

1159763

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated. It provides care for up to 8 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

Seven children were living at the home at the time of the inspection, and 3 were spoken with.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2025.

Inspection date: 21 January 2026

Date of last inspection: 19 August 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Improvements to the furnishings and maintenance of the home have been completed. Some areas of the home have been re-purposed, creating a more functional and child-centred environment. An external building has been developed to provide a safe space for children to develop their independence. Two further rooms have been separated to create separate spaces for higher energy activities and relaxation. This enables the staff to support children's individualised needs.

Staff build positive relationships with children. One child has become more settled, and they can now have more personalised belongings in their bedroom. Positive relationships are also developing between peers in the home, with some children choosing to take part in activities and socialise together.

The manager is supporting staff to develop their skills in seeking the views of children and embedding these into the children's day-to-day experiences. Regular meetings take place with children. Staff are more attuned to seeking the views of children and are working towards a culture where children shape their own daily lives. Furthermore, staff enable children to reflect on their behaviours and emotions in a safe environment which helps children to understand the possible effects of some behaviours.

Some children in the home are vulnerable to self-injurious behaviours. One child's risk assessment of self-injurious behaviour had been reduced to low, a matter of days prior to a serious incident. As a result of the staff's knowledge and understanding of the child, additional welfare checks were carried out. Staff responded promptly to the child's medical needs and provided appropriate emotional support. When serious incidents occur, a learning review of practice take place where leaders identify areas of development for the staff team.

Children's risk assessments and care plans are updated following an incident. Actions are included to support staff in managing children's needs and risks. Some risk assessments for children, contain more detail than others meaning the quality of the assessments varies. Some children have specialist assessments where needed, such as positive behaviour support plans to support staff to focus on these specific needs.

The manager recognises the areas for improvement in the home and is working towards continuous improvement. The home has moved over to an online system, to manage children's records. This has enabled leaders and managers to have greater oversight of staff practice and provide timely, constructive feedback to staff. Supervision sessions are provided to staff on a regular basis. These sessions provide staff with a space to have meaningful discussions and to reflect on their practice.

Staff can also discuss personal matters, training needs, and any areas of development.

Staffing has remained stable since the last inspection. The manager has strengthened the internal support for staff completing qualifications. The manager now provides better oversight and mentoring to ensure successful completion and improved practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/08/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/10/2024	Full	Good
06/03/2024	Full	Good
30/12/2022	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v))	19 March 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	19 March 2026

ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii))	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(iii)(v))	19 March 2026
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a))	19 March 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1159763

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Registered provider address: Lupton Tower, Lupton, Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2PR

Responsible individual: Tracy Nicholson

Registered manager: Danielle Cunningham

Inspector

Kerry Chater, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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