

1244160

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation that operates several children's homes. The home is registered to provide care for up to 8 children with social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, 5 children were living at the home.

The provider also operates a school that is linked to the home. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2025.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 June 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/06/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/10/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/12/2023	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

In this home, there is a warm, caring and fun atmosphere. The leaders and staff demonstrate a genuine commitment to children, enabling them to make good progress and have positive experiences.

Children feel safe and have developed trusting relationships with the staff, who they believe they can talk to for support and guidance. This promotes their ability to understand their own feelings and emotions.

Managers and staff value education. They work closely with education professionals to ensure that children receive education and have positive experiences. This helps to maintain consistency of care between home and education.

The home is led by a manager who is committed to providing high-quality care and ensuring that children enjoy their childhoods. She focuses on helping children make progress and unlock their potential. She has created a culture of high aspirations and positivity. This inspires the staff team to adopt the same beliefs, which in turn has improved outcomes for the children.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, significant improvements have been made to the home, which is comfortable and welcoming. Shared spaces are colourful and inviting, with space for children to play or have quiet time. Children's bedrooms have been personalised to their individual preferences. Children are actively involved in decisions regarding their home and have been part of developing the gaming room and gym.

Children like living in the home. They receive nurturing care from dedicated staff who are committed to helping them grow and enhance their experiences and outcomes. The managers and staff exhibit a natural, calm and caring demeanour in all their interactions with the children, and they take pride in discussing the children's progress.

Children with complex life experiences are supported to build trusting relationships with staff. This helps them feel safe enough to engage positively with boundaries and routines, explore their community with friends and prepare for the next stage in their lives.

Inclusive practice is central to the way that staff work to support the children. This support encourages children to explore their identities, promotes inclusivity and allows them to express themselves freely. As a result, children feel safe discussing any concerns or questions about their identities with staff, who help them understand their emotions.

Communication between home and school is excellent, with regular updates to ensure consistency for the children. Attendance and progress are good, and staff understand the support needed for effective engagement. Well-planned transitions create positive educational experiences, helping previously reluctant children enjoy learning and attend full time.

Children enjoy spending time with their families, and the staff actively promote family interactions, creating positive experiences for everyone involved. A strength is staff's ability to support children in maintaining family connections, even in difficult situations. This includes helping children attend family gatherings and inviting relatives for visits and meals, while keeping families well informed. As one family member said, 'It's like having a news channel; I'm always kept up to date.'

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

Children feel safe and are safer as a result of the care they receive. They know who to approach if they are worried or upset and easily share their concerns. The staff are attentive to their emotional wellbeing and offer support when needed.

The manager and staff are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children. They reflect on the reasons behind children's behaviours and continuously monitor them to gain a deeper understanding of each child. This understanding informs adjustments in their approach, ultimately improving outcomes for the children. The staff maintain close collaboration with partner agencies, promptly reporting and addressing any concerns that arise.

Staff have a strong and balanced approach to help children understand and manage risks. They are skilled at identifying and addressing risk-related behaviours, ensuring that children remain safe without imposing unnecessary restrictions. Importantly, their approach is not overly cautious. If children go missing from home, the staff proactively follow up, maintain contact and encourage them to return. Children have expressed that they feel safe and trust the staff to support them, even when they make mistakes.

Children engage with staff in meaningful discussions and reflective work following incidents or risk-related situations. One-to-one and group conversations take place about risks, and children have engaged well in discussions about going missing from home, substance misuse and vaping. This has resulted in reduced risks. This helps children to understand consequences, make informed choices and build their awareness of personal safety.

The manager ensures that children's concerns or allegations are thoroughly investigated and addressed.

Staff receive good-quality training in all aspects of safeguarding. Their knowledge is regularly updated through refresher courses, discussions during child-focused meetings

and supervision sessions. As a result, staff show appropriate professional curiosity and consistently take actions to ensure that children remain safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is a reflective leader who understands the children and staff. Her enthusiasm is a fundamental part of the environment, influencing how the staff interact with and care for the children. She and the deputy manager have a culture that sets high aspirations for each child, helping them to fully enjoy their childhood. This ethos is embraced by all the staff, who work together to enable children to achieve excellent outcomes. As a result, the children feel valued and cared for, leading to improved outcomes for them.

There is a stable and effective management structure in place. Managers and staff know children very well and speak about them with care and pride. Regular meetings focus on understanding children's experiences, behaviours, feelings and needs. This means that time is taken to analyse and reflect on the support being provided and how this could be changed to help each child further. For example, staff think about how children's needs can be met based on new or changing behaviours.

Managers place a strong emphasis on staff's wellbeing, providing strong support for professional development and career growth. They recognise individual potential and encourage them to grow and develop. New staff receive comprehensive support to help them connect with the children they work with. This creates a valued and cohesive team, ultimately benefiting the children. One staff member said, 'Managers' support is incredible and I am proud to be part of such an amazing team of people and working with the young people to help them thrive.'

A comprehensive training programme underpins staff's practice. Managers are proactive in identifying training for staff in response to children's emerging needs. This ensures that experienced and well-informed staff consistently care for the children.

The manager is forward-thinking and collaborates with professionals in health, education, social care and therapy to address the diverse needs of children. Positive feedback has been received from external professionals, as well as from the education and clinical teams, highlighting that staff communicate regularly and provide strong support for the children. One professional said, 'The staff team always have the children in mind.'

The responsible individual visits the home regularly and has a strong understanding of each child's individual support needs. The children know her by name, and she enjoys spending time around them. This approach reflects strong leadership and conveys positive messages to children and staff.

The manager has comprehensive oversight of the home through effective monitoring systems. Records are clear and capture details of children's engagement, experiences and achievements. Children's progress is monitored effectively through regular reviews

of plans and targets. Social workers are positive about children's progress and the approach that staff use to support them. The use of child-centred language in all plans and records means that staff think carefully about what they write and make sure that children's views are captured.

No requirements or recommendations were made during this inspection.

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: 1244160

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Helen Hoggins

Registered manager: Emily Wallis Mandache

Inspectors

Sharron Dormand, Social Care Inspector
Ken Bedwell, Social Care Inspector

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