



Guide for Parents



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Introduction

Children come to Pear Tree from all over the North of England and in every case, it is as a result of either one of two possible situations (1) children have been removed into care by the Local Authority and are either going through the process of care proceedings or have secured the care proceedings for the child, or (2) as a result of well identified difficulties, parents have asked the Local Authority to look after them on their behalf. Whichever the case, it is important for you to know that we recognise and acknowledge the difficulties that you must have experienced during this time.

It is our hope that by reading this document, it may well give you some reassurances as to the lifestyle that we hope for your child, the quality of care which we hope to provide and the skills that we hope your child to be able to achieve.

Having a child living away from home is never easy, the fact that your child's social worker has made arrangements for them to come to Pear Tree, demonstrates in itself that they have gone out of their way to find the best possible place equipped to take care of your child's needs.

Pear Tree was formed in the summer of 1990, at the request of local social services, to try and help fill some of the gaps and to be able to help children in a way that up until then, they have been unable to. So having been around for this length of time, it is hoped that we have demonstrated that as an organisation, we are here to stay and we would have only been able to have done so, on the basis that throughout that period of time, we had undertaken and sustained a high quality of work throughout. It is our sincere hope that you take some reassurances in these facts and we look forward to building a positive and rewarding relationship, not just for your child, but yourself also.

We hope we can, during the course of time that your child is with us, help you learn more about your child and work together with you to provide the best possible quality of care for him or her, as long as it is decided appropriate for your child to stay with us.

To provide the highest quality care to enable children to overcome the difficulties and traumas of the past, thereby providing a firm foundation from which they can grow through adolescence into adulthood as confident young people, able to function in, and contribute, to society.

Aims

'To provide the highest quality care to enable children to overcome the difficulties and traumas of the past. Thereby providing a firm foundation from which they can grow through adolescence into adulthood as successful human beings, able to function in, and contribute, to society'

Ref: D. Bartlett 1991

- To stop the cycle of abuse continuing
- Avoid all kinds of offending behaviour
- Look after themselves - keeping safe from harm
- Maintain positive relationships
- To be engaged in meaningful daytime activities, i.e. education, training, voluntary work
- Free of services, i.e. not relying on social services
- To be employed and become a tax payer, contributing to society
- To become a good parent themselves

David Bartlett 2010

Objectives

' To provide a safe, sympathetic and stimulating environment, together with a complex care programme appropriate to the needs of each individual child, delivered by suitable carers committed to re-parenting the children in our care'

Ref: D. Bartlett 1991

- To stop abuse of any kind
- To allow children/young people time to recover
- To allow children to be children and enjoy the remainder of their childhood
- To create a supportive learning environment
- To provide skills and increase general knowledge

David Bartlett 2010

Life at Pear Tree

The first thing that you will notice as you approach any Pear Tree home is an ordinary house in an ordinary street, there is no sign up to say that it is a children's home.

The Home

Once in the house, I hope you will find that it is a pleasant home, nicely decorated and well furnished, somewhere we hope your child will feel safe and secure. The fact that there are only a small number of other children around means that we avoid a lot of the problems that other larger homes encounter,



just as a result of the sheer number of children they look after. Indeed, as far as we know, Pear Tree was the first ever home to want to work with small groups of children in this way.

