

SC474894

Registered provider: A Wilderness Way Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to three children of the same gender and who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2021.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 May 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	Good
17/12/2019	Full	Good
24/09/2018	Full	Good
15/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are two children currently living in the home. The inspector spoke to both children during this inspection.

Children make good progress from their starting points as a result of living at the home. They can identify trusted adults in the home and feel able to share their wishes and feelings with their key worker. This helps the children to form secure attachments with the adults around them.

Staff encourage children to take part in a range of activities that they enjoy. The staff have supported the children to help other people in their local community. For example, the staff and the children are currently taking part in a local charity event to help raise funds for children in need. These acts of kindness teach the children to treat others with humility and respect.

Staff understand the importance of children seeing their close family and friends. The staff support the children to keep in touch with those who are important to them. Staff proactively address any difficulties that arise in these relationships so that the children continue to have stable support networks around them. The children particularly enjoy the time that they spend with their family and friends in the community. This means that the children enjoy similar social experiences to their peers.

The children are supported to attend their routine health appointments and are registered with local healthcare practices. They enjoy a healthy diet and are encouraged to keep fit. Staff have access to the internal therapeutic team to support the children's emotional well-being. This ensures that the children are getting appropriate care to support their mental health.

The children's educational outcomes have improved. Both children had poor school attendance prior to coming to live at the home. The manager and the staff have worked closely with the children's placing local authorities and local education providers. This has been successful as one child has now re-engaged with school and is attending school full time. Another child is being introduced to home tuition.

Staff support the children's learning at home. They assist children with homework and encourage them to develop new skills, such as cooking and tidying. This supports children to develop their independence.

The home is surrounded by a big garden. Children have access to outdoor space. This promotes children's physical health and emotional well-being. Children are encouraged to share their ideas for development of the home. Recently, one of the children completed a garden design with the staff in their free time. This helps the children to develop a sense of belonging living at the home.

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

Staff and the manager put in place risk assessments and individualised therapeutic support plans to help to keep the children safe. The risk assessments are regularly reviewed so that the staff have the most up-to-date information to care for the children safely. As a result, children receive predictable, consistent responses during challenging times.

The children's missing-from-home episodes have reduced. When the children are absent from the home without permission, the staff and the manager follow the appropriate safeguarding protocols. Staff have key-work sessions with the children following a missing-from-home incident to check on their welfare. This reinforces to the children that the staff care about them.

Staff use praise and effective key-work sessions to foster positive relationships and behaviour. As a result, the use of sanctions and the need for the children to be held have been minimal.

Daily records are written in a child-friendly way to help the children to understand their daily routines. This supports the children to make sense of their time in the home when they review their records.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have successfully reassured the children of their safety by following government guidance on safe practice to minimise the spread of COVID-19.

The manager informs the relevant agencies of significant incidents that involve the children. However, he has not notified Ofsted of a recent incident, which involves an allegation. This oversight has prevented Ofsted from scrutinising how allegations are investigated. In addition, this prevents Ofsted from being assured that the manager and staff have taken effective action to safeguard the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has not yet developed a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Ineffective monitoring and oversight mean that the registered manager does not always identify and act on shortfalls to improve the children's progress and experience. This restricts the capacity of the home to improve.

Suitable actions have been taken to address the recommendations from the previous inspection. As a result, a new independent visitor was appointed and the quality of the monthly independent visitor report has improved. However, the inspector found that there was no visit carried out by the independent visitor to the home for a period of a month during the change of independent visitor. This means that there

was no external scrutiny. The lack of external monitoring prevents Ofsted from being assured that the children were being safeguarded during that time.

Children's records are incomplete. A review of the children's documents identified that important documents, including minutes from looked after reviews, education meeting minutes and the outcome of the child's annual health assessment, were missing from their files. This means that children do not have access to their own records and cannot fully take part in the personalisation of the care that they receive. In addition, the manager cannot be assured that he, and the staff, are providing care in line with the children's most up-to-date care plans.

The statement of purpose is out of date and does not reflect changes in management. This means that the children and key stakeholders have not been offered the most up-to-date information about the home.

The manager and his staff are committed to achieving positive outcomes for the children. However, the manager has failed to seek consent from the children's parents and placing local authorities to restrict the children's access in their home. This has not negatively affected the care that children receive, but it could lead to inconsistent practice regarding the use of restrictive measures.

Staff are up to date with the training that is required by the provider. Staff benefit from regular informal and formal supervision. A reflective approach is used, which offers the staff the space to discuss the needs of the children and their own well-being. Staff speak highly of the support from their manager and feel part of a team.

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 registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	1 June 2022
The registered person must ensure that— any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is kept under review and, if necessary, revised. (Regulation 21 (c)(iii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the appropriate consent is obtained from each child, parent and/or placing local authority to restrict the child's access in their home.	1 June 2022
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that looked after review documents, personal education meeting documents and looked after health assessments are obtained and kept up to date.	1 June 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	1 June 2022

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI; upon request, the local authority for the area in which the home is located; the placing authorities of children; the registered provider and, if applicable, the registered manager; and the responsible individual (if one is nominated). (Regulation 44 (1) (7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) This specifically relates to ensuring that independent person visits occur on a monthly basis and that reports reach the provider and Ofsted within the required time frame.	1 June 2022

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: SC474894

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: Ricky Crafer

Inspector

Cherie Chen, Social Care Inspector

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