

1159763

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 and is registered for the care and accommodation of up to seven children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The manager was registered in August 2015 and is appropriately qualified.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 November 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 9 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2018	Full	Outstanding
27/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/04/2016	Full	Outstanding
07/12/2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The home has been very settled since the previous inspection. One young person has left after a successful placement and has gone to live with their family. One child has been admitted. There have been some staffing changes, but the strong leadership and management team has maintained very high standards of care throughout.

The home is orderly and comfortable. There are clear routines in place and staff supervise the children and young people closely. The children and young people have excellent relationships with the staff. The children and young people in this home are thriving.

Almost all of the children and young people are making good progress with their education and many are making exceptional progress here. One child had made up two years of schooling in one year and others are achieving much higher than expected progress. There are also very good levels of school attendance.

All of the children and young people engage in therapeutic work with the range of therapists, counsellors and psychologists available to them. This is particularly positive, and a number of the children and young people have clearly benefited positively from this support. They have noticeably grown in confidence, self-esteem and resilience, for example through the staff promoting social skills and emotional well-being. This progress is also clear from various progress monitors put in place by the managers.

The children and young people are supported to maintain and improve contact with their families. Several of them have made significant progress in terms of improving these relationships. The staff have worked hard to help them achieve this.

The children and young people go out of the home for their leisure time. Many play sports with local teams or attend other clubs and activities locally. Several of the children and young people have contributed to local charity events and local community activities.

Social workers spoken to by the inspector were exceedingly complimentary about the home and the staff. One said that she could not 'commend the staff highly enough'. Another described the progress of their placed child as being 'a complete turnaround'. One other said, 'I don't know how they have managed to do it,' when talking about their placed child and went on to say, 'They are really, really consistent.'

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

Safeguarding at the home is of a high standard, with the children and young people being kept very safe. The staff understand risks and put good controls in place to minimise these.

The staff ensure that all the children and young people understand the boundaries and expectations that are in place and generally they respect these. The staff do not use sanctions but do use physical interventions when needed. The numbers of physical interventions are high across the last year but many of these incidents are with one child who has required an intensive approach. The numbers of interventions are clearly reducing. The registered manager monitors and analyses these incidents to understand why they occur and then adjusts practice as necessary. This ensures that children and young people gain an understanding of what is expected and how to manage their own behaviours.

There have been almost no incidents of children going missing from the home. When young people do not return home on time, the staff manage this effectively, ensuring proportionality in their response.

The staff have worked with all of the children and young people in one-to-one sessions around safeguarding issues and around safe relationships, and this is also positive.

The staff operate a number of incentive schemes, which the children and young people understand and like, and which work well. They were all achieving their goals and targets and rewards of their choosing.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is very confident and experienced. He is also supported by an experienced and skilled deputy manager. Together they maintain high standards of care practices and monitor the work at the home efficiently and effectively. They are ambitious for all the children and young people and work hard to give them every opportunity they can. They clearly encourage the children and young people to have a say in the running of their home and in their care planning.

The leadership and management are outstanding because of their thorough approach to the task, attention to detail and their commitment to child-centred practice.

The staff say that the managers are supportive and approachable and that they provide good opportunities for supervision and training. The levels of training provided are high and all staff are encouraged to take additional training courses according to their interests and the needs of children and young people. This ensures that the service offered to children and young people is based on up-to-date knowledge.

The registered manager has maintained excellent working relationships and communication with both the staff at the on-site learning centre and the team of therapists. This ensures that there is an integrated service for all the children and young people, which is, in large part, responsible for their excellent progress.

The registered manager also has good relationships with external professionals and agencies and refers children and young people to them as required. These good relationships also extend to placing social workers who say that communication between

them and the home is very good.

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: 1159763

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Marcia McLoughlin

Registered manager: Cristopher Beattie

Inspector

Colin Imrie, social care inspector

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