

SC040926

Registered provider: Wigan Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It provides care for up to three children on a short break or emergency care arrangement.

There was one child staying in the home at the time of the inspection. Two children who had previously stayed in the home spoke to the inspectors about their experiences there.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 24 April 2009.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 24 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/02/2025	Full	Outstanding
27/02/2024	Full	Outstanding
21/03/2023	Full	Good
15/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children come to the home in times of crisis, they are welcomed and nurtured by a creative and committed staff team. Staff work hard to support children through their journey from crisis to a place of stability with an exceptional level of care. One child said, 'The staff were brilliant comforting nurturing, staff made sure I had what I needed.'

Children are shown unconditional acceptance and warmth by dedicated staff who continuously demonstrate going above and beyond in their practice. Children are provided with consistent care and therapeutic responses which are embedded into staff practice.

Professional feedback is extremely positive demonstrating strong multi-agency working. A head teacher said, 'The way staff spoke about the child was beautiful; you could see the care the staff had. The way they were with them moved me to tears.'

Children have fun when they stay in the home, playing and being outside is a big part of their experience. A staff member has built a new pagoda which has enhanced the garden space. The garden is well used as an extension of the home, widening children's experiences.

Children's time in the home is creatively recorded with the child at the heart of practice. New experiences and milestones are recorded as 'adventures'. Consideration and care have been taken to ensure that children looking back on their records will see they were cherished by staff.

The quality of relationships between the staff and children is excellent. These meaningful relationships are maintained after children move on, showing incredible consistency and commitment from staff. The continuation of these relationships has helped children to have stability and security after periods of upheaval and uncertainty.

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

Managers maintain a consistent multiagency approach to safeguarding. They have a strong presence in a network of professionals. This supports information sharing, ensuring that children are kept safe and positive transitions are enabled. One social worker said, 'I wish all my children could come to [name of home] because of the experiences that they have, how they are helped to settle and move on.'

Staff demonstrate exceptional de-escalation skills. Even when they have only known a child for a short time, staff are able to help them to soothe when they are upset. This helps children to settle and to feel safe and secure.

The recording of information by staff on the children's file is exceptional. There is a consistent child-focused and trauma-informed approach with a conscious effort to

understand how the child's previous experiences have impacted on their behaviour. The records are written for children to read now and in the future. When staff are injured, the focus remains on the child and their needs, and the reason behind the behaviour.

Staff have a consistently research-informed approach which helps them to attune to children's needs. Staff demonstrate excellent skills in helping children talk about their feelings and work creatively with children helping to identify triggers and reduce negative behaviours.

Children trust the staff caring for them to keep them safe. Children feel comfortable in sharing information. Staff follow disclosure processes to ensure that multi-agency action is taken and children are safe.

Staff say that they enjoy working in the home. They are enthusiastic about the care they provide and the progress children make. One member of staff said, 'This team of people are amongst the most empathetic, genuine, and compassionate people I have had the privilege of knowing, let alone working alongside.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is held in high regard by the team as well as other professionals. Together with the two deputy managers, they lead a team that thrive in a culture of continuous improvement. Children are cared for by staff who are ambitious in achieving outstanding outcomes for them.

Staff go above and beyond to make children feel comfortable and welcome. Staff all came together and worked additional hours over Christmas to ensure that children who needed to stay over, even at very short notice, experienced the magic of Christmas. Links previously formed with the team doing ongoing charity work and good relationships with the neighbours also helped to make this a positive experience.

Managers use sophisticated monitoring systems that include the perspectives of external professionals. This enables them to identify areas of development both for individual staff and as a service. Staff are provided with insightful and constructive feedback that promotes excellent practice.

Staff have completed specific training with a speech and language therapist, helping them to reflect and moderate their responses to children when they first arrive, thinking about welcoming children at the child's pace. Staff have also completed training to give them the skills to care for younger children.

Leaders and managers drive innovation from staff by encouraging new ideas and ways to improve practice with each member of the team. Staff are empowered to make informed decisions about the care of children without delay.

Leaders and managers provide staff with regular reflective supervision sessions. Staff identify their own areas of development and managers respond supportively and proactively. Children stay in a home that is solution-focused and filled with positivity.

Staff are supported by a clinical psychologist who provides space for staff to reflect on their own wellbeing. Staff are also provided with learning reviews and therapeutic reflection following difficult incidents or emotional transitions. This ensures that staff wellbeing is maintained so that they can continue to provide outstanding care to children.

The high levels of support provided to staff ensures that there is a dependable staff team in place. This provides children with the consistency of staff and the opportunity to build and maintain relationships.

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: SC040926

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Steven Swinhoe

Registered manager: Victoria Hanlon

Inspectors

Sarah Gilbert, Social Care Inspector
Rebecca Robson, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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