

# SC000820

Registered provider: Pear Tree Projects Ltd

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The registered manager has been in post since 2007 and is appropriately qualified.

**Inspection dates:** 31 July to 1 August 2018

**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:** 13 February 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 13/02/2018      | Full            | Good                    |
| 21/03/2017      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness  |
| 06/12/2016      | Full            | Good                    |
| 09/03/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The home has been settled, with no children or young people being admitted or leaving since the previous inspection. There has also only been one change within the staff team. The children and young people have very good relationships with the staff. The staff are nurturing and caring and provide good structure and routines for the children and young people. The home is safe, comfortable and homely and the children and young people are happy there.

All the children and young people are making good progress in their lives. They respond well to the staff and to the nurturing environment. They can make progress in learning independence skills and social skills and are being supported to deal with past difficulties.

Education is given a high priority. Two of the children attend mainstream school and are doing well. Two young people attend the organisation's alternative education provision and are also doing well. Attendance at school is high for all the children and young people and they are well supported outside of school to do extra study and to do their homework.

The children and young people are also well supported by the staff and by external specialist workers to undertake individualised work, which helps them make progress with their emotional health and well-being. The standard of this key work is high, and it tackles relevant issues.

There are lots of opportunities for children and young people to develop interests and hobbies. The provider organisation has a working farm and stables, various workshops and a range of staff qualified to provide specialist activities. These are very popular and two of the young people spend a great deal of time working with and riding the horses. This not only provides a great hobby but may also offer future employment opportunities. The children and young people also attend a range of clubs and groups outside the organisation and this provides opportunities to mix with others and to form wider friendships.

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

The children and young people at this home have been kept very safe. The staff understand risks and make good assessments of risk. They are also able to put good controls in place to minimise risks, both in the home and outside in the community.

Most of the children and young people have high levels of staff supervision, but this is relaxed when appropriate. There are very clear routines in the home and the boundaries and expectations that the staff put in place are consistent and firm. This ensures that the children and young people feel safe in the home and have a safe base from which to explore the outside world.

A number of the children and young people were involved in risky behaviour, such as going missing, prior to coming to the home, but this has reduced significantly once they have settled in the home. This progress is linked to the care and support that the staff offer.

One young person has had an unsettled spell after they had formed a brief friendship with a young person from outside the home. They developed some challenging behaviour and did go missing from the home on a few occasions for short periods. However, staff have worked exceptionally hard to both locate and return them safely each time and to educate the young person about the dangers of unsafe relationships. This worked extremely well, and the young person has not only settled back down but has also developed a greater understanding and awareness of their own safety.

There have been almost no other safeguarding issues within the home. The staff have used sanctions and physical interventions, but these are few and far between and are always appropriate. The staff are patient and spend time explaining about the effects and consequences of behaviour to the children and young people. This gentle, persistent way of working helps the children and young people understand and helps build self-esteem and resilience.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager is highly experienced, skilled and confident. He has built a strong staff team whose members work well together and who are enthusiastic and dedicated to the work. He is able to oversee the running of the home and to monitor care practices as well as maintaining excellent relationships with the children and young people and spending time with them.

He is a strong advocate of the aims and objectives of the organisation and is a good role model. He supports his staff team well with good supervision and training and is open and approachable with them.

The registered manager has formed good links with outside professionals and agencies and this is beneficial for the children and young people. He has excellent links to the local schools attended by some of the children, and good links with various mental health teams as well as other specialist workers. When external services are slow or do not offer the service needed he is able to challenge this or search for alternative resources.

At the previous inspection there was a requirement and a recommendation about improving record-keeping. The registered manager has made significant improvements in this regard and the requirement and recommendation have been met. The home is part-way through introducing the organisation's new electronic recording system and this is starting to work well.

## **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 differences 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 Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Pear Tree House, Bolam, Darlington, County Durham  
DL2 2UP

**Responsible individual:** David Bartlett

**Registered manager:** Sean Cooper

## Inspector

Colin Imrie, social care inspector

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