

1247559

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides assessment and short-term care for up to five young people, aged from eight to 17, who are unable to live in a family context.

Inspection date: 22 February 2019

Judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Date of last inspection: 16 August 2018

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged outstanding at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The manager has considered the recommendations from the last inspection and has adjusted practice accordingly. Children's experiences and memories are now captured in memory books. The children keep these and take them with them to their next placement.

The home continues to deliver high standards of care and support to children. Staff provide a nurturing and calm atmosphere in the home, where children settle quickly. Children feel relaxed, content and happy in their home. They have very positive relationships with the staff and children make excellent progress from the day that they arrive. One social worker said that '[name of child] made a significant improvement' while living here.

The management team is strong. Together, its members provide excellent leadership and management in the home. They ensure that children have a positive experience living here. Furthermore, they support children to have a positive transition to their new home.

Placement matching is good. In addition, the transition arrangements are child-focused and are of an excellent standard. However, a recent decision to move a child back to the home had an impact on the home and the child's outcome. The home has learned from this experience and as a result it is changing its statement of purpose to reflect this change.

Children receive support to self-regulate their emotions. Behaviour management strategies are informed by clear assessments and plans. Staff know the children well and are consistent in their approach. Consequently, children are settled, safe and happy. When incidents do occur, managers review and analyse them to inform their future practice.

While there has been low staff turnover, there have been occasions when staff have been deployed to other homes within the organisation. This had an impact on staff morale. Managers understood the difficulties this created and looked at different ways of deploying staff in the future.

Staff work in partnership with family members and professionals to ensure that they meet children's needs in a holistic way. Furthermore, they advocate on behalf of children and ensure that children receive a service that will help and support them.

Managers support and empower staff to develop their knowledge and skills. As a result, staff grow in confidence and competence. Staff have high expectations of themselves and of each other. The standard of practice is consistently high.

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 16/08/2018 | Full | Outstanding |
| 30/05/2017 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should plan staffing levels to ensure that they meet the needs of children and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. Staffing structures should promote continuity of care from the child's perspective. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.15).
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4).

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.

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.

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: 1247559

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Marcella Bird

Registered manager: Deborah Woollams

Inspector

Lisa Gregoire-Parker, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019