

**Children, Young People & Learning**

Children & Families Commissioning  
West Sussex County Council  
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10<sup>th</sup> April 2026

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of Best Project Ltd's application to open a new registered children's home in West Sussex.

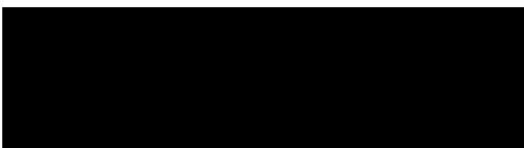
One of our key strategic priorities in West Sussex is to ensure that more of the children we care for can remain within their local communities. The intention of the Best Project is to establish a third children's home in our area, which fully aligns with this ambition. Currently, around two-thirds of our children in residential care are placed at a distance from their families, friends, schools, and wider support networks. We know that approximately 15% of all the children we care for are placed in residential settings, and this proportion shows no sign of decreasing.

The opening of a third home in West Sussex by Best Project would provide significant benefits. It would allow more children to remain close to home, reducing disruption to their education and personal lives, and enabling them to maintain existing relationships. This stability is a crucial factor in supporting children to return to their families where appropriate, as transition plans can be worked through without the barriers of long-distance travel. Additionally, local provision supports closer partnership working with professionals, avoids reliance on other Local Authorities' resources (such as schools, school transport, and healthcare), and strengthens wraparound support for children.

Our Commissioning Team has worked closely with Bridie to support the development of both Pear Tree House & Apple Tree House, reviewing documents and policies and providing guidance where possible. Since Pear Tree House opened in December 2025 we have worked closely with the home, and subsequently Apple Tree House, during this time we have made several successful placements. Bridie and her team have consistently demonstrated they are strong advocates for their children, promoting their health and wellbeing, and supporting them to move on positively.

We are very much looking forward to continuing our partnership with Bridie and her Team through Best Project, and to securing more high-quality local placements for the children of West Sussex.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Almond  
Children's Commissioning Team Manager