

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 provides care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2008.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home. The inspector spoke to all the children.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 October 2025

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: 5 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/11/2024	Full	Good
19/03/2024	Full	Good
01/11/2022	Full	Good
15/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home provides a warm and welcoming environment where children can relax and enjoy quality time together or on their own. It offers a spacious and safe environment designed to meet the children's needs. Children say the home is a good place to live. Staff are nurturing and have built trusting and positive relationships with the children.

Children's care plans are individualised and written in a child-friendly manner that is easy to understand. When children's moving-on plans do not proceed as expected, staff work with professionals and parents to ensure that alternative plans are safe and well considered. On one occasion, staff continued to support a child's choice to move back to the family home even though the move was unplanned.

Staff understand the children's emotional well-being needs and how trauma affects them. They are skilled at meeting each child's diversity needs, including those exploring their identity. When children have unrealistic expectations, staff identify these, and they respond sympathetically and with honesty. The registered manager is keen for staff to help children develop positive self-confidence and their identities, despite their additional needs.

Children attend education regularly. They participate in various learning opportunities at home and through outdoor activities. Children enjoy the time they spend on the home's farm and at the stables, where they also ride horses. This keeps the children physically fit, and the equine activities support their emotional well-being. In addition, staff enable children to develop practical skills while they earn extra pocket money.

Staff actively encourage children to spend time with people who are important to them. On one occasion, staff helped a child reunite with family members who they had been separated from, expanding the child's wider family circle. A parent praised the care and support staff provided for their child and said, 'Staff always want the best for my child.' Professionals describe staff as 'caring' and commend their clear communication about children's needs and the progress they make.

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

Children say they feel happy and safe. They say that staff make them feel welcome and are always nice. One child said, 'Everything is amazing.' Children say the house rules are fair and that there is nothing they would change.

Staff understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. Leaders and managers are introducing child-friendly risk assessments that children will read and sign. Staff lead by example and have consistent approaches to managing children's behaviours. They build

positive relationships to encourage good communication. As a result, children feel confident in staff, and they experience fewer significant incidents.

Children know how to raise complaints. Staff supported one child in making a formal complaint to the local authority about delays in being able to see their parent before they passed away. This support helped the child feel cared for and loved.

Staff carry out meaningful monthly key-work discussions with each child. This helps children learn from their experiences. They participate in discussions about various topics, and their views are clearly documented. Children also benefit from regular discussions with their social workers, the independent visitor and their teachers. An education professional praised a child's improved mood and stated, 'The child receives a combination of nurture and good advice and genuine care from the staff.'

Staff take children's worries seriously. When children with learning difficulties make disclosures that are unfounded, staff respond with kindness and understanding and use a sensitive, non-judgemental approach. This helps children understand the reality of the situation while also acknowledging their perception and confusion. This gives children the confidence to continue to raise any worries or concerns they may have with staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed to helping children recover from trauma and focuses on their needs. The registered manager takes a hands-on approach to children's care, for example, by spending one evening a week helping them clean their rooms. The registered manager occasionally takes the children to outdoor events and holidays, acting as a tour guide. This allows him to spend quality time with them.

Leaders and managers advocate for the children. They have positive working relationships with professionals and follow the home's escalation process. They challenge professionals when plans do not progress or when documents are delayed. This ensures that staff stay fully informed and up to date with the children's plans.

Staff speak proudly about the stability and care they provide and report a positive team culture. Children express their views freely, and complaints are rare. When children share their views in their meetings, they receive feedback through the 'you said, we did' forms. Staff ensure that feedback is written to the children in language that is kind and caring.

Staff celebrate children's success, which might range from having a good day to achieving in football. They mark every milestone, and they keep memorabilia for the children to reflect on. Celebrations show thoughtful parenting, and they help children who have no previous experiences of being celebrated to feel loved and valued.

Children attend their meetings, which are then reviewed in staff meetings. Staff meetings are held fortnightly. They are well attended and provide a focus on the children and their needs. Each meeting sets clear targets, which are reviewed for progress. In addition, staff carry out daily handover meetings to review the previous day's events.

This helps all staff to stay attuned to the needs of the children and the support they will need for the day.

The registered manager has an ambitious vision for staff to meet expectations to enable children to achieve positive outcomes. This includes enhancing staff's skills, increasing their responsibilities, and delegating tasks such as updating risk assessments. Staff benefit from monthly supervision sessions where children are a focus of discussions. However, supervisors do not consistently review previous actions set during these discussions. This creates a risk of missed opportunities for development.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision that allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children in their care. In particular, the registered person should ensure that all actions agreed are reviewed and recorded in supervision records. ('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

Tenji Wesa, Social Care Inspector

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