

1247559

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation and provides therapeutic care for up to 6 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home was registered with Ofsted in February 2017, and the manager registered in July 2025.

Six children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 March 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2024	Full	Good
19/03/2024	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good
07/07/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have good relationships with staff who know them well. The staff invest time in getting to know what each child likes and dislikes. The staff make events for children, such as birthdays and Christmas, extra special. For some children, this is a first-time experience. This time spent with children helps them to make happy memories and promotes their sense of belonging.

Children are all doing well in education. Children attend the provider's school. This ensures there is good communication between home and school. Children leaving school have good support to find the right college courses. Alongside this, staff support some children to find work experience, which helps them to gain additional skills for later life.

Children enjoy physical activities that help them stay fit and well. They try a range of activities, such as horse riding, football and swimming. Children who need help with their emotional wellbeing benefit significantly from support from the in-house therapist. The therapist provides bespoke sessions for each child in their own home. This removes the barriers of any travel and unknown environments. The therapies allow children to explore their life experiences. From the therapy sessions, children gain strategies to help them move forwards positively.

Children enjoy a range of activities that enhance their life experiences. Many are first-time events for children, such as holidays, cold water dipping, trips to theme parks, and live shows. Children also enjoy a range of local activities, which helps them to spend their free time positively. Activities they enjoy include music lessons, pool and Girl Guides.

The staff help the children to see their families. They help them to rebuild relationships, which supports children's sense of identity. For some children, the support around building relationships is so successful that children return to live with their families. The staff prepare children who are planning to move well. The children learn a range of skills, including learning how to shop, cook and budget.

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

When serious incidents occur, the manager assesses practice and learns from what has happened. He identifies effective strategies to manage and reduce future risks. The individual children's risk assessments are not always updated to reflect the strategies put in place. This does not consistently provide clear expectations for staff.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe. They complete work to help them recognise danger. Topics they cover include risks around going missing from home, stranger danger, online safety and bullying.

When children are in crisis, the staff try and help children calm before using physical intervention. Physical intervention is used a last resort to keep children safe. Holds are used for the shortest time necessary using the least restrictive intervention possible. Children are provided with opportunity to talk about their feelings after the event. Debriefs with staff are not consistently recorded. When discussions do take place, they are not reflective. This is a missed learning opportunity.

When children go missing from home, the staff follow children's plans and work with the police to try and locate the child as quickly as possible. Children benefit from interviews with an independent person on their return. This information helps staff to put plans in place to reduce future risks.

The staff undertake training to help them understand risks to the children. The training they complete includes how to spot the signs of exploitation and how to keep children safe online. The staff know how to report safeguarding concerns, and they feel confident to do this to keep the children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced registered manager has been in post since July 2025. He is committed to providing children with stability and positive experiences. He is well supported by a responsible individual who has close oversight of the running of the home.

The manager has a range of systems that support his oversight of the home and the children's progress. Where children need closer monitoring, he is innovative in his approach. For example, he creates new systems, such as an in-depth chronology which includes photos and constant analysis of events. This monitoring system helps him to track the child's journey. It also supports the manager to identify any dips in progress so he can explore new strategies to help children keep moving forwards.

The registered manager has very good relationships with a range of professionals. The positive relationships help to ensure that children receive the services they need. One professional commented: 'Communication is good. They always share information and keep me updated. They ring and email me to make sure I am always kept in the loop.'

The registered manager prioritises listening to the children. He makes sure he acts where he can to make changes they suggest. Children contribute to the running of the home in a variety of ways. This includes through feedback forms and takeaway nights, and children contribute information to staff performance reviews.

Staff receive a range of training which provides them with the skills they need to care for the children. They complete online learning and they benefit from face-to-face training sessions. Additional training is provided around children's specialist needs, such as Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.

The staff receive regular supervision. The supervision sessions help them to reflect on the care they provide for the children. Team meetings allow staff additional space to reflect on their work. Regular input into the meetings from the service's specialist clinical team helps staff to explore additional strategies they can use to support children positively.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) 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(s) 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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure individual children's risk assessments are always updated to reflect their current risks with clear strategies for staff to follow should the risk occur.	31 May 2026
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1) (3)(b)(i))	31 May 2026

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: 1247559

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Natalie Bennett

Registered manager: David Beavers

Inspector

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector

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