

2697992

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 run. It provides care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were four children living at the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke with three of the children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 October 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: 21 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2025	Full	Good
23/10/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is furnished and decorated to a high standard. Children's bedrooms are personalised, enabling each child to express themselves. There are several communal areas the children use regularly. This promotes opportunities for children to socialise with staff and their peers. The home offers countryside views and a large outdoor space for children to exercise and play. There is a warm family atmosphere in the home, which helps children to feel settled.

Children at the home are making good progress. This is because staff build positive relationships with children and understand their needs. Staff work with children to build children's confidence and develop their social skills. Staff provide children with a range of positive experiences. This is corroborated by professionals who speak highly of the home and the level of care provided to children.

Staff understand the importance of children's education. Children have excellent attendance and are making good progress. One child achieved more than 10 GCSEs, and another child is accessing additional learning by attending college one day a week. Children have been supported to attend work experience and complete voluntary work. This helps children to aspire and improves opportunities for them as they grow.

The home supports children to spend time with their families and loved ones. The staff support this time by taking children and supervising where necessary. The staff build relationships with family members to create positive experiences for children. Where there are concerns around family time, staff take the time to listen to children's views and opinions. Staff work well with partner agencies to ensure children's needs are being met.

Children are supported by staff to share their views. This is through children's meetings, key-working sessions, and day-to-day discussions. Children's requests are respected, with one example including the introduction of a post box for children to share their views.

Staff recognise children's achievements and provide positive encouragement. This ranges from verbal praise to rewards. This helps children to feel valued and encourages them to make positive decisions.

Some of the language used in children's records is insensitive and not child focused. This can impact negatively on children if they choose to view their records either now or in the future.

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

Children have individualised care plans that help staff to understand their needs. Risk assessments and positive behaviour support plans are completed for all children. These guide staff on how to provide effective support to children and keep them safe. These records are updated regularly, which means staff have the most up-to-date information.

Important and relevant information from partner agencies is kept on children's files. When information is missing, staff follow an escalation policy to ensure these records are received. Staff work closely with agencies, including the in-house clinical team, which provides direct support to both staff and children. This helps to ensure consistency in the care children receive.

Staff speak with children about the future and prepare them when it is time to move on from the home. One child has successfully moved on, partly due to the support they received from staff. Children benefit from clear plans to support them in managing important changes in their lives.

Sometimes children need to be held by staff. When holds are used, these are proportionate and recorded clearly. Children are provided with appropriate support following incidents. The manager provides oversight of incidents to learn how future reoccurrences can be avoided.

When children make allegations, they are supported by leaders and managers. This helps children to feel reassured that they are believed, and it builds trust. This helps children to feel safer, and they are more likely to share any concerns they may have.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager engages well with partner agencies through sharing information and attending meetings. The manager is a strong advocate for children and will challenge decision-making when necessary. An example includes the manager challenging a partner agency around the delivery of specialist work with a child.

The manager supports staff through regular supervision sessions and discussions when necessary. This helps staff share any concerns and ideas and talk about the children they care for. Additional supervision sessions are arranged when the manager identifies practice issues. This helps to ensure staff have the knowledge and skills they need to meet the children's needs.

Staff receive training to better equip them to meet the children's needs. This includes specialist training linked to any additional needs children have. The home benefits from the support of a clinical team that offers training and guidance. This provides a tailored and individualised approach for the children.

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. These provide an opportunity for staff to share their views and ask questions. Meetings are also used as an

opportunity for staff development, and they cover important topics relating to the care children receive.

The manager generally has effective oversight of the home. They recognise the strengths and areas for development. They actively seek out external feedback. This helps to ensure there is independent scrutiny to further develop the care provided to children.

Decision-making by leaders and managers has fallen short when deciding on the suitability of staff working in the home. This has impacted children's emotional well-being, leading to children being distressed and feeling unsafe in the home. While measures were attempted to minimise the impact on children, these were unsuccessful.

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

Statutory requirement

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires, and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. (Regulation 13 (1)(b)) In particular, decisions taken about staff working in the home must carefully consider the safety and well-being of children.	5 January 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion, and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2697992

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: Emma Atkinson

Inspector

Kerry Chater, Social Care Inspector

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