their future.

The environment that children live in is homely. Where children want to, they personalised areas of the home other than their bedrooms, which shows a sense of belonging. Leftover food was found on the floor of one child's room, which had not been identified and removed by staff.

Managers are working on ways to improve their oversight of the team. They identified that the tool used to monitor staff supervisions was not effective. Information is being transferred to a new tool, which is more user-friendly.

Staff supervision sessions use a detailed template that supports discussions with them about their well-being and achievements. Staff use this time to reflect on the children they care for, their role and their relationships. The responsible individual has plans to improve the guidance for senior staff completing supervision as the wording of the template limits opportunities for staff reflection.

The manager uses team meetings effectively to outline his direction for the home, to challenge staff practice and to complete group reflections.

Staff are well trained. Records show that staff have completed the provider's mandatory training, or sessions are booked in. The team also receives bespoke training from the provider's well-being practitioner and from external speakers to ensure that they can meet the specific needs of the children in their care.

Managers have made changes to staffing teams across the properties to ensure that there is a good mix of skills and experience. Managers recognise that changes can be difficult for staff and children to adjust to and will need time to become embedded.

To allow time for the management team's plans and improvements to become embedded, the requirement previously made for Regulation 13 will be restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/09/2024	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 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; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's risks are fully explored and assessed when considering the suitability of the home.	30 June 2025
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— 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;	30 June 2025

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child;

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;

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;

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(e)(f)(h))

The registered person must ensure they lead and manage the home consistently so that all children receive care in line with the home's statement of purpose.

The registered person must ensure that staff receive regular, reflective supervision and training that equips them to support children's understanding of risks and meet children's needs.

The registered person must ensure that they have oversight of all work being completed. They must ensure that incidents and work are evaluated to establish patterns and trends and identify areas of learning in order to make continuous improvements.

The registered person must ensure that evaluative monitoring systems are in place to inform practice in the home and the quality-of-care review.

This was a requirement at the last inspection and has been restated.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there are established routines in place to allow for children's bedrooms to be cleaned regularly. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's

needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 12, paragraph 2.8)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2778387

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Ltd

Registered provider address: Stoneybeck, Penrith CA11 8RP

Responsible individual: Hannah Winn

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector
Sarah Gilbert, Social Care Inspector

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