

# Statement of Purpose

Positive Action for Positive Outcomes

Reviewed May 2020

**“Wycombe Care”**

**Children and Family Services Ltd**

## **Caring for Children**

### **Who is the home for?**

Wycombe Care is a seven bedded unit across two adjacent houses, offering long term residential care to children and young people (young people), of either sex, who have a learning disability or physical disability.

### **What we believe, what we aim to do and how we will do it**

We aim to provide a safe, nurturing environment for young people where they can achieve their potential and attain as much independence as their disability allows. We also want young people to have different and varied experiences during their time at Wycombe Care.

In order to do this we will make sure that every young person has a clear placement plan which details what they want to achieve and how staff will work with them to accomplish this. Young people will have their own keyworker(s) who will meet with them regularly and support them to ensure their needs and wishes are heard and acted upon.

Individual Risk Assessments and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will identify measures that will be employed to keep young people safe. We do however recognise that risk taking is a vital and often enjoyable part of life, and that some young people will wish to take risks despite or even because of their disability. We do not aim therefore to provide a totally risk free environment, though we will take care to ensure young people are not subjected to unnecessary hazards. Where a young person wishes to take part in any activity which could involve risk, we will carry out a thorough risk assessment with that individual and/or their family or carers. We seek to agree and record action that will appropriately balance the factors involved.

We also want to work with young people, their families and other professionals to ensure that there are robust plans in place to enable a smooth transition to adult services. We will do this using an existing wide network of professionals and services and will ensure that there is an in-house plan, which works alongside any statutory agency plans, that details the steps needed to accomplish such a transition.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for a young person to stay living at Wycombe Care after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; for example, if they are staying on at school until the summer following their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, or while waiting for a suitable adult placement. In these circumstances staff will carry out robust risk assessments to ensure there is no negative impact on other young people using the service. This risk assessment will also identify the impact of living in a children's home on a young adult.

### **Enjoying and achieving. Recreational, and sporting activities.**

Our commitment to taking positive action to achieve positive outcomes means that we believe young people should be actively encouraged and supported to choose and take up recreational activities. To this end we encourage young people and their families to share as much information as possible about their social, sporting, cultural and recreational interests, as a basis for helping them during their time here.

The unit has ample communal and private areas for each young person. While respecting each young person's right to privacy and their own space we also believe that it is not in their best interest to spend hours watching TV or playing electronic games; we therefore limit the amount of time that young people can engage in these activities. These limits will be agreed with individual young people and recorded in their placement plans.

We aim to help each young person to enjoy as wide a range of individual and group activities as possible both inside and outside the home, to carry on with individual hobbies, pursuits and relationships and to explore new avenues and experiences. All young people are encouraged to use local sporting facilities and staff work closely with young people's schools in planning sporting activities.

### **Supporting cultural, religious and linguistic needs**

We are committed to supporting the religious and cultural needs of each young person and their family during their stay. In line with its anti-discriminatory policy the company will not tolerate persecution or abuse on racial, religious or cultural grounds.

We seek to celebrate the diversity of each cultural and religious tradition represented and will be proactive in making links to local religious groups where appropriate and seek advice where necessary to ensure that any links made by the young people are safe. Those who wish to attend a religious service will be encouraged and supported to do so.

We believe that a young person's cultural identity and ethnic heritage are an integral part of their character and should be supported and developed. Staff will work with young people, their families and local communities to establish cultural links outside the home. All festivals relevant to individual young people will be celebrated and used as an educational experience for other young people.

Young people living in the home may not have verbal language or may need verbal language reinforced with signs or symbols. Staff will be expected to have a basic knowledge of Makaton and PECS exchanges where this is necessary in order to meet the communication needs of individual young people. The manager and keyworkers will work closely with the Speech and Language Therapists where a young person needs to access

this service. Staff will also liaise with schools to ensure continuity of communication methods. Staff will develop relevant social stories using widgets and pictures if necessary, to help young people understand their environment and what is happening to them.

