

1247559

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide therapeutic care for up to six children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. The home is privately owned.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2021.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

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: 7 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/07/2021	Full	Good
29/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
22/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/08/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Six children live in the home. The home provides a spacious and homely environment in which children make good progress. It has a calm and relaxed atmosphere, which helps children to feel safe and secure.

The children receive good-quality, individualised care that meets their needs. Staff know the children well and build good relationships with them. This enables the staff to respond appropriately to children and promote their welfare. This helps children to develop confidence and resilience.

Staff support the children to maintain good physical health. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and attend all their health appointments. This helps children access specialist support to improve their physical health and well-being.

The children are attending school regularly. Staff work closely with the school, and there are open lines of communication. This is supporting the children's educational outcomes. One child is sitting their national qualifications this year and another child's reading is improving with support from staff.

The children enjoy a range of activities such as going skating, trampolining, swimming and days out. Children are supported to develop their own interests. One child goes free running twice a week and another goes to cadets. The home has a gym and a cinema room, which the children use regularly. Children also participate in community activities, including painting a bus stop and helping at a food bank.

Children are listened to. They are involved in decisions about their care and planning for the future. For example, monthly meetings take place with the children, and each week they are consulted about their day-to-day care. Managers provide feedback to the children about agreed actions.

Children know how to make a complaint. They are kept informed throughout the process and told the outcome. Managers complete learning reviews to help improve practice.

Individual work is completed with children on important issues, such as school, relationships and online safety. The children's views are recorded. However, the records do not always evidence how the individual work is helping children.

The home's therapist visits regularly and works with each child individually. The therapist supports the staff to deliver specific therapeutic work to the children. This promotes children's mental health and emotional well-being.

Staff support the children to carry out daily tasks independently in line with their individual needs, including personal care, cooking and washing. This is helping the children prepare for adult life.

Staff arrange for children to spend time with their family, including overnight stays. This helps the children to maintain their identity and continue to see the people who are important to them.

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

The children currently living in the home say that they feel safe. They can talk to staff about any worries they have.

Children receive help and support to manage their behaviour and feelings safely. Staff use a consistent therapeutic model of care. They consider the underlying causes of children's behaviours and help them to manage their emotions. This enables staff to sensitively support children who experience traumatic events.

Restraints are proportionate and used as a last resort. The recording of restraining incidents is detailed and shows a range of de-escalation strategies used in the attempts to avoid the restraints. Staff and children receive a debrief after an incident.

Assessments of risk and behaviour management plans are detailed and understood by staff. This ensures that staff take the right action when children go missing from the home. For example, staff make every effort to contact and locate the child, working closely with the police and the placing authority. Return home interviews are offered by an independent agency on each occasion.

The managers and staff know what to do in response to any allegations made. Referrals made are timely, and actions are put in place to minimise the risk to children to allow the necessary enquiries to be made.

Searches of bedrooms are carried out sensitively by staff. All searches are recorded appropriately, and children's views about the search are evident on the records. The reasons for the searches are clear and there is management oversight.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. The manager is supported by an experienced deputy manager. The managers know the children well and are positive role models for both staff and children.

The home is adequately staffed for the children currently living in the home. There is a stable, core staff team in place, which helps ensure consistency for the children.

Effective monitoring and review systems are in place. The managers complete monthly audits to ensure that they have regular oversight of all records. The

managers understand what is working well and the areas for improvement. This means that the managers and staff can identify and act on shortfalls to improve the quality of care that the children receive.

Staff describe the managers as being supportive and say that they enjoy working in the home. Staff have regular supervision. However, the records do not always evidence that staff have had an opportunity to discuss the children and reflect on their practice on an individual basis. This limits the manager's understanding of staff strengths and areas for development.

Team meetings take place regularly that allow for feedback and discussion. Child-focused meetings take place each month with the staff, clinical team and school. This helps ensure a holistic approach is carried out in the care of each individual child.

Staff receive training to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and meet the children's individual needs. For example, staff have completed training in supporting children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and protecting them from county lines and radicalisation. Staff also receive training from the clinical team in supporting children who have developmental trauma and neuro-developmental conditions. This helps staff have a good knowledge and skill base to safeguard and support children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discuss the children and reflect on their practice during individual supervision sessions. This should be recorded, as appropriate, on the staff supervision record. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)
- The registered person should ensure that there is clear evidence within the records of the impact of individual work sessions completed with children by staff. This can then be used to help further inform the children's assessments and plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)

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: 1247559

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Witherslack Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Natalie Bennett

Registered manager: David Beavers

Inspector

Dawn Walker, Social Care Inspector

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