

1263199

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to six children who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, five children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 January 2025

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: 20 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2024	Full	Good
21/02/2023	Full	Good
01/03/2022	Full	Good
11/06/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from living in a caring and nurturing home. Children make sustained progress due to the consistent standards of care provided by a trained and committed team. Children say that living at the home has changed their lives for the better. One child said, 'I have been here a long time and want to stay in this area. It feels like home.'

The home is furnished and decorated nicely and has a relaxed atmosphere. Children are supported to decorate their bedrooms to reflect their own interests and identities. This supports children to have a sense of belonging. Framed photos of the children and staff enjoying experiences together are displayed around the house.

Children are making progress in their education from their starting points. Children who have previously not been in education are now attending school and making progress. This means that children's educational predictions for the future have improved. One child is in further education at college, taking a subject which was a hobby they enjoyed and were encouraged to pursue by staff.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the children's individual needs. Individualised care plans reflect children's social and emotional needs. Due to staff following these plans, children are thriving, feel heard and are safe and secure in their home environment. External professionals say that staff are caring and available and are good advocates for the children.

Children's health and emotional needs are prioritised. Staff support children to attend routine health appointments and specialist appointments. Therefore, children remain in good health and their well-being is promoted. Children benefit from access to the in-house therapist and clinical team who visit the home twice a week.

Children are provided with a wide range of activities, including boxing, bowling, gaming and going to the cinema and all the children have a gym membership. This supports children's confidence and social skills and gives them opportunities to make friends and connections in their local community.

Staff encourage the children to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff work closely with children's families and support children to have time with them. One child travels by train to see their family, to support their transition to independence and build their confidence on public transport. One family member said, 'The staff make me feel welcome to visit [name of child] at the home and they will change their plans to fit in with me and the staff do the travelling if needed.'

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

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They demonstrate their knowledge of the children's risks and vulnerabilities and how best to

respond to these to ensure that the children remain safe. Staff follow risk management and support plans and provide good-quality care, which has resulted in risks reducing for the children.

Due to the positive relationships that staff and the manager have built with the children, they are able to de-escalate incidents effectively, which resulted in there being no use of physical holds of children in 2024. Staff and the manager speak to the children after every incident to help the children to reflect and to share any worries or concerns or ideas about how the situation could have been managed better. This helps the children to manage their feelings and emotions.

Staff receive training in child protection and safeguarding practices. They also receive tailored training on topics relating to individual children's needs, such as internet safety and self-harming behaviours. Staff have access to a therapist to support them and the children in their care. Additionally, this helps the staff to develop more in-depth knowledge of the children so they can support them further.

The manager has detailed oversight of incidents and acts appropriately when serious incidents occur. This enables the manager to make swift changes in the care provided for the children as necessary. Information is shared with family, carers, Ofsted and the relevant local authority.

Children are aware of how to make a complaint about things that upset or worry them. Children know they can speak to their social workers or family and can ask for an advocate to support them.

Sensors are in use on the children's bedroom doors. This is risk assessed and reviewed regularly, and only one child's sensor was activated at the time of this inspection. Individual support sessions are carried out in relation to the associated risks for the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

An experienced and enthusiastic manager runs the home efficiently. The manager and staff are committed to giving children opportunities to help them to reach their full potential. The staff say they feel well supported by the manager.

Staff speak highly of the manager. The manager includes the staff in decision-making and supports an open culture in which staff can express their own ideas to develop the home. One member of staff said, 'The manager is always available to listen and support me when needed.' The manager ensures that staff complete a programme of training and learning.

Staff benefit from regular supervision, however, this could be more reflective and focus on how they interact with specific children and develop individual relationships. Team meetings take place consistently and are well attended by the staff. Staff also attend consultations that are led by the therapist for individual children. These are reflective

sessions that provide a forum for staff to explore and review children's progress and support strategies.

The manager has positive relationships with professionals involved in the children's care. Professionals speak highly of the manager. One social worker said, 'The manager is really good. The care [name of child] receives is lovely and caring. They are making progress and doing well being at the home, which is great.'

The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development and uses the independent person's feedback to improve the care offered to the children.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff supervisions focus on supporting staff to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

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: 1263199

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: Lisa Shoosmith

Inspectors

Deborah Turner, Social Care Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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