

SC007608

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 operated by a private company. It is registered with Ofsted to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 January 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
---	--------------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
---	-------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
---	-------------

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 3 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people make outstanding progress as a result of the care that they receive from the dedicated team of adults who care for them on a daily basis.
- The registered manager and staff team consistently provide a high quality of care to the young people. Care plans are individualised, robust and up to date.
- Young people thrive on clear and consistent boundaries. The staff team educates young people to understand why actions are taken. This helps young people to learn and make excellent progress.
- Relationships flourish between the young people and the staff team. This is because of the transparent way that the staff work with the young people.
- The staff are highly effective in creating a family atmosphere in the home. Young people experience 'family time', such as eating together at meal times, movie nights in, and pamper sessions. This is balanced with young people having opportunities to spend time pursuing individual interests.
- The staff team proactively encourages young people to access and participate in a varied range of activities of their choice. This enables young people to feel integrated in their own community and develops social learning.
- The manager is aspirational about all aspects of managing the home. She demonstrates highly effective and strong leadership qualities. She is passionate about further developments and is willing to consider advice from inspectors to drive improvements forward.
- The manager creates a strong safeguarding culture in the home. This is based on the application of recognised research to inform daily practice. This benefits the staff team to understand the needs of the young people that it cares for.
- There is clear evidence of the manager and staff team consulting with a range of professionals to ensure appropriate input into the young people's lives. Even when young people experience setbacks, the staff team and the manager reflect on different strategies to provide the right level of support and intervention.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Safeguarding to be included as a standalone item agenda within the manager's own supervision.
- The manager to develop a system to collate feedback on the effectiveness of the home's practice from a range of sources, including staff, young people and stakeholders.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/09/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/11/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- The processes the registered person puts in place to enable such a review to take place, should allow for a report to be generated at least once every six months. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

Specifically in relation to collating the feedback obtained from stakeholders, staff and young people.

- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

In particular, safeguarding should be a standard item agenda in the manager's own supervision.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The young people receive individualised care from a dedicated team of adults who care for them. The staff team is enthusiastic and committed to progressing plans for young people. There are excellent monitoring systems in place to ensure that care plans and risk assessments are continually meeting the needs of young people. When young people experience difficulties, the manager and the staff team respond to these sensitively. Action is not taken in isolation and the manager and staff team ensure that they draw on the advice of other professionals. The staff team is excellent at responding to the underlying causes of presenting behaviour. This means that young people experience a more therapeutic response to having their daily needs met.

The manager and staff team know the young people well. This enables the staff team to build and sustain positive relationships with the young people. The young people say that they love living in the home. One young person, who is being prepared for independent living, said, 'I will refuse to leave. It's my home and I don't want to leave.' A professional working with this young person commented, '(name) doesn't want to leave. She is the most stable she has ever been. This is because of how fantastic the staff are with her. They have brought her on, it's unbelievable how much her confidence is growing.'

The home is situated a short distance from the local town centre. It is well maintained and decorated to complement the period of the home. The home is warm, welcoming and calming. This is due to the staff and home's manager being organised and creating a homely feel. Fresh flowers are displayed, along with craft items that the young people

have made. The kitchen is where everyone congregates to enjoy chatting, eating and generally socialising. Young people also enjoy snuggling up in the living area where they frequently watch movies together.

The home is continually seeing improvements, both structurally and more aesthetically. The young people are involved and give their views on what they would like to see change and improve. Most recently, the loft space has been renovated. The idea for this came from a mood board drawn up by the young people and, as a result, it is now called the 'Lioness Den'. It is a comfortable and peaceful space where the young people can relax by reading, listening to music, playing their guitar or enjoying pamper sessions. The den has its own nail bar should the young people wish to indulge in beauty treatments. This enables the young people to have a sense of ownership and take pride in their home.

The young people enjoy spending time with the staff team. This is because the staff team and manager respond to them in a consistent manner. Young people are clear on the boundaries and have good routines in place. One young person said, 'If you make a complaint and it's serious, they do take it seriously.' This makes young people feel physically safe as well as emotionally safe.

The young people are making excellent progress in their education, both physically and socially. The young people trust the adults that care for them and thrive on the care that they receive. There have been no 'missing' episodes for approximately two years.

