

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC000820
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	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	Susan Atkinson-Millmoor

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
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 good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. The children and young people are safe and settled in the home. They continue to make good progress and are supported by a strong, knowledgeable staff team. There have been no changes to the staff team or to the group of children and young people since the last inspection. This offers stability and consistency, which makes possible the progression that is seen in all areas of the lives of children and young people. Education is valued and well supported. The majority of the children and young people attend the provider's school provision and have 100% attendance. The fact that a member of staff attends the education provision with the children and young people each day ensures consistent approach shared approach to managing behaviours. This enables the young people to feel safe in both environments. A social worker said: '[Name] is definitely progressing. Her confidence has grown and she is enjoying school.' Another child attends a local mainstream school and has settled well. Staff attend the school and pick the child up each day so they can ensure that any issues can be discussed at an early point. This will contribute to the sustainability of this school placement. The relationships between the staff team and the children and young people are positive and effective. These relationships are characterised by physical demonstrations of love and warmth, a sense of nurturing, and good humour. This helps children and young people to feel safe and secure, thus enabling their development. A social worker said: 'I am really impressed with the home, it is one of the best I have been involved in. I can see a real difference in [name]. She is a lot happier and is dealing with her emotions better.' Contact arrangements with families are varied. These arrangements are appropriate to individual children's and young people's circumstances. Records demonstrate that the team keep in regular contact with and update family members when appropriate. In addition, contact is supported through supervision of visits or, when required, by transporting children and young people, or their families, to suitable venues. The incidents of missing from home for the current group of children and young	

people are infrequent, but are addressed promptly by the staff team if they do occur. Physical intervention is rarely used and records demonstrate that, if it is deemed necessary, it is carried out within guidelines. The use of sanctions is minimal. The manager and staff team prefer a restorative approach combined with incentives for positive behaviour. This allows children and young people to learn to manage their own behaviour and understand its impact on themselves and on others.

Leadership and management is strong and effective. Practice and development in the home are addressed by the experienced registered manager, who is supported by a deputy. Both have recently attended training in reflective practice to assist them in dealing with practice issues in the staff team.

No new staff have joined the team since the last inspection. Supervisions are carried out regularly with the staff team and now include evidence of reflective practice. A member of staff commented that communication between the team members is 'open and honest'. Team meetings are held regularly. Records of the meetings demonstrate that children and young people remain at the centre of practice. This ensures that members of staff are supported in their development and are able to continually improve the care provided to children and young people. A member of staff said: 'It is superb here. The manager and team are very supportive.'

The home is large and comfortable. It is well maintained and has adequate facilities that provide space for group and individual activities and offer a place for meetings when necessary.

There are no requirements or recommendations from this inspection.

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2016	Full	Good
09/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/01/2016	Full	Good
24/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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Manchester
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