

1244946

Registered provider: Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties or have mental health disorders.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 29 July 2024.

Inspection dates: 18 to 20 March 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/03/2024	Full	Good
29/11/2022	Full	Good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
16/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home has been closed for a significant period due to renovations. Since the last inspection, a new manager and staff team have been appointed.

One child has moved into the home since it reopened. The child had a planned move into the home. He met with staff before moving into the home to start building relationships. Managers carried out a robust assessment of the child's needs. The manager arranged for staff to receive additional training in line with the child's identified needs before the child moved into the home.

The home environment is homely, and the child's bedroom is comfortable and personalised. There are photos of the child on display in the lounge. There is a sensory room and a room that has been named the 'fun room' by the child and staff, which has a range of toys and games. The child's achievements are celebrated in the home, and his experiences are captured with photos, which is helping him build on his life story.

There are a range of activities on offer in the home. The child has recently been to North Wales and a local trampoline centre, and he enjoys visiting local parks. He plays football twice a week and trains, and he recently enjoyed a day trip with friends, which was organised by the football team. The child is having enjoyable life experiences, and staff support him in building positive friendships.

Staff provide the child with support through various good-quality direct work sessions. Staff have supported the child's understanding of how to better manage his emotions and how to keep himself safe when using his device. The manager and staff fully involve the child in day-to-day decisions and act on his wishes and views. The child helped to decide on a new name for the home.

The child has excellent attendance at school and is making good progress. Staff are ambitious for the child to do well. They have built up good links with the school staff. Feedback from education professionals is positive. The deputy headteacher provided feedback and wrote that the staff are always on the end of the phone and have attended all meetings.

The manager and staff ensure that the child has access to universal healthcare services. Consequently, the child's overall health and well-being are good, and his needs are fully met. The manager and staff work with mental health professionals to ensure that the child's emotional needs are met. The professional currently working with the child attends the staff handovers once a week to share information and ensure that there is effective communication. The staff use trauma-informed practice and therapeutic models of care to support the child's needs. This is helping to build nurturing, safe and trusting relationships with the child.

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

Risk management plans include all known risks and detail strategies for staff to follow. Following incidents, the plans are updated. Strategies for keeping the child safe are amended when required. Staff know and understand the child's risks and are knowledgeable about what actions to take to safeguard them.

Good-quality support plans are in place to help staff understand the potential causes of the child's behaviours. Staff give the child time to discuss things that have upset and angered him. When he finds it difficult to voice his thoughts and feelings, the child has access to a magnetic board to write them down provided by the staff. This helps the child to manage his feelings and emotions. This has led to a decrease in incidents for the child.

The home does not use consequences. The manager and staff work with the child in a restorative manner to ensure that he understands when behaviour is inappropriate. They work therapeutically and support the child in repairing situations and relationships. For example, when the child acted in a way that was unkind to another child during a football session, staff helped him to write letters of apology. This helped the child to learn how to resolve a negative situation and conflict effectively.

Physical restraint is only used as a last resort to ensure the child's safety, and it is proportionate. All incidents include the manager's oversight and evaluation, and appropriate debriefs are carried out.

Recruitment checks are robust. All new staff are appropriately vetted in accordance with safer recruitment guidelines before they start working in the home. This promotes safe working practices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably qualified registered manager in the home. She is child centred and has excellent relationships with the child. An experienced deputy supports the manager, sharing the same ethos to provide quality, therapeutic care to the child.

The staff work well together as a team and speak about a supportive and approachable manager. One staff member described managers as 'highly dedicated' and 'passionate about the home'. They said that the managers are approachable, supportive, and always available for the team.

There have been some changes in the staff team since the home reopened. However, there has been a consistent team in place. This helps the child to benefit from continuity of care.

Skilled staff were observed providing warm and caring support to the child, and the team delivers high-quality individualised care. They demonstrate a passion for the work they do and have shown resilience when managing challenging situations. The manager

recognises that the home would benefit from a better gender balance and has recently identified additional male staff to work with the team. The child had also specifically requested this change. This will help to ensure that the child has day-to-day contact with staff of different genders and builds his experiences of positive male role models.

Daily handovers and regular team meetings take place. This helps to provide staff with regular opportunities to discuss the child's plans and ensures that there are effective communication systems in place. Supervision is regular and of good quality. This enables staff to reflect continuously on their practice and professional development.

All staff have received appropriate training, as well as specific training in line with the child's needs. The staff team has been trained in trauma-informed care and therapeutic approaches. Staff are undertaking additional in-depth therapeutic training to enhance their skills in this area. The manager also ensures that her skills and knowledge continue to develop. She has recently received training in life-story work.

The manager has effective oversight of the home. All incidents are reviewed, and manager evaluation is included. The manager carries out a monthly critical analysis of incidents to identify patterns and trends in the child's behaviour. The manager uses this information to adapt the child's plans where appropriate to further improve the quality of care.

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: 1244946

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

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

Responsible individual: Steven Swinhoe

Registered manager: Katherine Hughes

Inspector

Suzanne Birchall, Social Care Inspector

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