

2615342

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It provides care for up to seven children who have experienced childhood trauma and display social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2020.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home. All of the children were spoken to by the inspector.

The registered provider has recently appointed a new responsible individual, and we are currently checking this person has the relevant capacity, experience and skills to carry out the role.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 September 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: 11 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/01/2024	Full	Good
16/01/2023	Full	Good
03/08/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children experience well-planned transitions into and out of the home. Since the last inspection, two children have been welcomed into the home following thorough assessments of their needs. Two children have also moved on; one returned to the care of their birth parent, in line with their care plan, while the other moved to a home in the same organisation that is much closer to their placing authority. This provided continuity of care and reflected the child's wish to be nearer their hometown, which forms a significant part of their identity.

Children make exceptional progress in their education, with attendance increasing significantly from their individual starting points. They display pride when talking about their achievements and actively approach the manager each day to share their successes at school. Each child has an individual education progress report that captures their achievements in attendance, academic progress, and social and emotional development. This helps children recognise the positive impact of education across all areas of their development.

Children benefit from having key people in their lives working together. The manager and staff team work hard to establish and maintain positive relationships with the people who are important to the children. They actively promote family time and advocate on behalf of children to increase the time they spend with those who matter most to them. As a result, children enjoy more time with their families, which, where appropriate, includes unsupervised time and overnight stays.

Children are encouraged and supported to engage in a wide range of activities and new experiences, including joining clubs and pursuing regular hobbies. This builds their confidence and provides opportunities to expand their support networks and develop peer relationships.

The home is decorated to a high standard, and children are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms to reflect their individual interests. The multiple communal areas in the home provide various spaces for children to relax, interact with their peers and staff, and enjoy a range of activities inside and outside.

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

Staff and leaders demonstrate a strong understanding of children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. They work tirelessly to ensure that children feel safe and protected, and they encourage children in various ways to explore and express their feelings. When children raise concerns or share their views about changes they would like to see in the home, there is a consistent management response, and appropriate action is taken to validate their wishes and feelings.

Physical intervention is used only as a last resort to keep children safe from harm. Incidents are appropriately recorded by staff, and children are spoken with promptly to reflect on the experience and ensure that their rights are upheld. However, an independent person does not always speak to staff following their direct involvement in incidents of physical restraint. This affects the quality of incident reviews and limits the potential for learning and development.

Staff understand the actions to take if children go missing from the home and have clear plans to follow. They consistently apply the missing-from-home protocol in practice, in accordance with each child's specific risk assessment. When there has been a delay in receiving return home interviews, the manager has consistently challenged wider networks to ensure that staff have access to all relevant information that supports their understanding of each child's safety needs.

Children are encouraged to take balanced risks. Staff help children to use electronic devices and access the internet safely. Direct work is carried out with children to help them understand and identify risk. When necessary, staff work effectively with other agencies to address emerging concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is child focused and is supported by a leadership team that shares their vision to provide the best possible care for children. They have high expectations for children and are passionate about helping them achieve their potential. The manager confidently advocates for all staff to understand children's individual starting points so they can recognise what progress means for each child.

Children experience positive relationships with the registered manager, who ensures that she is visible during key times, such as before and after school. On their return from school, children engage confidently, initiating conversations with the manager and sharing their achievements from the day. They consistently receive praise and encouragement from the manager and the staff team.

Systems for monitoring the quality of care that children receive are mostly effective. However, children's case records are not consistently signed and dated by the author of each entry. As a result, timescales for plans to support children are sometimes delayed, with no clear evidence of managerial oversight. This affects the manager's capacity to address specific shortfalls in practice with staff. The manager is currently developing online monitoring systems to improve the efficiency of this process.

Staff have personalised development plans and appraisals to review their progress and identify where further support is needed. Leaders ensure that staff continue to develop the knowledge and skills required to perform their roles. Staff also have access to a well-structured training programme.

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 registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	24 October 2025
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; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii))	24 October 2025

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: 2615342

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Joanne Webb

Inspector

Charlotte Tippet, Social Care Inspector

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