

SC040926

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 children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who are unable to live in their family home.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 24 April 2009.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 January 2019

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: 4 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2017	Full	Good
07/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/08/2016	Full	Outstanding
16/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (7)(a))	29/03/2019

Recommendations

- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is currently one young person living at the home. The inspector met the young person during this inspection. The young person was observed to have positive relationships with the staff. Staff and the young person enjoyed each other's company and had good rapport. The young person is proud of her home. She described it as 'homely' and said that she has a 'good' relationship with staff.

The home is a friendly, homely environment. The young person has helped to personalise the home. She enjoys craft activities and her work is displayed throughout the home. Staff are proud of her achievements and have given lots of praise and encouragement. This has increased the young person's self-confidence and self-esteem.

Staff know the young person well. They understand how past experiences can have a negative impact on the young person's behaviour. Staff ensure that the young person has support from other agencies, such as health professionals and community and mental health services. A health professional said, 'We have had a really good session

today. [Name] is making good food choices. Everyone around her is supporting her.'

The young person was admitted temporarily to another placement from this home because she needed a higher level of security. Staff maintained regular contact with the young person throughout her stay and supported her to return to this placement. Staff value the young person's education and are committed to supporting and encouraging her to achieve her educational goals.

The young person takes good care of her pet hamster. She ensures that his cage is clean and warm and handles him with care. She has a good knowledge of the care he requires. This teaches the young person compassion, understanding and about being responsible for the needs of others.

Staff consult the young person on her care and this is reflected in her care plan. Staff encourage and support the young person to learn independence skills. She enjoys cooking for herself and for the staff. These skills will help her in her adult life. The young person prepared brunch during the inspection and invited the inspector and staff to join her. She did this with confidence and staff rewarded her with praise. This approach increases the young person's self-confidence and self-worth.

Staff support the young person to have contact with her siblings. Staff ensure that contact is meaningful and fun. They follow the young person's care plan and ensure that contact is safe. These sessions support the young person's culture and identity. The young person enjoys cooking a meal for her siblings to share together. She values this time with her family, saying, 'I enjoy seeing them all [siblings]. I see them a lot.'

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

Staff give the young person's safety high priority. She is supported at the home by a high level of staff supervision. The young person is respectful and polite to others and knows what is expected of her in the community. This has resulted in a reduction in the level of staff supervision outside the home.

There have been a few occasions when the young person has not returned home at the agreed time. Staff identified the reason for this, and helped the young person to understand the dangers of her actions. Records show that staff followed procedures and risk management plans. Staff searched the area for her and reported her missing to the police. They sought advice and support from the child sexual exploitation team. This was successful, and since then the young person has returned to the home at the agreed time.

Independent interviews are not always offered to the young person when she has been missing from the home. This is a missed opportunity for the young person to talk to someone independent from the home and to share any worries or concerns about the time she was away from the home.

Staff support the young person to recognise her actions and responsibilities. Staff use reparation to help the young person understand the consequences of negative behaviour. The young person has devised a plan to pay for items that were damaged during an incident in the home. This shows that she is considering the impact of her actions on others and how best to resolve them.

Routine and boundaries provide stability and security. Staff know that visitors to the

home can cause heightened anxiety for the young person. Staff ensure that most visits to the home are planned, so that they can prepare the young person. When this is not possible, staff distract the young person in an activity that she enjoys. These techniques are successful and physical intervention has not been necessary.

Risk management plans consider the young person's known and emerging behaviours. Staff know what causes the young person's behaviour to escalate. Staff use humour and distraction to decrease the young person's rising anxiety and frustration. This strategy helps to diffuse a potential incident, keeping the young person and staff safe. A member of staff said, 'I use a lot of comedy with [name] and it usually this works.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was registered in April 2009. She is a strong, well-qualified leader and is enthusiastic and motivated. The manager is supported by an experienced deputy manager, and together they are committed to providing high-quality care and good outcomes for the young person.

Managers and staff are confident. They have an excellent understanding of the young person's complex needs. They provide support that will assist the young person to make a positive transition to adulthood.

Managers recognise that the monthly report from the independent visitor is not particularly helpful. The reports are brief. They lack evaluation and don't tell the reader how staff support the young person to make progress. Ofsted has not received the independent visitor's report since the young person moved back to the home. This means that the inspector is unable to monitor and review the care provided to the young person.

Managers ensure that staff are consistent in their approaches and responses. The deputy manager has devised a list of simple responses to use with the young person. This means that the she will receive the same message from all the staff. This is designed to reduce challenging and aggressive behaviour towards staff. This strategy will be reviewed by managers. A health professional said of the managers and staff, 'Staff are very creative with [name].'

Staff are positive about working in the home. They have high aspirations for the young person. They value good-quality supervision and appraisal. Staff meetings are regular. Managers invite other professionals working with the young person to these meetings. Staff said that they like working in the home and that they feel well supported by managers. A member of staff described the manager as 'brilliant' and said she gives them time to 'recharge their batteries'.

Professionals are complimentary about the work that staff do. Multi-agency strategy meetings are held weekly. This holistic approach provides the young person with the support she needs to develop and make progress in her physical and emotional health. A youth worker said, 'Staff are doing everything they can to support [name]. They really can't do any more.'

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: SC040926

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Adele Ion

Registered manager: Victoria Hanlon

Inspector

Jo Hornby, social care inspector

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