

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC040926
Inspector	Michelle Edge
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	People Directorate: Children, Adults and Families, Town Hall Library Street WIGAN Lancashire WN1 1YN
Responsible individual	Jayne Ivory
Registered manager	Victoria Maria Hanlon
Date of last inspection	12/12/2014

Inspection date	23/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of young people since the last inspection. There are good outcomes for some young people who are accessing the service and the outreach element is developing well. This is having a positive impact on achieving the stated aims of supporting young people who are on the edge of care to maintain constructive relationships with their families and other important people in their lives. However, aspects of safeguarding practice and procedures potentially impact on the welfare and safety of young people. The Statement of Purpose has not been adhered to as young people who are already looked after are living at the home and accessing a service designed for children on the edge of care. Important planning documentation including a placement plan; care plan; education plan and health plan have not been compiled in respect of one young person and there are no risk assessments in place to identify any areas of concern. Therefore, staff do not have sufficient information and knowledge of his needs and how he can be best supported to achieve positive outcomes.

There is a clear lack of effective monitoring of physical restraints and incident reports. Relevant paperwork has not always been completed and some records lack an accurate, factual reflection of the event. For example, in one young person's book it said 'incident happened last night.' No further information was provided. Consequently, limited recording and explanation does not assist in the analysis or evaluation of the interventions. Similarly, the lack of monitoring of the robustness of records impacts on the assessment as to whether staff practices and behaviour management strategies adequately safeguard young people and help improve the quality of care.

Whilst safeguarding procedures are in place they have not always been adhered to. When young people have been missing from home, no follow up meetings have

been held, to ensure all people involved in their lives work together to promote their safety and welfare. Although records do provide information on missing episodes, risk assessments have not been updated to accurately reflect any changes in circumstance.

Careful consideration is given to children and young people's short stays at the home. This ensures the group is compatible so friendships are promoted and their individual needs can be met. The home offers support to over fifteen young people with varying needs and they are benefiting from their stays. One young person said 'I like coming it's all about me and I get a chance to be listened to and try new things'. Introductions for new young people to the service are carefully planned with them and their families, to ensure they feel confident and comfortable. They are all offered appropriate reassurance to ease any anxieties and are encouraged to ask any questions. Both young people and their families can visit the service beforehand to meet the staff, look around the building and gain a clear understanding of the ethos of the home. One Grandparent said 'I was a bit worried about letting her come, but now she looks forward to her stays'.

A key strength of the home is the outreach work completed with young people and their families in their own environments. Staff have worked directly with parents to talk about boundaries and routines for young people and why these need to be established. The staff have also been able to access additional support for families and provided them with transport to get to different appointments. For example, one family was supported in visiting the housing department to address issues of overcrowding and look at suitable alternative accommodation. Another family was encouraged to attend appointments with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) to access family therapy. This provided an opportunity for the young person to talk directly with her family and to work productively to resolve any issues or concerns. This supports young people with their emotional wellbeing and self-esteem.

Some staff have opportunities to regularly reflect on their practice, performance and development, although supervision is not consistent across the team. Staff have developed their knowledge and skills from a comprehensive training plan, including training on safeguarding, medication and working with families. Staff feel better equipped to carry out their role, and are developing ideas about how to apply what they have learnt in their practice. For example one staff member said 'I attended domestic violence training and it made me really think about how young people can be affected, good to be mindful of this in my practice'. Team meetings are held on a regular basis and provide a time for reflective practice and development. The staff team said that they feel supported by the management team and said 'there is an open door policy, to discuss any issues as they arise.'

The external and internal monitoring systems in place are not sufficiently robust as neither system identified the issues raised during this inspection. The Registered Manager understands the strengths and areas of improvement for the home, but

has yet to fully develop a clearer monitoring system of the records so they can measure the impact the service is having. Once embedded this will ensure that any themes or practice issues are identified and managed appropriately. This will support young people to maintain important relationships and help ensure their welfare is safeguarded.

Information about this children's home

This home provides short term respite care for up to five young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is run by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/12/2014	Full	good
06/03/2014	Interim	good progress
03/05/2013	Full	good
08/02/2013	Interim	good progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to make proper provision for the care, education, supervision, support and, where appropriate, treatment, of children accommodated there (Regulation 11 (1) (b))	31/03/2015
16 (2001)	ensure where the registered person considers that a child who is accommodated in the home is, or has been, persistently absent without permission; or is at risk of harm they ask the local authority that looks after that child to review that child's care plan (Regulation 16(6)(a)&(b))	31/03/2015
4 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall compile in relation to the children's home a written statement (in these regulations referred to as 'statement of purpose') which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in schedule1. This specifically	31/03/2015

	relates to a young person with Looked After Status residing in a short breaks service. (Regulation (4) (1))	
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use any measure of control or discipline within the children's home a record is made in a volume kept for the purpose. Specifically include the time the measure was implemented, the name of the actual person using the measure and the effectiveness of the measure. (Regulation 17B (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))	31/03/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the care and support provided to young people minimises the risk that they will go missing, in particular that individual risk assessments clearly identify the risks and interventions used to reduce potential risks(NMS 5.1)
- ensure information about a child is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the child when they access their files now or in the future. (NMS 22.5)
- enhance further the managers monitoring of the home to ensure all any concerns about specific incidents, patterns or trends are recorded and any action taken to address any issues raised by the monitoring in particular risk assessments including missing from care are sufficiently detailed and dates are accurately recorded. (NMS 21.2)
- ensure staff are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff (NMS 19.4)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.