The young people have impeccable manners and etiquette in and outside the home. When negative behaviours do present, they are responded to promptly and in a nurturing and restorative way. During inspection, mutual respect was observed between young people and the staff members. The manager leads by example and the staff pride themselves on being good role models for the young people. This sets a benchmark for young people and will help guide them when they move to independent living.

A member of staff said, 'We all work well together like one big family.' She then went on to praise a piece of work that her colleague had done recently. There is no preciousness amongst the staff and all have a shared and collective goal to improve the experiences of young people and keep them safe.

The young people have their own pets, including two guinea pigs and a rabbit. This gives young people an opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility and offers them opportunities to develop feelings of empathy that will assist them in social situations.

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

The young people say that they feel safe in their home. The staff team is excellent at tackling sensitive issues with the young people. Issues are discussed when they arise and during key-worker sessions. Areas covered include extremism, radicalisation, child exploitation, sexual health and safety online. Financial abuse is discussed with those young people ready to move on to independent living. The manager is innovative and thinks creatively when introducing wider safeguarding topics with the young people. This engages the young people's interest and enhances successful outcomes for them.

There are no incidents of exploitation, radicalisation or extremism in the home. The manager does not become complacent and there is clear evidence of safeguarding topics being reflected on and revisited in team meetings and staff supervisions. This creates an excellent safeguarding culture in the home and the staff team are clear on how to respond to concerns should they arise.

One young person recently attended a seminar on how to stay safe in the city. She delivered a presentation in the home based on her learning. It was well received by the staff and the young people. This makes young people experience equality and feel valued through making positive contributions. Additionally, the young people approach staff if they have a worry or concern. This enables the staff team to take quick and decisive action.

Risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly. The in-depth locality risk assessment supports individual risk assessments for the young people. The manager is dynamic and forward thinking and has a vision to drive developments forward. Risk assessments are part of the target area she aims to improve. This demonstrates a continual commitment to safeguard the young people in the home.

Health and safety is taken seriously at the home. Fire drills are carried out monthly and where necessary. Maintenance issues are responded to and young people are advised of any activities in the home. This demonstrates that all aspects of the care that young people receive is of a high standard.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is suitably qualified and holds a level 5 qualification. She is supported in her role by a dedicated staff team. All staff are appropriately qualified and have completed mandatory training. Additionally, the manager looks at imaginative ways to bring in additional learning experiences for the staff team. This helps the staff to understand and manage the complex needs of the young people that they care for. It also assists the staff team to understand wider societal issues that could have an adverse impact on the young people.

The manager is dynamic in her approach and well organised. There is excellent evidence of case file audits and monitoring systems in place. This means that young people receive the right level of support when needed. When young people do experience difficulties and are not making progress, the manager is able to respond swiftly. She is not afraid to try new strategies to help move young people on. This is because her practice is driven by recognised research. The manager and the staff team have excellent working relationships with other professionals. There is evidence of consultations taking place to ensure that Working Together protocols are followed. A social worker commented, 'The manager and the staff are fully supportive of (name) and prioritise her therapeutic sessions. They do their homework. They do a good job and advocate for young people to get them the help that they need. They really understand what is going on behind the behaviours.'

The manager is highly effective at driving improvements forward. Her ability to recognise the home's strengths as well of areas of development make her an ambitious and influential leader. The home currently has no system to record feedback or compliments

on the home's practice. This would assist the manager to develop better strategies for improvements and evidence examples of good practice.

The manager is assertive and she will challenge her staff and other stakeholders where necessary. She is confident in her abilities and encourages a culture where there is no blame or criticism, but inspires reflective learning to improve practice. She said, 'I want my team to be hungry to learn.' This means that she can identify any shortfalls in the staff team's practice and offer support to develop skills.

The manager includes safeguarding as a standalone agenda in the staff team meetings and in supervisions. There was no evidence of safeguarding as a standalone agenda in her supervision records. This would further strengthen the overall safeguarding culture with this home.

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: SC007608

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pear Tree Projects Limited

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

Responsible individual: David Bartlett

Registered manager: Paula Kelly

Inspector:

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018