

SC064931

Registered provider: Pear Tree Projects Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private company. It provides care for up to eight children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were eight children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2018.

Inspection date: 12 March 2025

Date of last inspection: 4 December 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The use of consequences remains an area of concern. This includes the continued view of leaders and managers that not all children can make use of the holiday home owned by the provider even when the rationale is out of children's control. This means not all children have experiences that are equal to their peers.

The manager and staff continue to work with children around their use of technology. All children have access to a mobile phone with conditions of use that are in line with their individual needs. This helps children to develop independence and their understanding of the online world in a safe environment.

Staff and managers take appropriate action to safeguard children when incidents occur. Additional safeguarding measures are put in place to promote the safety of children and reduce the risk of further incidents happening.

The manager has made changes to their monitoring of the home. This includes updating all children's risk assessments and reviewing these on a frequent basis. Staff and the manager are also reflecting on incidents when they occur, to understand triggers and patterns for children's behaviours.

Staff have spoken about the positive relationships they have with the children. Children have felt able to share concerns and make disclosures regarding incidents which have happened in the home. This demonstrates the trust between children and staff.

Maintenance and improvement to the interior of the home is ongoing. Children's bedrooms have been painted and repairs have been completed. The communal areas of the home are also being refreshed with some additional redecoration. This helps to improve the home environment for children.

Not all of the requirements made at the last inspection have been met and have therefore been reissued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/12/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/03/2024	Full	Good
15/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
01/03/2022	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19 (1)) This requirement has been reissued.	7 May 2025
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered	7 May 2025

person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv)) This requirement has been reissued.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(h)) This requirement has been reissued.	7 May 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information about children in a non-stigmatising way. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. This particularly relates to the recording of complaints made by children. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC064931

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: Diana Hewick-Crawford

Inspectors

Kerry Chater, Social Care Inspector
Deb Duffy, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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