Values

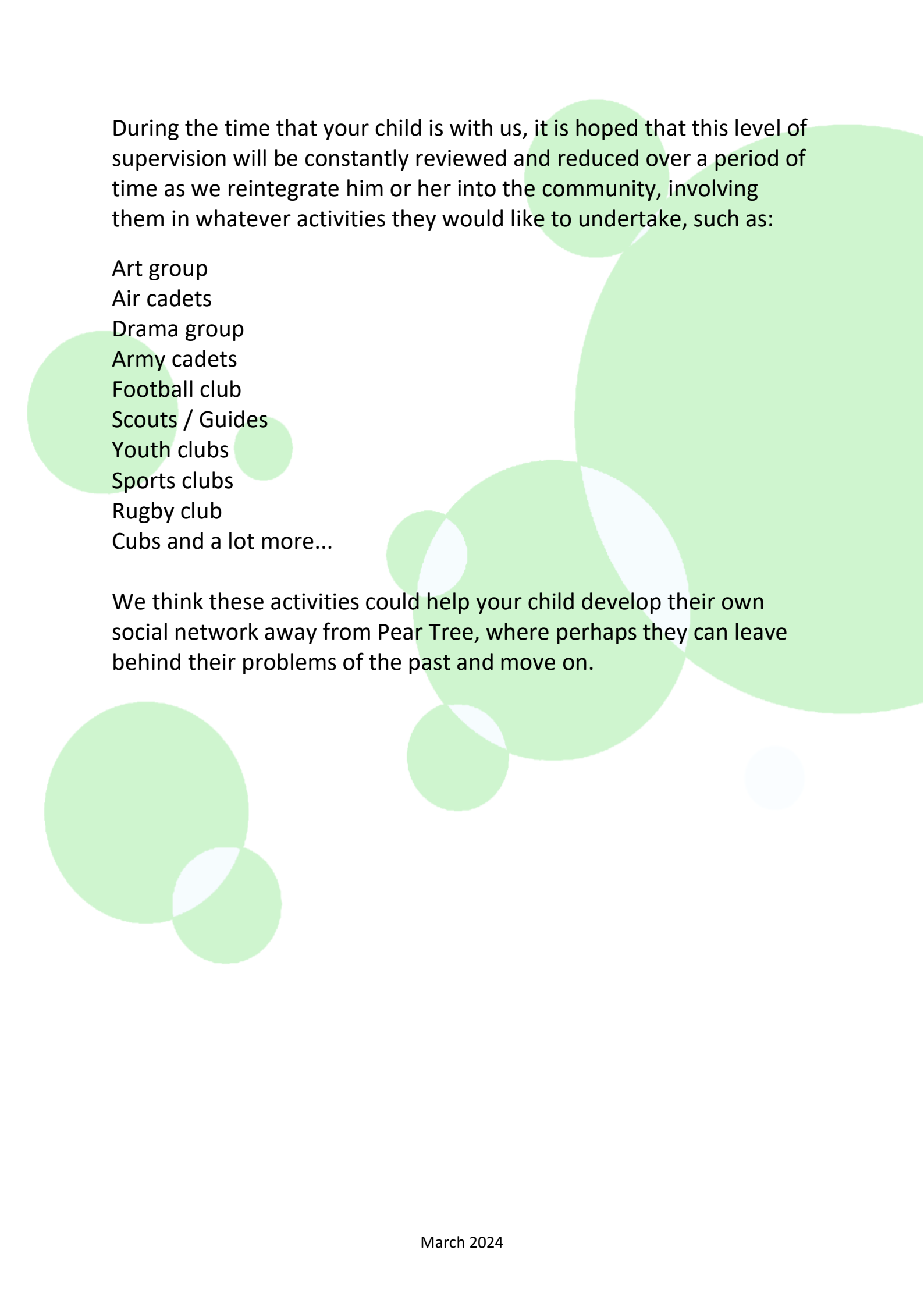
While your child is with us, we hope to be able to establish a positive routine, these include:

- Providing very clear boundaries as to what the rules and expectations are.
- Helping a child with his or her attitude and behaviour.
- Self-presentation and image resulting in their self-esteem being improved.
- They will have the opportunity to eat healthy foods and have a healthy well-balanced diet. We pay particular attention during these times to table manners and social skills. We also hope to tackle and promote health and hygiene.

Activities

Initially when your child is with us, we will be offering high levels of supervision. This will be done sympathetically, your child will often not realise that they are being supervised, due to the way we undertake this. Mainly by encouraging young people to be involved in a healthy lifestyle that involves lots of activities under the guidance of the adult carers. One thing that we can guarantee, is that your child will not feel as though they are being supervised by somebody looking over them all of the time as if they were in prison etc.





