

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC000820
Inspector	Michael, David Charnley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Pear Tree Projects Limited
Registered person address	Toy Top Farm Houghton Bank, Heighington Darlington County Durham DL2 2UQ
Responsible individual	David Anthony John Bartlett
Registered manager	Sean Thomas Cooper
Date of last inspection	10/11/2014

Inspection date	24/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

Young people continue to make good progress at this home. They benefit from the dedicated care and support of a stable and consistent staff team who continue to provide them with the necessary skills and guidance in promoting their development furthermore to keep them safe.

Staff maintain an environment that helps young people feel at home and relaxed. They are able to make choices. This allows them to have their own personal space and privacy or partake in group activities with their peers whether it be simply watching television or playing on the games console.

Relationships between the young people are generally positive. They are encouraged to be open about their feelings and views if anything is worrying or upsetting them. This enables them to manage their emotions and behaviours appropriately. Although there have been minor disputes between young people the quick intervention of staff through a process of mediation has prevented behaviours escalating unnecessarily. This helps protect and sustain relationships within the home. Young people feel supported and listened to by staff when raising concerns and happy with the manner in which they have been dealt with. This helps them feel valued and respected as individuals.

Young people continue to learn and develop the domestic skills needed to prepare them for the transition to adulthood including ironing their own clothes, cleaning and keeping their bedrooms tidy. In some instances, additional input by staff particularly around bedroom tidiness would be beneficial. Some young people need more support than others in completing such tasks but overall young people are cooperative and recognise it is part and parcel of everyday life. Young people are given guidance in valuing money and managing their own finances. One young person managed successfully to pay instalments to purchase a bike over a period of

time, thus demonstrating tenacity in saving up for things.

Young people continue to benefit from specialist support services focussing on areas such as self-protection and coping strategies. Such input aids their emotional well-being and promote their growing ability to manage in society as they make the progression towards independence.

Young people show good commitment in attending regular appointments with health professionals such as dentist, doctors and dietician. They are compliant in meeting their specific health needs for example, self-medicating. This means that young people learn about the importance of attending appointments to promote good health.

Young people continue to maintain links with their respective families through carefully planned contact sessions facilitated by the home's staff and placing social workers, with the aim to make it a positive and enjoyable experience for all concerned. Staff have good insight into the anxieties and uncertainties experienced by some young people surrounding contact, pre-empting possible negative effects. They show good empathy, giving opportunities for young people to talk about their feelings in private.

Educationally, young people continue to make good progress with a high level of school attendance and a positive attitude to learning. Staff are innovative in identifying ways and means of overcoming obstacles to learning such as use of kindle to promote an interest in reading. They support young people well both in the school environment and on the farm, enabling young people to experience a wide variety of educational and practical experiences. This is having a positive impact and contributing to young people making choices about their potential career paths.

There have been no incidents that require notification to Ofsted, however, there is the capacity for the home to improve upon the recording of safeguarding incidents relating to young people as it is difficult to see in its current form a clear trail of events in response to allegations and to account for any follow ups with outside agencies.

Requirements and recommendations raised following the last full inspection have been met.

Staff continue to be supported and led well by a manager who is relevantly qualified and experienced. There are good systems in place for monitoring the quality of care practice and support to young people. The latest report which reviews the quality of care, submitted by the Registered Manager, demonstrates through a process of consultation with staff, young people, parents, social workers how continued monitoring and oversight of care practices contribute to promoting the best outcomes for young people.

Staff demonstrate that they genuinely want young people to achieve to the best of their ability. They are knowledgeable of the young people with a good insight into their needs. They work in unison with outside agencies including social workers, health professionals to promote young people's overall development and esteem.

Information about this children's home

The home accommodates up to five young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/11/2014	Full	good
20/02/2014	Interim	good progress
05/11/2013	Full	good
14/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- demonstrate effective partnership with other agencies concerned with child protection by keeping a running log of events including dates and times of calls made with whom when making referrals and seeking updates on investigations to outcome (NMS 4)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.