### **Promoting contact with family and friends**

Staff will actively seek to promote contact between young people, their family and friends within the guidance of the placing authority. Young people will be encouraged to invite family and friends to the home and to join in activities, celebrations etc.

Unit staff will be trained to undertake supervised contact where required and will work to make contact a positive experience for all concerned.

### **Consultation**

We believe that all young people have valuable opinions which need to be taken into account.

We believe it is the responsibility of staff to communicate with young people with disabilities in such a way as to solicit those opinions. The communication needs of individual young people will be detailed in their placement plan.

We seek ongoing discussion with families and carers and welcome their voice and perspectives. Where a young person is unable to communicate their views owing to disability or language barriers then we will involve a translator or advocate as appropriate.

There are quarterly resident's meetings for young people who are able and who wish to participate in these. These meetings are used to ascertain their views on various aspects of life at Wycombe Care and provide an opportunity for those young people to have a meaningful input into e.g. menus, activities, likes and dislikes etc. For those young people who are not able to participate in meetings we ensure that they undertake an activity with their keyworker and that their views are included in monthly keyworker reports.

On an individual level all young people are given choices including:

- choosing how to have their rooms decorated
- choosing their clothes
- choice of keyworker
- incorporating favourite meals into menus, etc.

### **Anti-discriminatory practice and children's rights**

We believe that young people who live at Wycombe Care should be treated with equality and that their individuality should be respected at all times. No young person or their family will be discriminated against on grounds of their age, gender, ethnic origin, core beliefs, sexuality or disability.

All young people will have equal access to any services and support networks available for them and we will be pro-active in encouraging them to take advantage of these resources.

Staff will be respectful of families and will not make judgements about the reasons that a young person is in care.

All young people living at Wycombe Care will have the right to:

- Be protected from harm
- Be able to express their wishes and feelings in the knowledge that they will be taken into account
- Be given information about their family and other important people and to have contact with them or an explanation as to why this is not possible
- Know clearly what they are and are not allowed to do
- Not to be discriminated against for any reason
- Education and health care that meets their needs
- Opportunities to develop their skills and interests
- Participate in making decisions and plans about their lives
- Know how to complain and have their complaint dealt with properly

All staff will be aware of these rights and will work to ensure that they are implemented at all times.

### **Accommodation and Location**

Wycombe Care comprises of two chalet bungalow situated in a quiet residential area on the edge of Luton. It is close to local shops and amenities and within walking distance of surrounding countryside. The first has four bedrooms, two on the ground floor that have wheelchair accessible en-suite bathrooms and hoisting equipment. Special beds are available if required.

There are two further bedrooms on the first floor that share a large family bathroom.

The home has a large kitchen with a dining area which opens on to a large lounge; this is one of the main areas for meeting and socialising. Young people are encouraged to help in the preparation and planning of meals and in clearing up afterwards.

The second has three bedrooms all with their own en-suite shower rooms. There is a downstairs bathroom for those wishing to have a bath.

There is a lounge and playroom for soft play and computer games.

There is a large kitchen and separate dining room. Young people are encouraged to take part in the preparation and clearing away of meals.

Both houses have safe back gardens with toys and activities.

Fire alarms and firefighting equipment are installed and tested regularly. Fire audits are carried out by the Fire Service and any recommendations carried out without delay.

An in depth assessment of the location of these home show that they are in an area of Luton with low crime rates and low depravation and are therefore a low risk for the children and young people living here.

## **Safeguarding, Bullying and Missing Child Policies**

We have our own Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures; these reflect those of the Local Safeguarding Board and are reviewed on a regular basis. All staff receive regular and comprehensive training and are required to act in accordance with the company's policies. This includes instructions on whistleblowing. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed and sent to the LADO for approval and comment. In addition the staff handbook includes a full copy of our Safeguarding Procedures.

