

SC000820

Registered provider: Pear Tree Projects 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 five children and/or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The registered manager has been in post since 2007 and is appropriately qualified.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 October 2019

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2018	Full	Good
13/02/2018	Full	Good
21/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/12/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people are settled and making good progress from their starting points in most areas of their lives. New admissions to the home are well considered to ensure that care and support are provided in line with the home's statement of purpose. Care plans are bespoke, tailored to each child or young person's care requirements. A professional commented: '[Managers name] and the team are very good at understanding each child's needs. They are not afraid to try new strategies or draw in support from other services if this is what is required to help children. It doesn't feel institutional there but just like any ordinary home.'

Family time with children, young people and their families is supported well, where it is safe to do so. This helps children and young people to develop a sense of identity. Photographs are used to capture memories and the achievements of children and young people. They are collated in albums to give them special importance so that the children and young people can share their experiences and achievements with the people who are special to them.

Children and young people are consulted well. This means that they can contribute to the care that they receive. Children and young people benefit from accessing a wide range of activities. The carers have been creative in how they have sourced activities for some children and young people. For example, they have accessed clubs and activities specifically on offer to children and young people with learning difficulties. This enhances children and young people's experiences and provides opportunities for them to develop friendship groups and promote their independence.

Independent living skills are very well supported and in line with each child or young person's stage of development. Progress is regularly reviewed to ensure that the appropriate level of care and support is provided. The children and young people spoken to said that they are happy in their home and that they love the team of adults who are there to care and support them. They were able to speak confidently about their own progress. This demonstrates good participation and engagement with children and young people.

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

Risk assessment and risk management processes are highly effective. The strategies identified are creative and help to reduce the number of critical incidents in the home. Mandatory safeguarding training is kept up to date to ensure that the team of carers can confidently respond to safeguarding issues. Guest speakers have also delivered specific training within team meetings to provide evidence-based approaches to help and protect children and young people.

Missing-from-home episodes are extremely rare. The registered manager has worked collaboratively with the local police to proactively address episodes of being missing from

the home. This has been extremely effective in keeping children and young people safe. Professionals spoken to say that children and young people are safeguarded both inside the home and out in the community. One professional commented: 'In terms of safeguarding, this has got to be one of the best homes I have ever worked with. They are so effective at setting clear boundaries and managing behaviours. They have fantastic relationships with the children. I don't know what it is that they have, but it must be magic safeguarding dust.'

Children and young people are supported to help keep themselves safe. This is well evidenced through proactive and reactive key-working sessions using a range of methods, including videos and other interactive tools. Equality and diversity subjects are considered in a thoughtful way. Children and young people are educated on subjects such as radicalisation, staying safe online, bullying, relationships, racism and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), and much more. This helps children and young people to develop values that will promote prosocial behaviours as they grow into adults.

The adults caring for the children and young people recognise the need to support independence and educate the children and young people to make safe choices. Support is balanced between keeping children and young people safe and recognising that they need to take measured risks to develop appropriate skills.

Low-level disruptive behaviours are responded to very well with clear boundaries and de-escalation techniques. Proactive working and positive reinforcement are the favoured strategies to manage behaviours effectively. This means that the use of physical intervention remains significantly low. The registered manager reviews all records to monitor practice and ensure that behaviour management remains effective.

Restorative approaches are used to address behaviours of concern. They are fair and helpful for children and young people. In this way, they can consider and reflect on their own actions and the impact that their behaviour may have on others. Imaginative approaches are used to help to engage children and young people. This means that children and young people benefit from accessing this intervention in a meaningful way.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the home. Safeguarding is explicitly referred to in supervisions and team meetings. This demonstrates that safeguarding is at the forefront of the team's thinking.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is appropriately qualified and experienced for the position held. He is supported in his role by a resilient and stable staff team. This enables children and young people to benefit from consistent care and support. The comments made by the children and young people are positive. They state that the thing that they value most is their relationships with the adults who care for them.

The registered manager uses the varied skills within his team. He supports his team of staff in their professional development. Since the last inspection, his deputy manager has

moved on to manage another home within the service. Another member of the team has been appointed as deputy manager and there are plans to support the progression of other staff members. The team reports that training opportunities, qualifications and professional development are encouraged. The team feels motivated and valued, as a result. Furthermore, the staff are supportive of each other and recognise that they all have something to contribute to deliver the very best care to children and young people.

The registered manager welcomes feedback from his independent visitor and inspector to drive improvements forward.

The registered manager and his team work well with a range of professionals and agencies to ensure that children and young people receive the appropriate level of care and support. Some children and young people have moved on from the home successfully because of the progress that they have made.

The registered manager has good monitoring systems in place. He regularly reviews the quality of care and seeks feedback from his staff team on how to improve the quality of care for children and young people. He is very present in the home. This enables him to monitor and observe practice. He has a positive relationship with the children, young people and his team, and this helps in the smooth running of the home.

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 difference 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: SC000820

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pear Tree Projects Limited

Registered provider address: Bolam, Darlington, County Durham DL2 2UP

Responsible individual: David Bartlett

Registered manager: Sean Cooper

Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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