

1244946

Registered provider: Wigan Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority, two-bedded home. The aim of the home is to provide care and accommodation while young people are assessed and future permanency is explored.

The registered manager has been in post since October 2018.

Inspection dates: 28 January 2020

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 12 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
29/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/02/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/07/2017	Interim	Not judged

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(b))</p>	27/03/2020
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b)(c))</p>	27/03/2020
<p>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; and</p> <p>are kept up to date, and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	27/03/2020
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p>	27/03/2020

When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—
if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and
to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.

A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.

The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—
children are effectively safeguarded; and
the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions.

The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to—
HMCI. (Regulation 44(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5)(7))

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently two young people living at the home. The young people have made positive progress from their starting points. The manager and staff have a good understanding of the needs of the young people and do their best to ensure that outcomes are improved for them. Young people are happy and settled. One young person said, 'The staff are very supportive, they gave me lots of reassurance when I was upset recently, which made me feel much better.'

The registered manager and staff strongly support the young people to achieve in education. Good routines and structure to the young people's day promote opportunities for them to reach their full educational potential, and this improves their future life chances. The registered manager and staff liaise effectively with education professionals to make sure that the young people's educational needs are met well and all relevant information is shared. As a result, plans are in place for one young person to move to an alternative education provision that is more suited to his needs.

The home takes a multi-agency approach to providing stability and support for young people. Young people and staff benefit from professional intervention and support from a range of professionals, including a speech and language therapist, and practitioners from

child and adolescent mental health services. Weekly case management discussions take place to monitor each young person's needs and progress, and to plan for their future. Therefore, staff are able to provide young people with a good quality of care that meets their needs well.

The registered manager and staff support young people to maintain contact with the people who are important to them. They enjoy regular contact with family members and when necessary staff supervise contact to ensure that it is safe. The staff have developed positive relationships with parents, which has resulted in improved relationships between a young person and his family. As a result, the young person's family contact has increased in frequency and is more enjoyable for the young person and his family.

The relationships between staff and young people are trusting and nurturing. Staff spend time with the young people and they enjoy many activities together, such as cooking, go-karting and football. Young people are encouraged to attend community activities, for example one young person is a member of a local dodgeball team. The young person and staff are currently raising money for the dodgeball team to attend an event in Cairo. The regular conversations and key-working sessions that take place between staff and young people are targeted at the individual needs of the young people.

The home was in the process of being refurbished and decorated during the inspection, to improve the environment. There will be an additional room downstairs for young people to relax in, and the kitchen is being extended. There is now an additional toilet and shower room upstairs, which provides the young people with more privacy. The young people have been fully involved in choosing the decoration for their bedrooms and other parts of the home. There are photographs of the young people, their families and staff around the home. This demonstrates that children and young people feel valued, listened to and have a sense of belonging.

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

Staff understand young people's risks and behaviours well and young people are safeguarded effectively. Staff benefit from regular training and development opportunities to enhance their safeguarding knowledge and skills.

Staff spoken to during the inspection had a good understanding of the individual risks for young people, and the strategies required to manage and reduce risk. However, the risk assessment for one young person does not include sufficient information about all known risks, such as fire-setting, allegations and self-harm. Furthermore, the risk assessment does not include the strategies used to manage the risks. Although this has not impacted on the safety and well-being of the young person, it has the potential to do so.

An incident occurred when a young person placed himself and others at risk by fire-setting. The incident was poorly managed by staff. Staff did not take immediate action to manage the young person's risk-taking behaviour effectively, which placed the young

person and others at risk. However, the manager and staff have reflected on this incident and have a clearer understanding of how to manage future safeguarding incidents more effectively. Furthermore, direct work has been undertaken with the young person to raise his awareness of the risks related to fire-setting. Consequently, no further fire-setting incidents have occurred.

The registered manager and staff have established consistent boundaries in the home, and they have successfully supported young people to understand behavioural expectations. Furthermore, they help young people to respond to difficult emotions and situations in a safer way. As well as being good role models, staff utilise behaviour management strategies effectively, such as de-escalation and rewarding positive behaviour. This approach means that young people are settled, and they are able to regulate their behaviour and emotions more effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake her role. The manager demonstrates genuine commitment and high aspirations for the young people in her care. The manager has a very good understanding of the young people's needs and is fully involved in their care. The manager is well supported by a highly committed and competent team of staff, who share her motivation to achieve the best possible outcomes for the young people.

Staff feel supported by the manager and they benefit from regular team meetings that allow them to discuss and share good practice and information, in order to enhance their knowledge and skills. Although the staff are able to reflect on practice and the needs of the young people during team meetings, this is not evident in individual supervision records. Furthermore, not all staff have received regular professional supervision in line with the supervision policy.

The manager and staff value the importance of regular training and development opportunities to enhance their practice and the quality of care that they provide for young people. All staff have completed mandatory training and further specific training on issues that affect the current young people, such as autism spectrum disorder. This helps staff to meet the individual needs of the young people in their care. All staff have a relevant qualification for their role or are enrolled on a course to complete their qualification.

The home's monitoring and review systems help the manager to identify the strengths and areas for development of the home and the staff team. The manager takes effective action to address shortfalls and build strengths in order to improve practice and outcomes for young people. There is a clear development plan for the home that is regularly reviewed to ensure the continued development of the service. However, the reports from the monthly independent monitoring are not always sent to Ofsted in line with regulation.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with professionals and family members who are involved in each young person's care, so as to support positive outcomes for the young person. Feedback from professionals and family members was positive. They praised the management and staff's commitment to the young people and the progress that young people make.

Some records for young people lack sufficient information relating to their current situation, needs and progress. For example, placement plans do not include sufficient information relating to their educational needs and progress. Furthermore, the legal status recorded for one young person is incorrect. However, the manager has identified recording as a particular area for improvement for the staff team.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1244946

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Wigan Council, Town Hall, Library Street, Wigan WN1 1YN

Responsible individual: Susan Myers

Registered manager: Victoria Hanlon

Inspector

Lisa Mulcahy, social care inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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