

SC475706

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The suitably qualified and experienced manager registered with Ofsted in April 2019.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 November 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 6 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
12/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
08/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/10/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people make good progress from their starting points. They often live in the home for a long time. This means that they can make and sustain long-term changes. For many children and young people, this has been the most stable period in their lives.

The quality of relationships that children and young people build with members of staff is a strength of this home. Well-planned inductions into the home mean that children and young people get to know members of the staff team before they move in. As a result, children and young people feel valued, which helps them to trust their carers.

Children and young people do well in school. Their attendance is excellent and members of staff support their learning. Children and young people are proud of the progress they make. As well as gaining good results in examinations, this is good for their self-esteem.

Children and young people are generally healthy. They attend routine and urgent medical appointments. A clinical team works with children and young people. As well as providing direct support, clinicians have links to a range of other professionals. This means that children and young people are seen quickly, and this improves their overall well-being.

Children and young people enjoy a wide range of activities. As well as being fun, these experiences help children and young people to develop their social skills. Children and young people are building positive memories of their time in the home.

Members of staff help children and young people to maintain family relationships. They help children and young people to spend time with their families, even when they live far away. Family members are grateful for this support and children and young people preserve a sense of their own identity.

Children and young people contribute to the running of the home. Members of staff ask children and young people for their views about a range of topics. This includes the decoration of their bedrooms and communal areas. This approach helps children and young people to feel invested in the home. In turn, this adds to the sense of stability they feel.

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

Children and young people are generally safe in this home. Incidents of going missing from home are very low. There are no issues with substance misuse and no current issue with antisocial or criminal behaviour. Members of staff carry out work with children and young people about these and other risks. This work is effective and children and young people reduce their risk-taking behaviour.

Two safeguarding incidents remain under investigation by the relevant authorities. This helps children and young people feel listened to and that staff will do everything to try and keep them safe.

When children and young people are missing from home, members of staff follow the home's relevant procedures. Members of staff look for children and young people who are missing. Return home interviews take place within appropriate timescales. Children and young people are safer as a result. They also learn that their carers worry about them when they are away from the home. This is good for their sense of self-worth.

Members of staff develop individualised positive behaviour plans for children and young people. These plans identify strategies to help improve behaviour. The wider staff team discusses and reviews these plans. Children and young people receive a coordinated approach from members of staff. This results in progress being made.

Members of staff follow an accredited approach to physical intervention. All incidents of physical intervention are recorded accurately. Discussions with children and young people, and with staff, take place following every incident. The number of physical interventions is reducing in this home. Reflection on alternative methods of managing challenging behaviour would result in further reductions.

The home must have copies of all legal orders on file. In one record seen where a deprivation of liberty order was stated to be in place, no copy was available on the file.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are passionate about and committed to children and young people. Managers want the home to be the best it can be. Managers inspire members of staff, who work very hard to meet the needs of children and young people. Children and young people make progress in all aspects of their development because of this approach.

Managers encourage members of staff to develop the full potential of children and young people. Members of staff use innovative ideas to work creatively with children and young people. Children and young people learn that they can succeed and make positive changes. For some, this is the first time they have felt like this.

Managers have successful monitoring arrangements. They understand the strengths of the home and its areas for development. Managers review the work members of staff undertake with children and young people. Any gaps in practice are discovered and corrected quickly. Children and young people are looked after by members of staff who are always supported to perform highly.

The management team makes excellent use of new and resourceful ways of working with children and young people. This includes understanding risk and improving the quality of direct work with children and young people. As a result, the interventions made by members of staff are very effective. Children and young people make progress

within a short time of coming to live at the home.

Leaders and managers provide high-quality training and supervision to members of staff. All staff have the required professional qualification or are working towards it. Members of staff are encouraged to develop within their roles and because of this, the staff team becomes highly skilled. This means staff can understand and meet the complex needs of children and young people.

Managers are very responsive to external oversight. They follow all recommendations made by independent visitors and other forms of monitoring. Managers undertake reviews of serious incidents. They apply the learning from those incidents, making changes to staff practice when necessary and this supports them to improve the quality of care they provide to children and young people.

Managers have developed excellent relationships with members of the professional network. Feedback gathered from professionals during the inspection was very good. The strength of these relationships supports managers to appropriately challenge professionals to bring about positive change for children and young people.

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

Recommendations

- Any use of restraint carries risks. These include causing physical injury, psychological trauma or emotional disturbance. When considering whether restraint is warranted, staff in children's homes need to take into account:
 - the age and understanding of the child;
 - the size of the child;
 - the relevance of any disability, health problem or medication to the behaviour in question and the action that might be taken as a result;
 - the relative risks of not intervening;
 - the child's previously sought views on strategies that they considered might de-escalate or calm a situation, if appropriate;
 - the method of restraint which would be appropriate in the specific circumstances; and
 - the impact of the restraint on the carer's future relationship with the child.

('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.55)

In particular, restraint should be used only when necessary, due to the potential risks involved.

- A deprivation of liberty may occur where a child is both under continuous supervision and control and is not free to leave the home. A children's home cannot routinely deprive a child of their liberty without a court order, such as a section 25 order to place a child in a licensed secure children's home, or, in the case of young people aged over 16 who lack mental capacity, a deprivation of liberty may be authorised by the Court of Protection following an application under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.63)

In particular, the provider must ensure that there is a current order available in respect of any child or young person subject to deprivation of liberty.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for

the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC475706

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Marcia McLoughlin

Registered manager: William Blades

Inspector

Jane Titley, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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