During the time that your child is with us, it is hoped that this level of supervision will be constantly reviewed and reduced over a period of time as we reintegrate him or her into the community, involving them in whatever activities they would like to undertake, such as:

Art group
Air cadets
Drama group
Army cadets
Football club
Scouts / Guides
Youth clubs
Sports clubs
Rugby club
Cubs and a lot more...

We think these activities could help your child develop their own social network away from Pear Tree, where perhaps they can leave behind their problems of the past and move on.

Education

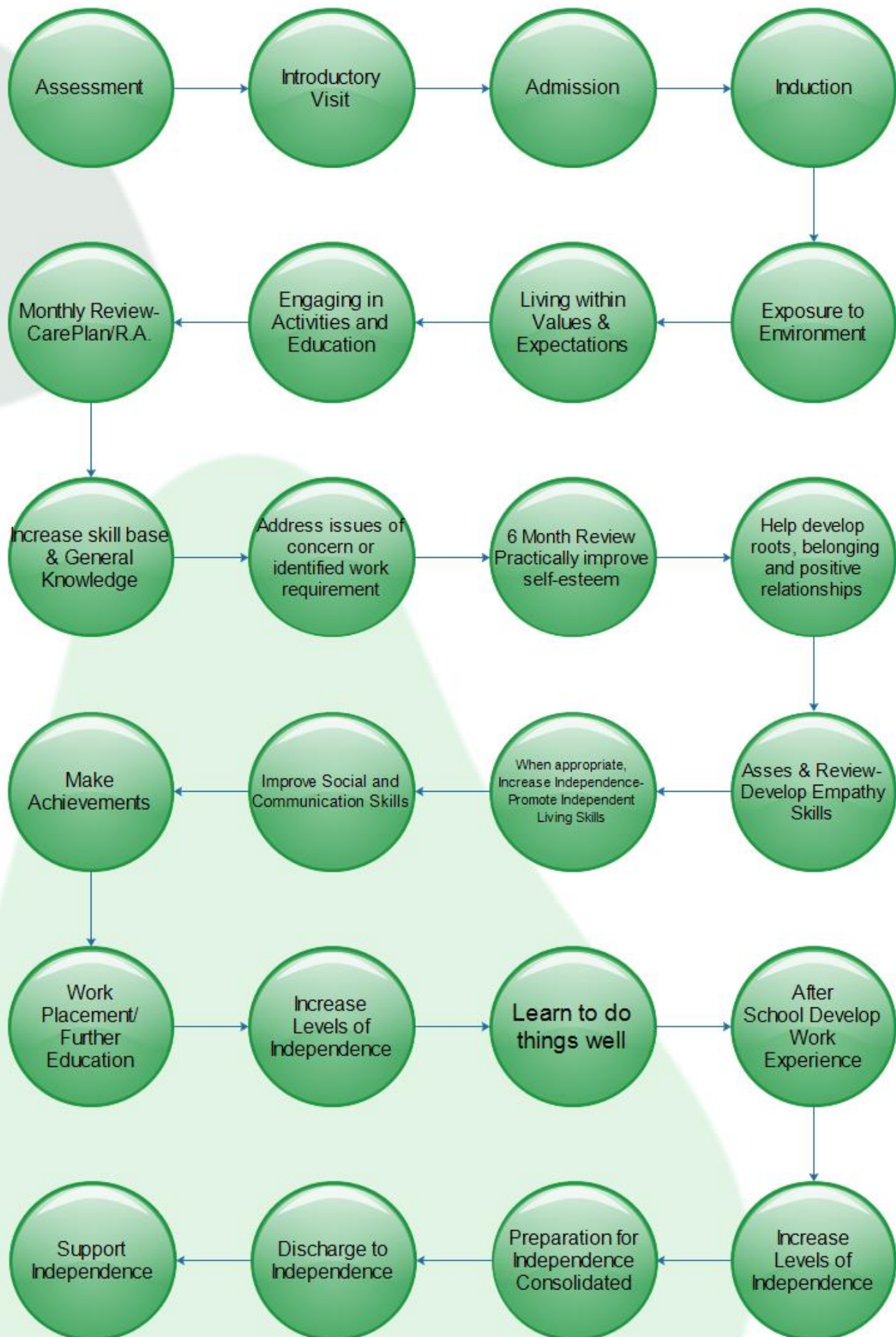
Please see document “Pear Tree School Prospectus.” This gives full details on our own education provision. The aim of this is to help reintegrate children/young people back to mainstream school or special school.

