

1244108

Registered provider: Bay Tree House (Gravesend) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three young people. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides holistic and therapeutic care for children with learning needs, language and communication difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders.

The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2017.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 to 6 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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, 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
<p>The registered person may permit an individual to start work at the home despite the fact that the requirement in paragraph (3) (d) has not been met if—</p> <p>the registered person has taken all reasonable steps to obtain full information about all matters in Schedule 2 in respect of the individual, but the enquiries in relation to paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2 are incomplete;</p> <p>and full and satisfactory information has been obtained in relation to the matters in paragraph 1 and 2 of Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(7) (a)(b))</p>	31/01/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

In particular, ensure that staff consistently record debriefings and information regarding health appointments. Staff should ensure that the environmental risk assessment, location risk assessment and supervision contracts are dated.

- Ensure that staff understand the definition of restraint as identified in regulation 2 (1). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.41)

In particular, ensure that restraint records only include incidents where staff use force on children or restrict their liberty of movement.

- Ensure that staff appraisals take into account, where reasonable and practical, of the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are thriving in a nurturing, therapeutic-based, family-style environment. All children have been living at the home for approximately one year, and they have a sense of belonging. A child confirmed, 'I love it here,' and a social worker stated that this is the best placement their child had ever had.

Children benefit from good health arrangements and access to a variety of therapies, for example play and yoga therapy. Older children benefit from sensitive support regarding sexual health services. Medication procedures have been strengthened to safeguard children, and this ensures that staff securely store, administer and audit medicines.

Staff strongly advocate for the children's needs, especially in relation to education. This results in children who have spent long periods out of education being reintegrated successfully into schools. The home also offers children the opportunity to work towards vocational certificates in a wide range of topics.

Children are welcomed as part of their local community and neighbourhood, and they make a positive contribution to society. They recycle household waste, actively support charitable events and they are cadets in the St John Ambulance service. Children enjoy an extensive range of activities which offer them new life experiences, for example bushcraft. Children contribute to their care planning and create their own targets, which are broken down into achievable goals. Children have a voice within the home, influencing their individual incentives, sanctions, activity and menu planning and staff recruitment.

All children are developing their independent living and personal development skills. They learn to appreciate equality, diversity and difference, including, for example, visiting a local temple. Staff actively challenge racist and disrespectful language, and sexuality is openly discussed. This practice enables children to develop a positive self-identity.

Memory books capture children's pleasant memories of their lives at the home. Currently, staff are undertaking life-story work training to enable them to meaningfully contribute to this area of work. Relatives appreciate how staff facilitate family meetings that enable them to maintain a positive link with their children.

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

All children spoken with said that they feel safe. Practices in the home are designed to safeguard children.

There are no issues involving child sexual exploitation, extremism or risks of radicalisation. Staff pride themselves on having been able to prevent a particular child from being admitted to a youth offending establishment.

Leaders and managers use available guidance to inform their safer recruitment practices. This involves undertaking risk assessments on new staff, as well as ensuring that new staff have minimal contact with children prior to the receipt of a new Disclosure and Barring check. However, leaders and managers should be mindful of regulations that outline when a person can be employed prior to the receipt of all the required checks.

Staff have a good understanding of attachment issues and work exceptionally hard to ensure that the home is a stable base for children. This is commendable, as some children have experienced multiple placement breakdowns.

Parents and social workers praise the fact that staff do not give up on children. Since they have been living at the home, there has been a significant improvement in the children's emotional well-being. This has reduced the number of incidents of restraint as well as incidents of children going missing from the home.

Children learn to take responsibility for their actions through the use of appropriate sanctions. Staff now recognise the need for consistent record-keeping of their debriefings with children. This practice helps children to reflect and informs future decision-making about them.

Staff understand each child and creatively and inventively work towards providing the best outcomes for them. There is an onus on de-escalation and regularly measuring children's happiness and well-being. Children are calmer, and they learn to manage their moods through self-regulation.

Children are helped to understand the importance of online and personal safety. There is a good risk management system that identifies and checks for environmental hazards as well as identifying specific risks to children. There are clear strategies and effective interventions for managing risks, which include checking children's phones and regular room searches.

Staff have access to a wide range of safeguarding training and have established good links with the local children's safeguarding board. Concerns are managed appropriately, and, where necessary, disciplinary procedures are used to address poor staff practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from compassionate and effective leadership and a committed staff team whose members are determined to make a positive difference to children's lives. Relatives and social workers commented that staff go over and above to provide good care. There is a clear vision for the service that all staff are aware of.

Shortfalls are minor. Record-keeping does not always demonstrate good practice. Some documents are not always dated and there was one occasion when the record of a child's health appointment did not include details of the visit.

Leaders and managers demonstrate commitment to the well-being and development of

staff. Staff have regular individual supervision sessions, team meetings, therapeutic support and annual appraisals. However, the appraisal system misses the opportunity to take account of the views of children and involved professionals.

The multi-skilled, enthusiastic staff team benefits from extensive and effective training. Vocational training is in progress for staff who do not have the necessary qualification. A staff member stated that this was the best home they had ever worked in.

The good quality-assurance system focuses on enhancing children's outcomes. Challenging and constructive monthly monitoring reports highlight the home's strengths and areas for development. The registered manager's comprehensive quality of care reviews are focused on continual improvement through analysis and efficient monitoring.

Social workers praise the good communication and partnership working; one commented that this was one of the best homes they had worked with. Leaders and managers have addressed the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection effectively. Children benefit from improvements in their case records, independent visitor reports, the notification system and the staff supervision process.

Children live in a home that is maintained to a high standard. Communal areas include the lively kitchen-dining room and a spacious, relaxing lounge. The house cat contributes to the warm, homely atmosphere.

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: 1244108

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bay Tree House (Gravesend) Limited

Registered provider address: 96 Lynton Road South Gravesend, DA11 7NE

Responsible individual: David Lewis

Registered manager: Clare Lewis

Inspector

Sharon Payne, social care inspector

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