

## Children's homes – Interim inspection

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>27/02/2017</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>1159763</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Interim</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Witherslack Group Limited</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>Witherslack Group, Lupton Tower, Lupton, Carnforth LA6 2PR</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Marcia McLoughlin</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Cristopher Beattie</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Janet Black</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>27/02/2017</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<p><b>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.</b></p> <p>This home was judged <b>outstanding</b> at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has <b>improved effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>The requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have been met. Children and young people are safer because the recording of physical restraint now meets regulatory requirements and there is enhanced analysis of such incidents by the manager. Full details of the therapeutic staff and therapy services offered are now included in the home's statement of purpose. This makes it clear to children and young people, their families and other professionals the kind of services that they can expect from the home.</p> <p>Seeking feedback on the home's performance and the quality of care provided from children, young people, parents and social workers is another area of improvement. For example, children and young people requested changes to the menu and a change to pocket money day, which were made.</p> <p>Other improvements include children and young people having access to a phone in a private space. The manager has also reduced the amount of documentation that children and young people are required to sign. This helps to promote a more homely environment.</p> <p>Transitions to and from the home are managed well. Children and young people leave the home in a planned way with time to make appropriate endings. Since the last inspection, one young person has left the home and one has been admitted. Through gradual introduction and liaison with families and social workers, children and young people settle in well and all engage in education at the on-site school. Their individual needs are thoroughly explored and appropriate placement plans made, demonstrating that staff value them as individuals.</p> <p>A significant number of the children and young people are making excellent progress. The local authority has nominated one young person for an award for improved educational attainment.</p> <p>The relationships that children and young people have with their families are maintained and strengthened by the supportive role provided by the staff team. For those children and young people who are still experiencing difficulties with contact,</p>	

the staff team takes the time to listen and talk to them about their concerns.

All children and young people attend education and staff extend the curriculum at home by activities such as reading with younger children and joining the library. Extra-curricular activities such as fishing, horse riding and cycling develop children's interests. One young person is undertaking a joinery course and staff bought him a drill for Christmas. This young person commented that being at the home has 'turned his life around'.

Children and young people are protected by clear and focused risk assessments and comprehensive safeguarding procedures. A complaint resulted in an extensive review, the learning from which further strengthened the safety of children and young people. The majority of children and young people do not go missing and for those that do, staff are extremely proactive in locating them and ensuring that they are safe and well on their return.

Children and young people are central in the process of devising their own behaviour support plans, with the result that the use of physical intervention is continuing to reduce. Staff know each child and young person well. They understand the triggers for a decline in their behaviour, and sensitively plan ways to reduce these. For example, staff engaged one young person in a variety of activities on the anniversary of a bereavement.

The manager maintains effective working relationships with other professionals involved in the lives of children and young people. One social worker commented that communication is 'excellent' and that the staff have the skills and confidence to deal with the children's and young people's needs.

Sound monitoring arrangements provided by the management team ensure that children and young people enjoy high standards of care. Their drive for improvement, such as completely ceasing the use of certain physical interventions, demonstrates a determined and innovative approach that allows children and young people to thrive.

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to seven children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private provider.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/04/2016	Full	Outstanding
07/12/2015	Full	Good

## **What the inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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