

# 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 children. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides holistic and therapeutic care for children with learning needs, language and communication difficulties and/or autism spectrum disorders.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in October 2019.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting 10 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

### Inspection dates: 18 to 19 May 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 12 June 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2019	Full	Good
15/11/2018	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

The quality of care provided to children in this home is of a high standard. Children are cared for by a skilled and passionate staff team who has a good understanding of children's needs.

Each child has a good-quality individualised care plan that considers their needs and how best to support them. Weekly and monthly analysis is carried out by key workers to ensure that the plans are progressed. Reviews are shared with children's social workers, providing a shared understanding of children's progress and helping to identify further targets.

Children are happy in the home. They are regularly consulted about how it feels to live there. There are a variety of different activities made available to the children based on their requests. As well as local activities and clubs, the children enjoy larger trips to theme parks.

Children's views are paramount in all decisions made both about the home and their individual care. There are regular one-to-one sessions, house meetings and well-being surveys to ensure that children's views are continually considered. As a result, children feel their views are valued, and staff have a good understanding of how children experience care in the home.

Plans for children's independence are supplemented by the use of a national qualification-awarding system. This allows children to get academic based qualifications and training to learn life skills for the future. Staff support the individual learning activities which are done with children each day.

Staff skilfully and sensitively help children to understand individual differences and identity, both in relation to themselves and wider society. Staff ensure that all significant work done with children is also documented in a way that they can understand by often using visual symbols as well as written words.

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

Safeguarding systems are, generally, strong. Staff have a clear understanding of risks to children. Assessments identify children's individual areas of vulnerability. These are reviewed both periodically and following any significant incidents. However, there has been an incident of a child misusing social media that did not prompt a review of their risk assessment. Managers did not ensure that up-to-date guidance was available to staff, and the child was potentially vulnerable as a result.

Missing episodes are infrequent. Children who go missing from the home are well supported upon their return. Risk assessments set out clearly the action that needs to be taken, and records show an understanding of what may have been the child's

motivation for being missing from the home. Staff advocate strongly to ensure that following a period of going missing, children are offered a return home interview. They undertake one-to-one sessions with children to reflect on what has happened, helping children to make safer choices and to reduce the potential for further missing episodes.

Incidents are well managed in the home with minimal use of restraint. Managers ensure that there is a clear process for reflection by staff and children. Records of incidents are, generally, well written. However, in the one incident of restraint, the report lacked a clear description of the actions taken by staff in relation to the type or length of time of the restraint. This limits opportunities for staff and managers to learn from these incidents to avoid similar incidents reoccurring.

Managers have not consistently notified Ofsted of a number of significant incidents in the home, including missing episodes. This means Ofsted has not been made aware of potential safeguarding issues in the home. This issue was also identified at the last inspection and is, therefore, a repeat requirement.

Recruitment of new staff is well planned, and rigorous checks are undertaken to ensure that people are suitable to work with children and are compatible with the existing staff team. Although the registered manager makes appropriate checks and challenges, their rationale for appointing staff is not clearly recorded.

Health and safety checks in the home are well managed. Fire drills are carried out monthly, and a schedule of repairs ensures that the home is well maintained. All children in the home are involved in the regular safety tests, and they are supported to understand what to do in the event an evacuation is required.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear vision for the home, and they are aspirational for children. Staff talk positively about the support that is available from the management team, and there is a clear sense of being 'in it together'. This culture is promoted by the clear direction and support provided to staff by the management team.

All staff share a genuine passion for achieving the best for children. Staff are held in high regard by professionals for the supportive role that they play in children's lives. Significant decisions are made in agreement with family members. Staff are active within the professional network and ensure that their in-depth understanding of the children's needs is used to inform care planning.

Managers advocate strongly for children. When children's needs are not being sufficiently met, managers are persistent and successful in securing the services that children need. This has had a positive impact on improving children's circumstances.

Managers actively monitor the quality of care that is provided by staff. There is a thorough system of review and analysis of practice that supports children to make

good progress.

Staff are supported by frequent good-quality supervision. This is well planned and helps staff to develop while also being clear about expectations for staff moving forward. Leaders help staff to reflect on their practice and to identify changes that they can implement to improve their responses to children's changing behaviour.

Leaders and managers have worked hard to construct a specific training plan for the staff team. There is a regular review of their skills, and this is reflected in individual training plans. However, these reviews have not been used to produce a workforce development plan. This is a missed opportunity to give better strategic oversight of the team's training needs in relation to service development. This is a repeated recommendation from the previous monitoring visit.

## 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 must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>	31 July 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v)(vii))</p> <p>This refers specifically to the description of techniques that have been used by staff to restrain children.</p>	31 July 2021
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	31 July 2021

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))

This particularly refers to management oversight of risk assessments and making changes when necessary.

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure there is a suitable workforce plan in place that links to regulation 16, schedule 1 ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered manager must maintain good employment practice ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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

**Responsible individual:** David Lewis

**Registered manager:** Adam Barron

## Inspector

Mark Newington, Social Care Inspector



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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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