

SC040926

Wigan Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home offers short breaks for up to five children who are experiencing crisis.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 24 April 2009.

Inspection date: 11 March 2021

This monitoring visit

The home was judged as inadequate at its last full inspection on 17 September 2019. Ofsted issued three compliance notices in relation to the quality and purpose of care, the protection of children, and leadership and management. Inspectors carried out further visits to the home on 4 November 2019 and 19 December 2019 and found that the registered person had taken the required action to meet these shortfalls.

This visit took place because Ofsted's point-in-time surveys indicated serious concerns about the leadership and management of the home. Furthermore, the purpose and function of the home had changed in January 2021. The visit was carried out using a combination of on-site and off-site activity.

The home is operating in line with its statement of purpose and conditions of registration. The manager has a wealth of experience and provides clear and effective leadership. The manager and staff are responding to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic appropriately to manage the risk of infection.

Children come to stay in a safe and welcoming home. A child said that they enjoyed being at the home and that the staff are friendly and helpful.

Staff are skilled at helping children to feel at ease. As a result, children feel able to talk to staff about their feelings, worries and aspirations. Staff are curious to understand what is going on for children and help them to find healthier ways to manage their emotions.

Staff have strong relationships with other professionals, including mental health practitioners and speech and language therapists. They work together to assess children's needs and plan their care and support effectively.

Children are achieving positive outcomes. This has included children moving to live with new foster carers successfully; children no longer misusing substances; children rebuilding relationships with their parents and returning to live with them.

Staff know how to manage risk and keep children safe. They recognise the signs of abuse, exploitation and harmful relationships. They take effective action to protect children from harm, including when children go missing from the home.

Experienced and qualified staff respond flexibly to any unexpected situations, including when children come to stay at the home in an emergency, or supporting children when they are in hospital.

The manager provides staff with the right support, advice and guidance. Staff receive regular practice-related supervision, which enables them to reflect on their practice, children's progress and identify learning needs.

However, one of the children's risk assessment and plan does not set out precisely what staff need to do to support the child. For instance, the plan asks staff to speak to the child using language that he understands, without giving examples of how to speak to the child and which words to use.

The independent person who carries out the external monitoring of the home does not routinely seek the views of children, their parents, relatives, carers, staff and the professionals involved in their care. This is limiting the independent person's ability to understand children's experiences and the home's effectiveness in keeping them safe.

Shortfalls found at the last inspection in relation to education, health and the use of restraint have not been the focus of this visit. These issues will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/09/2019	Full	Inadequate
08/01/2019	Full	Good
04/10/2017	Full	Good
07/03/2017	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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii))	31 March 2021
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met;	31 March 2021

children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment, and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(c))	
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home. Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2))	31 March 2021
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)) This relates to the independent person getting the views of children, staff and other people involved in children's care to understand children's experiences staying at the home and the effectiveness of the arrangements for protecting children from harm.	31 March 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's risk assessments and management plans provide details of the specific steps that staff should take to manage any assessed risks and help children to manage their emotions on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality standards' page 42, paragraph 9.6)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC040926

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wigan Council

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

Responsible individual: Shirley Parkinson

Registered manager: Victoria Hanlon

Inspector

Nick Veysey, Social Care Inspector

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