

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 owned and managed by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to five children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties. There were five children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2008. The registered manager holds a suitable qualification for this role.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 1 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/11/2022	Full	Good
15/09/2021	Full	Good
08/10/2019	Full	Good
31/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress. This is supported by a stable staff team that is knowledgeable about the children and has built up good relationships. One professional said that a child had 'flourished' since living at the home, and one child's progress was described as 'thriving'. Staff challenge professionals if they are not providing or pursuing access to the support that the child needs.

The complaints process is accessible and understood by children in the home. The children's guide is shared with children before they come to live at the home. It is written in a child-friendly format and is available to the children. Further complaint forms can be easily found in the home. This means children can make a complaint or a confidential complaint if they want to.

All the children have good attendance in their educational settings and participate well in their learning. Staff encourage children to participate in their learning and help children reach their own goals. The staff use learning opportunities in the home to supplement children's education by completing recognised learning, which is shared with the schools to promote attainment.

Staff support the children to access and experience new opportunities and to explore hobbies and interests. Children benefit from a widened experience base and learning opportunities. Children make memories, which are captured by the staff team and seen in the photos around the home.

Children are supported to maintain relationships that are important to them. Staff work with the family or former carers to promote these relationships and encourage consistency. Any issues that arise in family time with family members are challenged sensitively to promote and maintain the relationship for the child and ensure the child's voice is heard.

Children are provided with positive praise. Any achievements are recognised, and staff record how they have been celebrated. This is a strengths-based approach that reinforces the achievements of each child. Incidents that result in consequences are limited. However, records reflect a lack of a restorative approach to help children understand the impact of their behaviour.

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

Children feel safe and trust staff to care for them. One child said, 'Everyone cares about me.' Staff listen to children and advocate for them to ensure their voice is heard. This means children participate in planning and reviewing plans for their future.

Staff understand children's risks. Risk assessments and plans are comprehensive and regularly updated by the children's key workers. Staff are provided with clear guidance and strategies to manage identified risks to keep children safe.

Staff are skilled at de-escalating incidents, which means physical interventions are a last resort. Staff are trained to use physical interventions when necessary. Debriefs are completed within timescales to ensure the child's voice is heard and their views are explored. However, children are not offered an independent person to speak to as part of a debrief to ensure they have every opportunity to explore their views and be supported to reflect.

Safeguarding incidents and written records are completed with detail and context with management oversight. This allows incidents that happen to be explored and points of learning to be identified. However, the registered manager has not notified Ofsted of incidents that are serious or identified as a risk to a child. This means that Ofsted cannot be assured that all actions have been completed to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is qualified and experienced. The registered manager is knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the home. There are monitoring systems in place to track progress and ensure quality and effectiveness in the care provided. This supports the registered manager in identifying areas for development.

Staff feel valued and supported by the management team. One staff member said, 'I feel a valued member of the team here.' Another staff member said, 'I have found the management is supportive.' Staff can speak openly regarding any aspect of work or personal issues. Team meetings are child-focused and invite staff to share their views, which are considered in future planning.

All staff access training to be knowledgeable in their role. This is regularly reviewed to ensure continued development. Learning completed is shared in team meetings as a refresher to ensure consistency and skills in the approach from the staff team. Where there are training gaps, these are identified and addressed quickly by the registered manager to prevent delay.

The registered manager has measures in place to ensure oversight in all aspects of the running of the home. The registered manager uses manager oversight audit measures in place, which ensure that the registered manager can scrutinise the care provided by the staff and that it is provided to the high quality they expect. Where it is not good enough, action is taken to address it.

Staff receive regular supervision that is child-focused. However, supervision is not reflective to support staff in exploring the care they provide or the impact on themselves.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	18 June 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that children are encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access advocacy support to help them with this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on

their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC000820

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pear Tree Projects Limited

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

Responsible individual: David Bartlett

Registered manager: Sean Cooper

Inspector

Kate Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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