All staff who are involved in recruitment must have completed the NSPCC Safer Recruitment training course. No new staff member will be permitted to commence employment before all satisfactory checks and references have been completed and verified.

Bullying in any form, whether verbal or physical will not be tolerated. We have an anti-bullying policy which staff are aware of. This clearly defines bullying and ways in which it can be identified. A widget leaflet on bullying is available for all children and young people.

Admission procedures include an assessment of the risk a potential new young person may pose to others.

### **Missing from care**

Any young person missing from Wycombe Care will be considered to be in danger and at risk of significant harm from the outset. Our policy is to notify the Police, EDT or duty social workers, the young person's family and the unit manager immediately. Each young person has a risk assessment detailing the level of risk and action to be taken in the event that they go missing when out with staff.

In addition, a Missing Persons Profile including a recent photograph, is completed for each young person and is forwarded to the Bedfordshire Missing Person's Unit for their information. Wycombe Care maintains a close working relationship with Police Officers with responsibility for Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Persons.

Local authority managers and the local police have been consulted on the procedures in place for a missing child and for the home's location. These will be reviewed regularly and on every new admission to the unit.

In the event that a young person goes missing from Wycombe Care, staff will ensure that the Local Authority instigate an independent return to care interview within 72 hours of their return.

### **Criteria for admission to the home**

In assessing a child or young person for a placement at Wycombe Care the assessor will first ensure that the needs of the new young person are compatible with the needs of the current resident group.

We will consider young people up to the age of eighteen who have a learning disability/ and or physical disability.

### **Planned admissions**

Wherever possible admissions are planned and the young person's care and support requirements fully assessed and discussed before admission.

Following a referral an initial assessment will be undertaken so that all parties can assure themselves of the suitability of the placement.

During the period of assessment the young person and their family/carers will be introduced to the home. The young person will be invited to come for an introductory visit and then to stay for a longer period. We welcome family and friends to the unit so that they can see the care and facilities that we can provide.

On occasions staff from the home may visit the young person and their family or carers to provide information, reassurance and support. Families will be given a copy of the Statement of Purpose and the young person a copy of the Children's Guide in a format appropriate to their level of understanding.

Any placement at the home will be carefully monitored during the initial 3 months to ensure that the new child's needs can be met within the stated function and purpose of Wycombe Care.

### **Emergency admissions**

In certain circumstances and provided there is a vacancy, it may be possible to accept emergency admissions.

In such cases a senior member of staff will be responsible for gathering as much information as is needed to care for the young person in the very short term. This will include signed consent to treatment in a medical emergency.

*A Child in Care Review* will be instigated and held within 72 hours of the placement in order to establish the suitability of the placement and whether this should continue.

### **Complaints**

We understand that positive comments help us build on our success but also that we can learn from comments which are critical. To this end we welcome comments and suggestions from young people, their families and other significant people in their lives.

We also support the rights of young people and their representatives to make complaints about any aspect of their treatment whilst living at the home. We believe that receiving and responding to complaints is a key element in developing and improving the service we offer.

We will ensure that all young people, parents, carers and significant others receive information on how to complain.

If a young person or their family have a complaint, they will be encouraged to voice their complaint to their keyworker in the first instance. If the keyworker is involved in the complaint, then another member of staff will act as mediator. If the complaint is informal then internal negotiation and arbitration will take place. A complaints book is kept on site to record all complaints and the young person's social worker will be informed of the concern.

If the complaint is formal in nature, then it will be forwarded to our directors. They will appoint an independent investigating officer and again notify the young person's social worker of the complaint.

At each stage of the complaint the young person, and usually their family, will be kept informed of the outcome and advised of the next stage in the process. The young person and their family will be notified of the overall outcome of any investigation within 21 days of the receipt of the complaint.

Families and young people will also be advised of how to contact Ofsted and how to access the placing authority's complaints procedure.

