

2509300

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It provides care for up to 7 children who have experienced trauma.

At the time of this inspection, 6 children were living in the home. Four of the children were spoken to and/or observed during the inspection.

The home is led by an experienced manager, who registered in December 2025.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious child protection allegations were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform the inspector's judgements.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 February 2026

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/02/2026	Full	Good
04/02/2025	Full	Outstanding
01/08/2023	Full	Good
12/04/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Most children have positive experiences and make progress when living in this home. Children have strong, trusting relationships with staff. The home environment is comfortable and welcoming, and children are provided with a stable and loving home to live in.

There is an effective safeguarding culture in the home. Staff know children well and collaborate with partner agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Safeguarding procedures are consistently followed, and managers ensure that opportunities for reflection and learning are embedded following incidents, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive experiences and make progress while living in this home. Since the last inspection, 2 children have moved in, and one child has recently moved on. Five of the children have lived in the home for over one year. Managers and staff provide children with a stable home, where they have been able to build trusting relationships with staff.

Children receive good care from a nurturing and resilient staff team. Staff build strong, positive relationships with children. They invest time in understanding children, listening and responding to their wishes and feelings, and speak about them with genuine pride and affection. As a result, children feel valued, loved and well cared for.

Children benefit from clear routines, boundaries and expectations. Staff support children to explore and understand risk in a safe and nurturing way, helping them to develop independence and confidence.

Managers and staff prioritise children's education. They work closely with education professionals, social workers and internal support teams to support children to access suitable, individualised education programmes. As a result, all children's education attendance has increased from their starting point. This supports children's education attainment and improves their future life chances.

Staff ensure that children are registered with universal health services and children are encouraged to attend routine health appointments. Staff seek specialist support for children when required. In addition, they are supported by an in-house clinical team, which strengthens their understanding of the children and how to meet their needs effectively. These practices support children to improve their physical and mental health.

Children have opportunities to have fun and try new things. Children attend drama and singing clubs and have tried scuba diving and ice-skating, and one child is learning to

drive. Staff support children to maintain relationships with those people who are important to them. This support helps children to develop socially and in their independence, improving their confidence and sense of self-worth.

Managers have not always robustly assessed children's needs when considering moving children into the home. For example, there is a lack of consideration of children's ages or gender. On one occasion, children moved in together quickly, which did not give them time to settle or allow staff the time to get to adequately know children's vulnerabilities. This may have contributed to a recent unsettled period in the home. Leaders and managers have acknowledged this shortfall and are reflecting on their processes for moving children into the home.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and take appropriate action to keep children safe. Managers ensure that staff have up-to-date guidance on how to meet children's needs and mitigate risk. Staff use this knowledge and a relational approach to talk to children to help them understand their behaviours, which has created a culture of reflection and understanding and is helping to reduce incidents.

When incidents occur, managers and staff respond effectively to keep children safe. Staff appropriately conduct room searches to ensure that children do not have access to items that may cause them harm. When there are concerns, managers quickly share information, to ensure that there is a multi-agency approach to keeping children safe.

Staff respond quickly when children go missing from the home. They consistently follow children's missing-from-home protocols. They search for children and collaborate with the police to ensure that children are quickly located and returned home. When children return home, they are warmly welcomed and have access to an independent person to talk about any worries or concerns that they may have.

Managers take appropriate action when children raise concerns and disclose sensitive information. They promptly share information with other professionals, carry out investigations and use complaints as a learning tool to strengthen practice. Children are informed of outcomes, which helps them feel listened to and gives them confidence to raise concerns in the future.

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to keep children and others safe. Restraint records are detailed, and managers have effective oversight of all incidents. Managers ensure that children and staff are given opportunities to reflect on incidents. This helps to keep children safe and strengthens staff practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The leadership and management arrangements are effective. Managers maintain effective oversight of the home. Children and staff benefit from a strong internal support

structure, with visible senior leaders and organisational support. This ensures that children and staff receive the guidance and resources they need to make progress.

The registered manager is a strong advocate for children. He listens to children and will speak out for them. Children feel listened to and know that their voices matter. Leaders and managers aspire for children to do well, and they encourage the staff team to share this ethos.

Staff benefit from regular supervision which provides the opportunity to reflect on their practice. Team meetings, post-incident reflective sessions and clinical supervisions help to create a culture of learning and development and promote consistent care for children.

Leaders and managers provide staff with a comprehensive training package that supports staff to develop the knowledge and skills to meet children's individual needs effectively.

Feedback from external professionals about the care that children receive is positive. Social workers and other professionals are complimentary about the standard of communication, the quality of children's relationships with staff, the care children receive and the progress children make while living in the home.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that they complete a robust review of each new child's risks and vulnerabilities when considering moving new children into the home.	4 August 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: 2509300

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Louise Hyams

Registered manager: Philip Carolan

Inspector

Sonia Sullivan, Social Care Inspector

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