

SC475703

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of several homes operated by a private provider. It provides care for up to 8 children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home was registered with Ofsted in April 2014, and the manager registered in May 2014.

The children access the organisation's registered school and therapeutic services.

Seven children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 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: 29 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/10/2024	Full	Outstanding
31/10/2023	Full	Outstanding
18/05/2022	Full	Good
17/08/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported well by the manager and staff, who hold them in high regard. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the children's individual needs. This helps staff to meet the children's needs well. One social worker said: 'I don't need to worry about [name of child] as I know they are well cared for.'

Children say that they feel safe. They can identify trusted adults whom they can talk to about their worries. Positive relationships were observed between the staff and the children. One child said: 'Staff are really emotionally supportive, and I always feel I can speak to them.'

Children are supported to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff maintain good communication with children's families. This provides children with a support network where they feel safe to maintain relationships with people who are important to them.

Children benefit from opportunities to enjoy activities of their choice. Activities include trampolining, cycling, holidays and fishing. Some children attend clubs, such as cadets and swimming. This supports children to pursue their hobbies and interests and share experiences with others.

The manager and staff promote children's education. There is good information-sharing between staff and the children's education provider. The manager remains persistent in their attempt to fully engage children in education. However, for 2 children there has been a reduction in school attendance. Strategies are in place to support the children to engage; however, these are not always effective.

The home is welcoming and has a relaxed atmosphere. Children's bedrooms are personalised, and their photos are displayed around the home. This gives the children a sense of belonging. However, some redecoration is needed around the home.

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

Children have individual risk assessments that are consistently reviewed and updated by managers and staff. Staff understand children's risks and vulnerabilities and take time to talk to children and educate them about risk. Staff use these discussions to increase children's understanding and safety.

Staff can identify behaviours involving risk and understand and follow safeguarding procedures to keep the children safe. Staff spend time with children after incidents to support them to understand their emotions and feelings. This helps children to learn from incidents.

There have been occasions when the use of physical intervention was necessary. The manager evaluates physical interventions, ensuring that they are proportionate, and reflection is completed with staff and children. Detailed analysis of physical intervention supports the manager to identify patterns and implement strategies to support children.

Staff are proactive when children go missing from home. Managers and staff search for children and liaise effectively with relevant professionals and family members to ensure that the children return home as soon as possible. Staff have a good understanding of the missing-from-home procedures.

Since the last inspection, there have been incidents when children have made allegations against staff. Leaders and managers follow safeguarding processes and inform relevant safeguarding professionals if any incidents occur. This ensures that children receive a well-rounded, multi-agency approach to keep them safe.

Recruitment procedures and practices are safe and effective. These checks ensure that only suitable adults are employed to work with children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a dedicated, caring, and ambitious manager who advocates well for the children. The manager speaks about the children with warmth and enthusiasm and is present within the home. The manager is supported by a dedicated deputy manager.

Staff feel supported by leaders and managers. There is a committed and stable staff team which provides consistency of care for the children. One member of staff said: 'I have felt valued and appreciated since I started working here.'

Staff are provided with identified areas of training to help them meet the specific needs of the children in their care. Training topics include first aid, safeguarding, knowledge, and skills for working with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and reporting and recording. This ensures that staff have the skills to support children's individual needs.

Staff members have regular supervision and team meetings in line with the home's statement of purpose. These provide opportunities for the staff to reflect on and develop their practice and ways to support the children.

The registered manager has effective monitoring and review systems in place. This helps the manager monitor staff practice to ensure that the quality of care provided meets children's individual needs.

One serious incident has not been reported to Ofsted. This means that the regulator does not always have sufficient oversight of the management of significant incidents.

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 notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	17 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure the necessary support is given to children to enable them to access their education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 28, paragraph 5.13)
- The registered person should ensure that the fabric of the home is well maintained. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC475703

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Mark Jarvill

Registered manager: Judith Fletcher

Inspectors

Stacey Ilaboya, Social Care Inspector
Karen Andrews, Social Care Inspector

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