This may take a different amount of time for each individual child. In some cases young people go straight to other schools. In this case we hope you will join us in supporting your child in their new school, and give them every bit of encouragement we can.



'The Pear Tree Journey'

Process and Outcome



Family Time

The important thing to remember here is that Pear Tree do not on their own decide what the family time arrangements are. In every case, these must be agreed with yourself and the social worker. It may be necessary that contact is restricted for various reasons, and these are different in every circumstance, no two children are the same.

Whatever the family time arrangements are, it is important that they are stuck to and that we give a clear message to your child that this is how it is going to be and that we all agree on this and that it will only change through negotiations.

Questions & Answers

Who will be looking after my child?

Here at Pear Tree, we start by ensuring that we employ the best carers to look after your child, right from the start.

All carers go through a thorough interview and vetting process which includes obtaining a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (previously CRB check); spending time with the young people and listening to their opinions before we employ them.

Once a carer starts with Pear Tree they then follow our induction process which leads onto an ongoing programme of training which will continue throughout their career with us. Each carer is also assigned a supervising Manager who is there to support and advise as they look after your child.

Many of our carers have been with us for several years and have gained a lot of experience in:-

- Helping young people to come to terms with past experiences
- Helping young people to learn how to manage their behaviours
- Helping young people to be successful in education
- Maintaining a positive environment for young people to live in
- Helping young people to develop independent living skills
- Helping young people into Further Education or employment

As well as developing good, professional relationships with young people, they are genuinely caring whilst maintaining good, professional boundaries. These relationships help our young people to relax, feel safe, thrive and have fun.

At the back of this booklet you will find a list of the names of your child's House Manager and their carers, along with contact details for the house where your child will be living.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ring and speak to the Manager.

Can my child use the telephone?

Yes of course. There is always a phone available, however we would ask you to consider the family time arrangements, and as we have explained earlier, it is very important, to keep to what has been arranged.

Can my child have a mobile phone?

Yes, if your child is 11 year old or over.

What if my child or I wish to make a complaint, do you have a complaints procedure?

On admission, your child will be given a copy of our complaints procedure. If however, there is anything you feel unhappy about, please feel free to discuss this with our senior staff, and if you do not get a result that you are satisfied with, we would always encourage you to discuss your concerns with yours or your child's social worker. If you wish to make a formal complaint, please write to the Register Manager or Managing Director with your concerns. For full details please see our complaints procedure.

Can we still buy clothes for our child?

Of course you can. Each of the children who are with us receives a clothing allowance and a clothing book is kept so we can always see how much money has been spent on a child's clothing. If you would like to add to this, you are of course, more than welcome to do so. We would, however, ask that you consult with our staff in respect of what is appropriate to buy.

At Pear Tree we place great importance on allowing children to be children and provide clothing that is age appropriate. Therefore, a girl aged 10 or 11 would be encouraged to dress in that age group. Although it is sometimes difficult to define the difference between what a 10 or 11 year old wears, the difference between a 10 year old and a 16 or 18 year old, is very clear and that is the differences we try to avoid.

There are many reasons for this. First of all, as we have said, it is important that we encourage children to be children so that they don't lose out on what should be a pleasurable and important time in their lives. Sometimes our children feel they need to be older than they really are because of the experiences that they have gone through. One aspect of trying to address these issues is to try to address this kind of presentation, to help them be happy with the age that they are meant to be and to try to reduce the need to feel that they need to be older or present themselves as being older.

The children are rewarded for being who they are without trying to be someone different. This is a very important process and it is important that this is supported.

Can we give presents when we want to?

Of course you can, however it is important to remember that we would like your child to look forward to seeing you for who you are and not what presents you may give. Sometimes parents, because of what has happened, feel the need to always be providing their child with presents. Quite often the child becomes more interested in the presents and is disappointed if there aren't any.