## **Children's Behaviour**

### **Monitoring and surveillance**

Young people living at Wycombe Care will all have some level of disability. Where appropriate and following a robust risk assessment, exit doors from the building can be alarmed or locked. In these circumstances the impact on young people living at Wycombe will be subject to MCA/DOLS assessments. Each placement plan will detail whether young people are safe to leave the building unaccompanied.

Bedroom doors can be alarmed at night if necessary, to alert staff to movement within the building.

In some instances, it may be necessary to use monitors in bedrooms to ensure the safety of young people, (for example to listen for seizures). However, the decision to use a monitor will be informed by a risk assessment that balances the risk of not monitoring against young person's need for privacy.

Occasionally it may be necessary to use a high handle to prevent children from leaving the building this decision will again be subject to a robust risk assessment and the handle removed as soon as it is considered redundant.

## **Behavioural support**

Each child at Wycombe Care will have a Behaviour Management Plan embedded within their placement plan which will detail how staff will work with them to ensure acceptable behaviour and to reduce anxiety. This may be compiled in consultation with CAMHS staff.

Staff may seek advice from other relevant professionals in order to help a child to manage their behaviour.

At Wycombe Care we believe that a system of rewards and incentives for good behaviour are more effective than the use of sanctions for less acceptable behaviour. Staff meetings are used to discuss issues of conduct and to agree approaches to diffusing incidents and managing behaviour.

Any sanction must be agreed by two members of staff and recorded in the sanction book. The record is then signed by both members of staff and countersigned by the manager. Sanctions must also be recorded in individual daily logs and case files. The use of sanctions must be a last resort.

Where sanctions are necessary these will be:

- Appropriate to the level of understanding of cause and effect
- Relevant to the incident
- Reasonable in relation to the incident
- Weighted towards reparation and restitution rather than punitive
- Consistent and fair
- Contemporaneous

Staff will be expected to record how they have ensured that they maintain a positive relationship with the child following the imposition of a sanction.

Where a child's behaviour management plan indicates that they will benefit from quiet time in their room or another quiet area of the building in order that they can calm down as opposed to being given 'time out' this will be recorded but not considered to be a sanction.

**We operate a strict no restraint policy.**

**Staff have been trained on a de escalation NAPPI training.**

## **Contact Details**

### **The Company:**

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### **The Responsible Individual:**

Ruth Kirchner



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**Registered Manager (Maternity leave)**  
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**Acting Manager**  
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## **Education**

Each young person's placement plan contains details of their educational history, progress and achievements as well as their Personal Education Plan (PEP).

Keyworkers are familiar with the educational history and needs of a young person and can support them (usually through providing study support and by liaising with schools) to achieve their goals.

While the placing authority arranges for transport to and from school, staff at the home ensure that young people have full access to education by liaising with the school and, where appropriate, attending education reviews and other activities.

Where a young person's disability may present barriers to their taking part in educational activities, staff will endeavour to facilitate their participation.

## **Health Care and Therapy**

Wycombe Care does not provide any health care or therapy.

## **Staffing Matters**

**See Appendix 1**

The home has a management team comprising:

Responsible Individual/Director  
Registered Manager (Maternity leave)

Acting Manager  
Night Manager  
Senior Support Workers x 3  
Support Workers

(For a detailed list of staff, their qualifications and experience please see Appendix 1).

The Home Manager is responsible for the supervision of the Deputy Manager and the senior team. The Company employs an outside consultant to provide supervision for the Registered Manager.

Team Leaders and Deputy Manager undertake the supervision of the rest of the staff team.

Our policy is that all staff members will be qualified or working towards a relevant level 3 qualification.

All staff receive an induction training on commencement of employment and ongoing induction during their 6 month probationary period. Details of the induction process are laid out in the Workforce Development Plan.

We aim to be an equal opportunity employer welcoming staff members from diverse ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. It actively seeks to recruit both male and female staff to ensure that young people experience mixed gender role models.

Staff we recruit can expect a full commitment to their training and development based on an analysis of their needs and regulatory requirements.