

SC444289

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 run by a private organisation and is registered for the care and accommodation of up to four children and/or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, learning difficulties and/or mental disorders. The manager was registered in 2012.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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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: 5 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
30/01/2018	Full	Outstanding
08/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/11/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people develop excellent relationships with their carers. They are provided with exceptional care that supports the continued progress that they make in all areas from their starting points. Children and young people spoken to say that they recognise their own progress and achievements, which makes them feel proud and confident.

From the point of admission the children and young people experience stability and consistency of care. Carers work extremely well with a wide range of professionals in relation to the health, education, and emotional, social and psychological well-being of the children and young people. This means that children and young people access the right level of support when needed and are thriving as a result.

The expressed wishes and feelings of children and young people are given great significance. Carers discuss and reflect on children's and young people's views in fortnightly team meetings. This maintains a focus for carers to ensure that the nurturing care continues to enhance children's and young people's daily living experiences. This helps children and young people trust that their carers will support them in areas that they identify as being important to them.

Individual care plans and records are meticulously maintained and address the full range of the children's and young people's needs. Time with family and friends is especially well considered and supported where it is safe to do so. This helps children and young people to have a sense of belonging and enables them to have positive experiences and maintain links to significant people in their lives.

Children and young people benefit from the wide range of planned activities that they can access in the home and out in the local community. Activities include cooking, horse-riding, trampolining, coastal walks and much more. This provides structure and routine for the children and young people. Furthermore, the children and young people are provided opportunities to form friendship groups as well as benefiting from a healthy lifestyle.

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

Risk management processes are good and help protect children and young people from risk of harm. Detailed risk assessments identify an awareness of known risks, with clear and detailed instructions for carers to follow. Risk assessments are continually reviewed and updated where necessary. Children and young people are better protected as a result.

Children and young people are supported by their carers to help them to keep themselves safe in a range of settings, including how to access the digital world safely. Proactive key-worker sessions and AQA awards enable the children and young people to

discuss relevant topics on a regular basis with their carers. This supports children's and young people's learning and development.

Supervision levels of children have not always been consistent. This has led to a small number of incidents happening since the last inspection. On these occasions, carers followed the appropriate protocols to ensure that the immediate protection of children and young people is sought. Children and young people are consulted following incidents and reassured on the future actions to be taken by their carers to help protect them. A young person commented, 'This is the best home I have ever lived in. I just love it so much that I am never going to leave. I can talk to any adult in here and I know they will help me.' Supporting children and young people to share their concerns means that their carers can take swift action to better protect them.

There has been an isolated incident where one young person was reported absent from home. Carers had lost sight of her in a public place. The appropriate protocols were followed to aid her safe return. Support was offered to the young person following the incident and strategies in her risk assessment were updated to prevent further incidents happening. This reassures children and young people that their carers will help and protect them.

A new admission saw an increase in the use of physical interventions for one young person already living in the home. However, more recently such incidents have reduced. There is good management oversight of incidents to ensure that interventions are appropriate and within practice guidance protocols. Children and young people are consulted following such incidents and their views are used to scrutinise the care that they receive. This shows children and young people that their views are important, which helps them to feel valued.

Sanctions are used to address low-level disruptive behaviours. Firm boundaries and good routines manage such behaviours well. When sanctions are used, carers consider restorative approaches. Children and young people report that the sanctions used are fair. This demonstrates that the sanctions used are effective and support children and young people to reflect and learn, promoting prosocial behaviours.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is highly experienced and qualified for the position held. He is supported in his role by a stable staff team. The deputy manager is newly appointed but has worked in the home for several years, therefore there has been no disruption for children and young people.

The manager is extremely aspirational for children and young people. He is assertive in his challenge of other professionals where there are shortfalls in the quality of care provided to the children and young people. Additionally, he ensures that the children and young people have access to their own independent advocacy. This means that the children and young people access the right level of support and can have their views represented by someone independent of the home.

The manager and staff team maintain excellent relationships with a range of professionals to ensure that holistic care is provided to the children and young people. Proactive levels of communication ensure that the children's and young people's care plans remain relevant. Forward-thinking approaches to care planning arrangements support the excellent progress that children and young people make. Furthermore, young people transitioning to semi-independence or independent care have positive experiences of moving on. They maintain contact with their carers when they leave the home as they value the support that they receive.

Feedback from a range of professionals was impressive, with comments such as 'insightful' and 'amazing' being phrases commonly used. One professional commented, 'The manager is very organised. The team is very experienced and insightful into the individual needs of the children. They really understand the behaviours of children and are empathetic to their past experiences. They really invest in their relationships with the children and the massive progress that the children make speaks volumes.'

The manager uses his own internal monitoring systems as well as feedback from his independent visitor to build on the home's strengths. This is highly effective at sustaining and driving improvements forward and securing excellent outcomes for children and young people.

The registered manager recognises the importance of developing a skilled staff team to deliver the best possible care to children and young people. He provides opportunities for reflective discussions in team meetings and staff supervisions. He has sourced training that is relevant to the needs of the children and young people. Training includes foetal alcohol, post-traumatic stress, epilepsy and much more. This means that children and young people are provided with consistent care from a skilled and knowledgeable staff team.

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: SC444289

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: Gary Ramsbottom

Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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