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HOWDEN

Case study: How AllChild is building a national movement from local partnerships

By AllChild 21/01/2026

In Wigan – AllChild's first partnership beyond London – the charity is exploring how a simple promise can become a daily norm: helping every child and young person thrive in their school and community. Wigan is where we are helping that vision comes to life in everyday practice.

Partnerships in action

AllChild partners with local organisations and charities to expand opportunities and support for children and young people.

We recognise the wealth of excellent programmes and services available in these communities. Unfortunately, children at risk don't always receive the right support at the right time.

That's where our Link Workers and delivery partners come in - working collaboratively to help children form positive trusted relationships, maintain good mental wellbeing, build confidence and aspirations, and thrive in school.

Each child we support has a tailored plan, coordinated by their AllChild Link Worker and shaped by input from their school and parents.

Here is what some of our local delivery partners in Wigan say:

Everyday Wigan brings creativity into schools, helping children express themselves, rebuild confidence, and re-engage with learning.

"Everyday absolutely loves our work with AllChild," said CEO Hannah Robinson-Smith. "We facilitate creative health and wellbeing workshops and use cultural education to improve confidence, resilience, and self-esteem. We're proud to be part of such an incredible collaborative community, supporting every young person to achieve their best."

Leigh Leopards Foundation uses sport to build resilience, offering skills sessions and match-day experiences that reward progress and belonging.

"This partnership is about more than sport," said Martyn Leach, Community Development Manager. "It's about helping young people feel seen, valued, and capable. I've had the pleasure of working with many of the children involved, and seeing their confidence grow each week is genuinely inspiring."

Media Cubs equips children to tell their own stories through video and journalism. "We believe in the power of collaboration to strengthen young people's voices," said Kirsty Day, Media Cubs Lead. "Working with AllChild has brought our values of confidence and creativity to life. Together, we're ensuring young people's voices don't just get heard, they influence their futures."

These local partnerships are central to our aim of building the capacity and capabilities of the voluntary sector. A common thread runs through our work: trusted adults offering time, space, and meaningful opportunities-and services working together, not passing families from one doorway to the next.

"One of the many benefits of the AllChild programme is the engagement of community-based organisations as delivery partners," said Colette Dutton, Wigan Council's Director of Children's Services. "It's wonderful to see how these local collaborations are having such a positive impact on young people's lives."

Why Wigan, why now

Across the country, demand on children's services is rising while budgets are squeezed. Families experience siloed instead of joined-up support, which means that services struggle to build relationships with families and to help them address their multiple challenges.

AllChild's purpose is to work locally at the heart of communities-so every child and young person can access the right support and opportunities, in the right way, at the right time.

"Wigan is proud to be the first Local Authority outside London to offer the AllChild programme," added Colette. "Families have welcomed the support, and we particularly value the trusted relationships children build with Link Workers over two years to improve attendance, attainment, and inclusion."

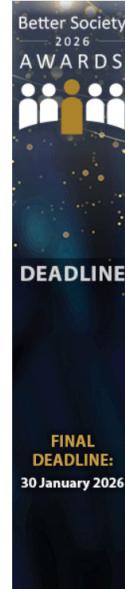
The programme is supported by a combination of philanthropic funding and investment from the Local Authority and schools using an outcomes-based model that enables delivery to be tailored to every young person.



Charity Times editor, Lauren Weymouth, is joined by Dementia UK CEO, Hilda Hayo to discuss why the charity receives such high workplace satisfaction results, what a positive working culture looks like and the importance of lived experience among staff. The pair talk about challenges facing the charity, the impact felt by the pandemic and how it's striving to overcome obstacles and continue to be a highly impactful organisation for anybody affected by dementia.



The cost-of-living crisis is impacting charities in a number of ways, including the risks they take. Endsleigh Insurance's* senior risk management consultant Scott Crichton joins Charity Times to discuss the ramifications of prioritising certain types of risk over others, the financial implications risk can have if not managed properly, and tips for charities to help



A strong first year in Wigan

We're proud of a highly successful first year of delivery in Wigan, where our experienced Link Workers supported 250 children, young people, and their families across seven schools in Leigh.

Building on this momentum, six new schools have joined the programme for the 2025/26 academic year. This expansion brings the total number of children and young people currently supported by AllChild across Leigh, Atherton, and Tyldesley to 480.

Our impact so far:

94.4% of children met our engagement milestone
Each child received an average of 45 hours of tailored support
95% of parents feel confident communicating with their child's Link Worker.

National significance

Wigan's success has the potential to shape national policy. In July, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Lisa Nandy MP, and Makerfield MP Josh Simons visited Westleigh Methodist Primary School to see the approach in action. They joined sessions with children and Link Workers and heard directly from families about the impact.

The visit also marked the launch of the £500m Better Futures Fund-a national outcomes-based fund inspired by models like this.

AllChild's locally led, evidence-driven approach is gaining recognition as a blueprint for change: rooted in communities, mobilising change, and shaping futures.

Looking ahead

Wigan enters year two with a new cohort and continued support for those already engaged. We'll deepen what works - creativity, sport, peer voice, and early identification - while building on and strengthening our local partnership network.

"It's been a promising start in Leigh & Atherton," reflects AllChild CEO Louisa Mitchell MBE. "Thanks to our brilliant and dedicated partners, our fantastic AllChild Regional Director Jenny Muter, and the AllChild team, we're excited to welcome new children, families, schools, and organisations into the partnership this year."

Place-based partnership isn't a slogan - it's a practice children can feel. In Wigan, when creativity, sport, health, and community line up around a child, potential is unlocked, and pressure elsewhere eases.

That is what AllChild stands for: a trusted national voice on social outcomes partnerships which bring together the public, private and community sectors.

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