

2496627

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were two children living in the home. Both children were seen and spoken to during the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2025.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 October 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection, and care.

Date of last inspection: 30 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/07/2024	Full	Outstanding
18/12/2023	Full	Good
22/02/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children feel safe and very well cared for living at this home. They refer to it as their home and tell their social workers that they do not want to leave. Children find stability at the home and make excellent progress from their starting points. Staff help children rebuild relationships, supporting families to understand and care for their child. This helps children spend meaningful time with people important to them, and for some to safely return to the care of their families.

The children's social workers recognise the impact the manager and staff have had on the children's lives. When speaking with the inspector, they used words that included 'fantastic,' 'excellent,' and 'they go above and beyond,' to describe the quality of care. One social worker said, 'The home has been the making of [name of child], they have helped so much.'

The home is large and decorated to a high standard. Photos of the children, their families, and hometowns are in every room, enriching the environment. Notes and chores are pinned to the fridge with a magnet like in a family home. Staff greet children warmly each morning with hugs and words of encouragement for the day.

The staff understand the impact that childhood experiences have on children. Staff undertake work with the children that allows them to catch up on early life and play experiences that they may have missed. The manager and staff have access to the provider's therapy team to support them in caring for the children, through regular meetings, clinical group supervisions, and direct work with the children. Their insightful practice has had a significantly positive impact on the children's emotional well-being.

Children have the support they need to improve their health. They eat healthy meals and are active. Staff ensure that children register with the health services they need. Some children's longstanding dental problems are addressed. One child's seizures have significantly reduced, because of the staff, multidisciplinary support, and medication, to the point where the child can return to the care of their family.

The manager ensures that children have access to a variety of enjoyable activities. The strong and trusting relationships children develop with staff gives them the confidence to have new and positive life experiences. For example, one child thoroughly enjoys horse riding and has recently started writing poetry. Another child is a keen gardener and DIY enthusiast, including helping the staff with their weekly checks on the home and the vehicles.

Significant importance is given to ensuring that the children attend and engage in education. Staff help them with their learning, and children have made great progress. The children's attendance is excellent. When one child struggled with full-time lessons, the manager worked with education professionals to create a bespoke timetable that

helped to maintain the child's engagement. Furthermore, children have tutors and resources to support them with studying for their exams. Children who moved on from the home enrolled in mainstream schools and colleges to continue their journey towards reaching their potential.

Managers and staff ensure that children are well prepared for independence. Structured workbooks and transition plans ensure that children have all the information and skills that they need. Staff support children to take part in planning their next steps and help them settle into their new homes when they move. Children value this support and keep in touch with the team to share their successes.

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

Children say they feel safe living at this home. Staff work with them to increase their understanding of their risks and behaviours. This has helped children to make great progress in managing their emotions and behaviour more safely. This is reflected in the reduction of incidents in the home. When children do experience difficult emotions, staff are highly effective in limiting the children's distress through distraction and nurture.

The manager ensures that staff record all incidents in detail, with clarity, when children are held for their safety. Managers, staff, and other professionals review the incidents from end to end and identify learning from the event. When needed, staff receive additional support and training to further enhance their practice. Behaviour support plans are updated to reflect changes. This ensures that staff remain highly responsive to the children's needs.

Staff help children to repair relationships with staff and each other quickly when upset occurs. This embedded practice reduces distress for children and has helped to develop empathy for one another. Staff complete follow-up conversations with children at the right time to ensure that each child's views are fully considered.

The children's established and trusting relationships with staff helps them to feel safe when poor choices are made. Children do not experience blame. Staff encourage them to reflect on their actions and participate in deciding what an appropriate consequence would be. Children understand the importance of restorative consequences and will often spontaneously apologise or offer reparation of some kind. This demonstrates that children are learning important social skills that will serve them well beyond life at the home.

The staff know children and their plans well and this helps them to minimise risks. When new or infrequent risks arise, staff work quickly to ensure that appropriate measures to mitigate the risks are implemented. For example, staff respond quickly to changes in patterns of self-injurious behaviour, seek advice and provide the right support that reduces risk. They assess and develop the children's knowledge of how to stay safe online and identify risks, so children can enjoy the internet safely.

Children rarely go missing from home. When they do, staff follow the children's individual missing-from-home procedures based on their age and risk profile and help children return safely to the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is aspirational for the home, the staff, and the children. She is a proactive advocate for children and works tirelessly to ensure that they have the help and support that they are entitled to. The manager leads a highly effective and nurturing team that has had a great impact on the lives of children. She leads by example and strongly promotes the importance of helping children develop trust in the adults who care for them. This creates a strong foundation for children to grow and develop.

Leaders and managers support staff to reflect regularly, both formally in meetings and supervisions, and informally with each other. The manager's practice-related supervision is child focused and reflective, including reflective discussions in anticipation of upcoming events, such as new children moving to the home. Supervision is child centred, and staff get support based on their individual circumstances and needs. They strive to understand the totality of a child's behaviour, not just understanding why incidents occur, but remaining curious when things are going well to inform the future care of the child.

Staff have access to a broad range of training and extra courses based on children's needs or their own interests and professional development. A member of staff recently attended a 'drawing and talking' course to enhance their communication with younger children and improve the experience of the children in the home.

Staff are enthusiastic about working at the home. They receive a well-planned and progressive induction when they join the home and report 'extensive, ongoing training' throughout their time there. They talk about genuine and caring support from their managers and colleagues and their commitment to providing consistent, excellent care to the children. Staff comments about working at this home include, 'I am happy and proud to work here' and '[name of manager] is an outstanding manager. She genuinely cares about her team, supporting us both professionally and personally. She encourages us to reach our full potential and helps us maintain a healthy work-life balance.'

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: 2496627

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: Chelsea Kipling

Inspector

Kirstie Sutherland, Social Care Inspector

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