

2594854

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a national organisation. The home provides care for up to five children.

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

There is a new manager in post and their application to register with Ofsted is in progress.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have a good experience of living in the home, they have positive relationships with staff and each other. Staff understand the needs of the children and support them to make good progress. For example, when children struggle to attend school, staff, with the help of the school staff and the therapy team, use individualised plans to support the child to attend. As a result, all children's attendance has improved from when they moved in.

The home is in very good order. It is warm and welcoming and provides the children with space to play and socialise. Staff refer to the kitchen as the 'heart' of the home and a lot of activity takes place there, for example cooking, talking and meeting up.

Children told the inspectors that they enjoy living in the home and feel safe. Children were observed showing warmth and affection when engaging with adults, and adults were seen responding in a supportive, caring manner.

Children are supported to maintain their hobbies and interests. For example, the home is well resourced with musical instruments, to reflect one child's musical talent. Children also enjoy a range of activities in the home and the community. For example, during school holidays, children enjoyed learning new activities such as surfing and body boarding.

Children are supported to attend healthcare appointments and have their needs met. For example, staff sought guidance to increase their knowledge on how to help reduce a child's anxiety around attending the dentist. Staff successfully used this to inform their practice and, as a result, the child attended their appointment.

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

The manager and staff know the children well and identify potential risks. and know what might upset each child. Risk assessments and care plans are detailed and provide the staff with strategies to best support the children. However, the inspectors found the blanket use of door alarms on all children rooms. The use of this restrictive practice is an imposition on children's freedom of movement without rational. This practice has not been individually risk assessed, as recommended following the last inspection. A statutory requirement is set as a result of this inspection, (see below). In addition, the risk assessment for the keeping of pets to be out of date and did not accurately reflect the risks.

All staff are up to date with their mandatory training. Staff who contributed to the inspection demonstrate a sound knowledge of child protection and safeguarding.

Since the previous inspection in January 2022, children have gone missing from the home. The manager and staff have been quick to respond to this spike in incidents of missing from home. Staff manage the incidents well, and records capture the conversations the staff have with the children. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in the number of times that the children go missing.

Since the last inspection, some serious incidents have occurred. These have resulted in the staff physically restraining the children. There is evidence of management oversight of the use of restraint and learning and reflection by the staff. More recently, there has been a reduction in the number and seriousness of incidents.

Structured and personalised responses by staff mean that the children's behaviours are mostly managed well. Staff are helping the children to gradually learn how to manage their anxieties and worries.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Since the previous inspection in January 2022, a new manager has been in post. The manager receives good levels of support from the previous registered manager and members of the senior leadership team, resulting in a smooth transition of management.

In the main, the manager reviews and monitors all records. However, the inspectors found that the manager had failed to ensure that the risk assessment for one child to keep a pet was not sufficiently robust. Furthermore, the strategy for the use of bedroom door alarms was unclear and left staff and the children confused.

The manager has a good understanding of how the home is performing and the progress children are making. Children are listened to, and their views, alongside those of staff and professionals, contribute to the continuous improvement of the home. This means that the requirements made following the inspection in January 2022 have been met, although the recommendation about risk assessing the use of door alarms was not met. Staff now feel supervision is beneficial and effective. The independent person routinely captures the views of the children and professionals.

Staff receive the right support and training to enable them to care for the children effectively. For example, staff expressed how supportive they find the new manager and how she encourages them to develop professionally. Consequently, staff morale is good.

Senior leaders and the manager were swift to begin the process of addressing the shortfalls that are identified as part of this inspection

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, 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(g)(i)(h)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that risk assessments are kept up to date and accurately reflect the risk. In addition, that daily logs reflect the diets of children, and that advice is sought from specialised professionals in relation to diet and behaviours.	9 January 2023
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and	9 January 2023

the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(c)(d))

This directly relates to the leaders and managers routinely reviewing the use of bedroom door alarms and ensuring that the children are consulted and involved. In particular, to ensure that any form of monitoring does not unnecessarily restrict the liberty of children.

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: 2594854

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Ltd

Registered provider address: Witherslack Group, Lupton Tower, Lupton, Carnforth LA6 2PR

Responsible individual: Leigh Bown

Registered manager: Claudia Guggenmos

Inspectors

Gary Turney, Social Care Inspector

Linda Bond, Social Care Inspector

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