It is important to remember that we need to teach children that we all have limitations and more importantly to want to see you for who you are and not for what you may bring. It is also important to remember again, as with clothing, to respect the advice which may be given in terms of what would be appropriate to bring or not.

At Pear Tree we have clear expectations on age appropriateness, which is possibly a difficult thing to appreciate for some people. If a young person wants to watch a video they can do, providing it is age appropriate, for example if a child was 14 1/2 years of age, they would not be allowed to watch a 15 rated movie. You can imagine the frustration it would give a child, having been given a 15 rated movie, not to be able to watch it. The reason for this ruling is quite clear, we try to encourage our children to respect advice from authorities and guidance where it is needed and to reinforce the fact that we are encouraging them to be who they are and not somebody different. The same rules and expectations apply to Video games.

There is a fine line here, and you must be aware that we do try to find the balance between enforcing these rules and regulations, and allowing a child to be themselves. It is important to acknowledge at this

point that each child is viewed as an individual. With the issues that we have talked about above, it is clear-cut as there is guidance given, but for others that we encounter where guidance is not available, sometimes these issues are very much open to people's individual personal points of view.

How much pocket money will my child receive?

8 -15 years: £7.00

16 years: £9.00

17+ years: £11.00

What time will my child have to go to bed?

Underneath is a bedtime chart, which hopefully answers your question. It is important to remember that all children can negotiate time after their bedtime, providing they are well behaved. If there are difficulties, then this is often the first things that goes and they have to go to bed on time.

8-9 years: 8.15pm

10-11 years: 9pm

12-13 years: 9.30pm

14-15 years: 10pm

16+ years: 10.30pm

What kind of therapy will my child receive?

The important point to remember here is that Pear Tree does not provide any therapy for children in the form of individual counselling sessions with a therapist. Pear Tree uses what it calls a therapeutic approach, which basically means trying to arrange a programme of events and a lifestyle that will be beneficial all round. However, direct therapy is something that we do not undertake within Pear Tree.

We do have a good well-established working relationship with other agencies like the local CAMHS team.

These services are often considered by consulting your child's doctor. Again, we need to reassure you that we are not an organisation that sets about trying to force any kind of therapy upon a child. It must be agreed by the whole care team before any referrals are made to any other agencies, and most importantly of all, your child would have to want to be involved in whatever kind of therapy is offered.

It is at this point that we ask you to remember two important things:

1. Please respect the ethos and culture of the home, it may be different from what you have experienced yourself but the fact that your child is with us means that it has been acknowledged that this will hopefully be of much benefit to your child and therefore it is important to respect it.
2. Please remember to support the placement and not undermine it. To openly question these rules and regulations in front of your child or display contempt for them can cause great difficulties because children often become torn between the different views that are held by the different adults concerned, intent is the important issue here. It is our aim that we intend to provide the highest quality of care we can for your child, to look at every possible aspect of their lives and to help them overcome any difficulties they have.

Holidays

During the time your child or young person is with us it is hoped they will be included in a variety of holidays and trips. To begin with these will be day trips away, then weekends away using our own accommodation in the Lake District and the North Yorkshire Moors.

It is hoped that each summer he or she will get at least a full week at our own accommodation.

Conclusion

It is my sincere hope that your child's stay at Pear Tree is a most rewarding and positive experience as possible. In most cases it is life changing very much for the better. I hope that in time you will be able to overcome the concerns and worries you most probably have and also develop a positive relationship with the team of special people I have selected to look after your child and run the home. It will not always be easy, there will be difficulties and challenges to consider. However, if your child or young person has to live away from home at Pear Tree they will be surrounded by people who really do care about what they are doing and will work hard every day to offer the best they can. We all try our hardest, it is an expectation of staff and children alike and I hope it is not long before you can see the benefits for yourself.

Yours sincerely

David Bartlett MBE
Managing Director 2010

The members of staff in your Child's home are:

Name: _____

Designation: House Manager

The Team:

Contact details:
