

Statement of Purpose: Acorn House



Registration Number: 2661513

Contents

QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE

1. A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.
2. Details of the home's ethos, the outcomes that the home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.
3. A description of the accommodation offered by the home, including:
 - (a) How accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children.
 - (b) The age range, number, and sex of children for whom it is intended that accommodation is to be provided; and
 - (c) The type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation.
4. A description of the location of the home.
5. The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic, and religious needs of children.
6. Details of who to contact if a person has a complaint about the home and how that person can access the home's complaints policy.
7. Details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the home's child protection policies or the behaviour management policy.

VIEWS, WISHES AND FEELINGS

8. A description of the home's policy and approach to consulting children about the quality of their care.
9. A description of the home's policy and approach in relation to:
 - (a) Anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families; and
 - (b) Children's rights.

EDUCATION

10. Details of provision to support children with special educational needs.
11. If the home is not registered as a school, the arrangements for children to attend local schools and the provision made by the home to promote children's educational achievement.

ENJOYMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

12. The arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical, and social interests and skills.

HEALTH

13. Details of Care provided, including:

(a) Details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing the care; and

(b) Information about how the effectiveness of the care is measured, the evidence demonstrating its effectiveness and details of how the information, or the evidence can be accessed.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

14. The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their families and friends.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

15. A description of the home's approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children.

16. Details of the home's approach to behavioural support, including information about:

(a) The home's approach to physical intervention in relation to children; and

(b) How persons working in the home are trained in physical intervention and how their competence is assessed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

17. The name and work address of:

(a) The registered provider.

(b) The responsible individual; and

(c) The registered manager (if one is appointed).

18. Details of the experience and qualifications of staff, including any staff commissioned to provide care.

19. Details of the management and staffing structure of the home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff providing care.

20. If the staff are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes.

CARE PLANNING

21. Any criteria used for the admission of children to the home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission.

22. Management Profiles, Management flow chart and staff profiles.

1. Introduction

To comply with the Children's Homes Regulations 2015, each home is required to have a Statement of Purpose. The Children's Homes Regulations 2015 specifies that the Statement of Purpose is clear and available to staff and children, it is reflected in any policies procedures and guidance. It is available to the responsible authority and any parent or person with parental responsibility. The standard also advises that the Statement of Purpose is child focussed and is updated along with the homes Children's Guide every year in line with the Children's Homes Regulations Schedule 1, which refers to Schedule 1 *Matters to be included in the Statement of Purpose*.

At Almond Care Childrens Services we aim to provide children and young people with sustained care that will help them to overcome traumatic life experiences, so that they can grow and learn to value themselves, fulfil inherent potential, and sustain positive relationships. Almond Care Childrens Services also aims to provide bespoke support packages for children with Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (EBD).

Our main objective is to work towards meeting the holistic welfare needs of each child and young person. We will provide a child centred package of support that contributes to their overall personal, emotional, social, physical needs and preferences. We will co-operate with other services and professionals to help to maximise each person's independence, health, and wellbeing. Staff will encourage where possible for the child's or young person's participation in the community, and to help them each achieve a full potential and positive outcomes.

Quality & Purpose of Care

1. A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation

Acorn House provides a solo placement for a 2:1 child aged between 8 – 18 years who experience complex social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. The home would not accommodate a new placement for an adult of 18 years, however pending admission before this age they are able to remain in the home until they are 18. The home provides accommodation for up to 1 child with 2:1 staffing levels.

Acorn House provides a caring, structured, and homely environment. Our Child will receive daily support from the care team and together will create an individual care plan to meet their individual needs; with focus placed on achievements and positive development. Our Child will follow their own programme in an atmosphere of high expectations where they are valued for being themselves. The overall objective is to create the ideal conditions for our child to succeed to the maximum of their potential and to prepare for a fulfilling, independent adult life.

Acorn House offers a welcoming environment where a child can thrive and grow. We will encourage bed-times routines reasonable to age, to ensure our child has sufficient rest, we will provide advice around and offer healthy eating options, also support the development of routines for personal care skills, education etc. There is a strong emphasis upon establishing a secure base from which our child can experience a close relationship with their identified keyworker and care team members. Our home offers a safe environment where a child can test authority and have appropriate boundaries and controls in place to challenge their behaviour.

Acorn House provides a stable and nurturing environment to give a child the opportunity to heal and to experience or rediscover a sense of their own self-worth. Care and placement plan alongside individual behaviour support plans will be implemented for our child.

All management plans are compiled in consultation with the child and care team, with the aim of providing individualised and personalised care for our child. Our care considers of the child's sex, religious persuasion, racial origin, and cultural linguistic background, any disability, and previous experiences. Almond Care Childrens Services will ensure our child's overall progress will constantly monitored and evaluated and any decisions made will be through a multi-agency agreement and with the child in question.

2. The homes underlying ethos and the outcomes that the home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.

The Ethos of the Almond Care Children's Services is to create the ideal conditions for each child to reach their full potential and prepare for a fulfilling life.

We believe that our children can recover from traumatic and painful life experiences. To do so, they can rely on the people around them having the expertise and support to help them through their healing process. We appreciate the complexities of this work and our responsibilities to ensure that once a child is placed with us, the resources to reach planned objectives are available. Such as gaining access to CAMHS, Youth support projects etc. The children will also have access to a clinical psychologist (Dan Mulligan) who will provide weekly therapy as well as carry out training with the staff team.

Our work with Children with Emotional Behavioural Difficulties is focused around supporting everyone to achieve positive outcomes and promote their active participation through:

- Putting children with LD and EBD at the centre of everything we do
- Understanding and working with the impact such has on the individual.
- Commitment to Person Centred Planning and Approaches.
- Commitment to involve children with LD and EBD in decision making.
- We will adopt a partnership and community development approach to our work so that we can share our ideas and knowledge as well as learning from others.
- Promoting and supporting positive risk taking.
- Enabling individual to develop skills to enhance their personal lives.
- Promoting independence and choices by providing people appropriate support with daily living, employment, and leisure pursuits.
- Ensuring peoples individuality, sexual orientation, spiritual, cultural, and emotional needs are met and respected by the care team.
- Ensuring peoples dignity, respect and rights to privacy is upheld always.
- Providing support always.
- Providing support to make decisions.
- All staff are sufficiently trained to provide tailored support to our child.
- All staff regularly receive therapeutic parenting and PACE training.

We recognise the complexity of the task and the skills required to support our children. Our care team have experience and qualifications that enables us to be specific about the needs of each child. We are able to make accurate assessments and tailor specific 'Care Plans' seeking well defined behavioural outcomes. This allows us to offer the child opportunities to change unhappy internal feelings, confusion, and unhealthy thought processes. It is also the philosophy of Almond Care Childrens Services that many of the children who we care for who are on the autistic spectrum or are diagnosed with ADHD etc. may well have also experienced traumatic and painful life experiences. Therefore, our objectives and values are fully committed to ensuring that we support these children through this by:

- Provide residential care for children in need of short, medium, and long-term care.

- Providing and managing child centred services, where children come first, through open and honest communication.
- Manage and apply appropriate care and health plans, which will enable us to follow through with well, designed, tried, and tested interventions, that develop empowerment and responsibility.
- Providing expert advice, education and support within the team and outside agencies.
- Promoting the awareness and understanding of LD and EBD and ensuring respect for the individual.
- Provide guidance, support and advice on health and personal care issues to children according to their needs. The expectation of high-performance standards from all employees and a willingness to recognise and reward achievements children make.
- Provide for the needs of children within an efficient, cost effective. business strategy, without any compromises, in the scale and quality of service delivery.
- Promoting equality in diversity through valuing the uniqueness of individuals.
- Staff members to understand and attain the required knowledge in relation to working with children who identify as being on the autistic spectrum or have emotional or behaviour disorders.

All Almond Care Children's Services care team will work in partnership within a multi-disciplinary setting to ensure the welfare and best interest of children within our care are being met.

3. A description of the accommodation offered by the home including-

- a) Accommodation that has been adapted for children's needs
- b) The age range, number, and sex of children for whom it is intended that the accommodation is to be provided
- c) Type of accommodation including sleeping accommodation.

The house has the appearance of being a small, spacious, and comfortable home, and has nothing on the inside or outside to distinguish it from other properties in the area, or to suggest it is in anyway institutionalised.

The Home is set within its own grounds and has a large garden to the rear of the property

The whole ambiance of the Home (décor, furniture, and accessories) is designed to encourage warmth and stability, within a carefully planned structure, where clear boundaries will be respectively set to ensure all our Children can live in a safe environment and to experience and discover a sense of their own growth.

Our child has their own bedroom that can be secured allowing for both privacy and security. Bedrooms are fully equipped and provide a space to relax and study privately. Our child may hold a key to their own room dependant on risk and age appropriateness. For safety reasons, adults within the home can gain access to bedrooms and bathrooms if necessary. Our child will be encouraged and will be supported to personalise their own room.

4. A description of the location of the home

Acorn House is located within easy access of a range of facilities within the village of Sileby, Leicestershire we have easy access to Loughborough and Leicester town. The village of Sileby itself includes a post office/newsagent, parks and multiple convenience shop. All recreational facilities: shops, library and other amenities are very close by.

Due to the position of the home, activities are easily accessible throughout the east Midlands, these include swimming, bowling, cinema, football clubs, skateboard parks, cycling tracks, nature reserves and bird hides, ice skating, trampoline clubs, horse riding. This list is not exhaustive. However, any interests held by each child can be developed and nurtured at a local level. Acorn House provides an endless list of in-house activities which can include football, gardening, nature walks, arts and crafts sessions, games consoles, this also includes children having the choice of watching their TV in the privacy of their own room should they wish.

We are located close to a train station and actively plan days out for our child, at Acorn House we are keen to ensure the children within our care gain new life experiences and will be considering this as well as hobbies of interest. The home has a car, however independent travel for the children is encouraged.

An annual Premises Review is performed to ensure the safety of the local environment and area; this is available upon request.

5. The arrangements for supporting the cultural linguistic and religious needs of children

Acorn House care team members will consider religions, cultural and linguistic issues by ensuring that the feelings of all children and their families are fully respected during the child's stay. We recognise that children may wish to participate in their chosen religion and that this can mean involvement at all levels, from attendance at a place of worship to daily observance and dietary needs. The child's care team will gather information on religious and cultural needs prior to admission and how these needs can be met within the immediate area.

Information on different religions and cultures will be available to all children, and team members will support in whatever needs are requested. All cultural, religious, language and racial needs are identified on induction and met throughout the organisation. This practice is enhanced with a broad mix of cultures within our care team and by exploring diversity and cultures within the home in the form of projects on a regular basis.

Acorn House is situated near both Loughborough and Leicester towns within reach either by walking, driving and public transport; this allows us to access several culturally diverse religious amenities. Any child placed within the home who wishes to participate in their relevant places of worship, can be easily provided for due to the proximity of the relevant towns and Cities.

6. The details of who to contact if a person has a complaint about the home and how the person can access the complaints policy.

Almond Care Children's Services complies with the Children Act 1989 and Department of Health Guidance and Regulations Volume 4 "Residential Homes", and the minimum standards of the National Care Standards Act 2000, in providing the required complaint and representation procedures for children, their parents, and/or such other persons deemed to have sufficient interest in the welfare of the children.

All parents, carers and Local Authority representatives have access to a written description of Acorn House complaints procedure on request. This information is also summarised below and within the Children's Guide, copies of which will be given to significant people on admission. Our service regards all complaints as an inherent part of our aim to continuously improve service user satisfaction. At Acorn House the Registered Manager Alison Kenny has the responsibility to ensure that all residents are aware of their rights and choices regarding making a complaint and such is done during admission and then reviewed during key-work sessions

and as issues arise.

Internal Complaints Procedure:

All complaints must be directed towards the manager of the children's home; however, should the complaint be regarding the home's manager the complaint will be directed to the Director Mrs Julia Senah. Initially Almond Care Children's Services attempts to resolve dissatisfaction and concerns by encouraging an informal problem-solving process:

1. A designated manager of Almond Care Children's Services will interview the complainant and provide support and advice.
2. The complainant will also be told of his/her right to seek independent advice from their Union, ACAS or a solicitor or other relevant advisory bodies.

If the matter is not resolved

1. An independent senior manager will be assigned to investigate the complaint.
2. The local authority will also be informed so that it can carry out its own investigation.

The independent officer will have the authority to carry out the necessary interviews of children and employees of Almond Care Children's Services. He/she will also have access to the relevant documents and records held by Almond Care Children's Services. He/she will then provide a written report of his/her findings to the complainant and home manager as soon as practicable and in any event within 28 days.

If the complainant is still dissatisfied, they will be able to make an appeal in writing to the responsible individual.

The complainant and the independent officer will be permitted to make representations to the responsible individual.

All representation and complaints will be recorded in writing and made available to the relevant local authority, who may then wish to invoke the external complaints procedure – a copy of which is available on request.

SUMMARY FOR CHILDREN - WHAT IS A COMPLAINT

If you are not happy about something, then this might be a complaint. A complaint may be a 'problem that has not been sorted out. Children can put forward ideas about changes they think would be good without this being treated as a complaint.

Children do not have to put a complaint in writing although if they want to, they can speak to a member of the care team or the manager. Children are also able to voice their complaints either individually or by means of a group meeting.

This can either be via completion of a complaint form, discussing such with a member of the care team, raising the issues during community meetings or to an independent person outside of Acorn House. On arrival all residents are informed of the complaint's procedure and where the pre-addressed envelopes are kept providing the opportunity to create a written complaint.

All Children have open access to a telephone and may contact their social worker, parents, Ofsted or the

NSPCC Young person line.

Children are also aware of the role of the children's commissioner for England and are also given the relevant information on how to complain to them. At any stage in the complaints process young people have the right to support from an external advocate and they will be assisted by care staff accessing such service.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

All children, their parents, carers and social workers and advocates can have, on request a copy of the full Almond Care Childrens Services complaints procedure.

The complaints procedure is also explained in the Statement of Purpose and in the Children's Guide to the home.

MAKING A COMPLAINT

Complaints can be made in different ways. Children or their parents, carers and social worker can contact the home to talk about the problem.

Children can tell their key worker or member of the care team. Children as a group might talk about their complaint in community meeting or children's meetings.

Children can choose to complain to their social worker, Ofsted or the Children's Commissioner. The contact details for all these people can be found in the home.

If the child wishes to make a complaint regarding the home or the management of the home, they can contact the Operations Manager / safeguarding lead information is available in the home and in the Children's Guide for children.

Children who make a complaint will never be penalised or told off for making the complaint.

INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS

Most complaints are sorted out quickly by someone in the home, usually the manager. The person making the complaint will be asked about what the problem is and what they want done about it. They will get a letter explaining what is going to happen about their complaint. They will be asked if they are happy with what is going to happen.

In some cases, a complaint maybe looked at by somebody outside of the home, this is likely to happen if the person making the complaint isn't happy with what the home has done about the problem so far. The person investigating the complaint will be independent and investigate the complaint and will write to the child to explain what they think should be done.

At any time, children can also complain to Ofsted or their social worker as well. They can also ask for an advocate, an independent person, to help them sort things out.

RECORDING COMPLAINTS

We must keep a record of any complaint. Children's complaints are recorded on our system and children can see a copy of this if they want to. Children will be asked if they are happy with the outcome of their complaint.

MAKING A COMPLAINT ABOUT YOUR PLACING AUTHORITY

Children can complain about their social worker or their placing authority. All local authorities have a complaints procedure, and any problem children have about what their social worker or the placing authority is doing then they can make a complaint using the placing authorities' complaints procedures.

All children will be given a copy of their local authority complaints procedure and the key worker will go through it with them and explain it, if children need help to make the complaint.

WHAT IS AN ADVOCATE AND HOW CAN THEY HELP YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT?

An advocate is someone, who can help a child or young person: Almond Care Children's Services will use Children's Society or the Black Country Advocacy service depending on which Local Authority they are from. An advocate will help children:

- express their views, wishes and feelings, or by speaking for them.
- help sort out the problem.
- Support the child to take the complaint to the end.

Children can also contact:

Louise Copping – OFSTED inspector
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester,
M1 2WD
T. 0300 123 1231

Children are also referred in their children's guide to the children's commissioner:

Rachel De Souza - Children's Commissioner
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT
Tel: 020 7783 8330
Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Or for Almond Care Children's Services Contact:
Responsible individual/ Managing Director: Julia Senah
07866768178
Julia@almondcare.co.uk

7. The details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the homes child protection policies or the behaviour management policy.

Child Protection Policy Statement:

The children referred to Almond Care Childrens Services may have experienced a difficult past, often including family disruptions, moves, institutional care and abuse. Many of our children demonstrate their distress through challenging and difficult behaviour. Our residential care team are prepared, trained, and supported by: -

An experienced and highly qualified management team to enable them to work closely with children and give them a positive experience of residential care.

When abuse of a child is suspected, or has occurred, the protection of the child will be the primary focus and other practice principles, whilst important, are secondary. Priority over all other work is given to protecting children when there is possible or clear evidence of abuse.

On cases where Almond Care Children's Services staff suspect child abuse either physical, sexual, emotional or in the form of neglect, they have a duty to report this to the local authority in whose area the child resides. The local authority in partnership with the police will then carry out any investigation or protective duties which may be required.

Almond Care Children's Services has no power to investigate child abuse, but care team members do have a responsibility to take immediate steps to protect children from abuse. Any suspected abuse is reported immediately to social Care teams. All discussions and actions taken must be recorded fully by our team members. Out of hours the local authority emergency duty team can be contacted either by the senior on duty or the homes manager.

All care team members working at Almond Care Children's Services will be provided with training opportunities to enable them to recognise and act appropriately when they encounter instances of child abuse.

The home's policies regarding child protection and safeguarding have been assessed and amended in co-operation with the home's local safeguarding children's board and the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Any professional involved with the care of children placed at Almond Care Children's Services may have access to the home's policies on child protection and safeguarding with the consent of the registered manager.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Support Policy:

Almond Care Childrens Services firmly believes in protecting children and to this end will ensure that all members of our team are adequately checked and screened.

The home has clear guidelines in accordance with Local Safeguarding Board/Safeguarding and Ofsted. Team members will receive Local Safeguarding Board / Safeguarding training as part of their induction process and are assessed regularly to determine their understanding of the appropriate procedure.

Children should be protected from bullying. Bullying is abuse and/or intimidation by a person, a group of people or an organisation against others. On a child's arrival at Acorn House, our team members will introduce the children's guide, there are clear boundaries, and expectations of acceptable behaviour, particular attention will be drawn to the organisations policies that operate zero tolerance on bullying. Acorn House will not tolerate bullying and fully support the standard that children should be protected from bullying as a matter of policy.

Both the Safeguarding and Complaints policies can be obtained and shared if requested.

Where a safeguarding concern is raised, all staff are trained to record accurately and clearly and to pass on their concerns to the Manager or Senior Staff in their absence, or the manager on call. All Almond Care Childrens Services procedures will be followed, and the concerns passed on to the relevant persons.

In the event of any suspicion or the initiation of a safeguarding alert being raised the following people are notified:

The Local Safeguarding Board is:

Name Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Partnership

[Tel:0116 454 6520](tel:01164546520)

Email:LSCP@leicester.gov.uk

Local Safeguarding Team

Ofsted 08001313126 (enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Almond Care Childrens Services

Almond Care Designated Safeguarding Officer: Ano Senah

Email: ano.senah@almondcare.co.uk

Homes Manager Alison Kenny

Email: Alison@almondcare.co.uk

Responsible Individual: Julia Senah

Email: Julia@almondcare.co.uk

Almond Care Children's Services

Organisational Designated Safeguarding Officer: Ano Senah

Email: ano.senah@almondcare.co.uk

Responsible Individual: Julia Senah

Email: Juliasenah@almondcare.co.uk

Homes DSL Manager: Alison Kenny

Email: alison@almondcare.co.uk

Almond care whistleblowing link:

[Whistle Blowing Form - Almond Care Children's Services \(almondcarechildrensservices.co.uk\)](http://almondcarechildrensservices.co.uk)

The children at Acorn House are entitled to the same standard of protection from harm that is provided to any other child. Almond Care Children's Services homes have clear guidelines, in accordance with local (Leicestershire) Child Protection/Safeguarding and Ofsted.

Details of the homes missing children procedure and contact details for local contacts are available upon request, each child has their own protocol which is agreed by the home and placing authority in line with Leicestershire's police protocol and considering the placing authorities' procedures also.

Views, Wishes and Feelings

8. Description of the homes policy and approach to consulting children about the quality of their care

Acorn House care team will involve our child in the day-to-day decision making of the home, including decisions on issues such as food, décor, recreation, rules and responsibilities. There are many avenues where the children's wishes and feelings are sought, depending on the child's choice, a joint or individual children's meeting is held fortnightly. Using this forum, the children can contribute to:

- Menu choice
- Activities choice
- Their views of how they have been
- Their comments, compliments, or complaints
- Anything else they would like to say or share such as good news
- Fortnightly house meeting
- Incentive chart to support their needs.

Our child will have weekly planned Key working sessions; this is a format where their thoughts and feelings are heard.

On return from school each afternoon, a meeting can be held to discuss their day and to make decisions on what is to be planned for the evening, any announcements will be made at this point, or post and messages given to the children. The children also are aware they can at any time approach the Registered Manager of the home, to talk about any issues or concerns they may have, including the operation of the home.

The fortnightly house meeting is the appropriate forum for the young people to have the opportunity to have input into other issues relating to the home: weekly menus, activities etc. Children's views can also be aired via

the key working system.

Children can give feedback on their care by formal questionnaires, these are completed three times a year. The outcomes from these are used to inform and improve our practice. Also, at each LAC review a questionnaire is given to children or /parents/carer's/significant others as well as the placing authority to ascertain their views of the home and the care of their individual child.

To comply with Regulations an Independent Person (Regulation 44 Visitor) will monitor the home monthly. Access to the children's files with their consent will be sought from the young people through agreed written permission.

Almond Care Childrens Services has no legal duties to convene statutory reviews, this being the responsibility of the placing authority. Following placement of a child Almond Care Children's Services requires that a statutory review takes place within 28 days. Another review will be held in 3 months from the first, then at subsequent intervals of 6 months. Almond Care Children's Services will attend with any reports identified and assist in preparing the young person for his/her review.

The placement plan where possible, and as a minimum periodic requirement, is reviewed alongside statutory reviews.

House Meetings:

Children are actively consulted on the overall running of the home through Children's Meetings which are held fortnightly throughout a placement. All meetings are minuted and follow an agenda compiled by children and care team. It is the children who take the lead. Care team members are present to answer questions, consult with the children and represent the team and the home. Children who are on the autistic spectrum or communication difficulties will have this information conveyed to them in a manner that is conducive to their individual developmental learning. As part of best practice and transparency Almond Care Childrens Services welcomes key professionals to take part in this service as part of our key commitment to the children within our care who are always at the centre of everything we do.

9. A description of the homes policy and approach in relation to: -

- a) anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families; and
- b) Children's rights

Acorn House is part of Almond Care Children's Services who as an organisation are committed to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice for the staff it employs and the children we look after.

The child's welfare and needs are of paramount concern to our staff. Any issues relating to skin colour, disability, gender, class, religion, or any other human diversity which could impact on the child through discrimination or prejudice, will be addressed to ensure that children take full advantage of opportunities available to them. We encourage open discussion through processes such as individual and group supervisions to provide and check that we are progressing in practice. Care team members will help children to understand how to treat others with respect and fairness. Care workers will use plain, jargon free language appropriate to the age and culture of the children. The children are actively encouraged to contribute ideas or participate in all aspects of the running of the home, where their wishes and feelings are continually considered.

Acorn House works within all requirements and regulations and this is supported by relevant policies in place by Almond Care Children's Services which can be requested and be printed on request. This includes all policies for anti-discriminatory practice, children's rights, missing from care, complaints etc.

Almond Care Children's Services upholds the values set out in The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which is a comprehensive, internationally binding agreement on the rights of children. The

UNCRC is the most widely ratified international human rights. Since the treaty came into force in 1991, every child in the UK has been entitled to over 40 specific rights. The different rights are not ranked in order of importance; instead, they interact with one another to form dynamic parts of an integrated unit.

These include:

- The right to life, survival, and development.
- The right to have their views always respected and to have their best interests considered.
- The right to a name and nationality, freedom of expression and access to information concerning them.
- The right to live in a family environment or alternative care and to have contact with both parents if possible.
- Health and welfare rights - including rights for disabled children - the right to health and health care and social security.
- The right to education, leisure, culture, and the arts.
- special protection for refugee children, children in the juvenile justice system, children deprived of their liberty and children suffering economic, sexual, or other forms of exploitation.

Equal Opportunities Policy:

We are committed to be an equal opportunities employer. This means that all the job applicants, care team members and children will receive equal treatment regardless of religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality, cultural or national origins, or disability etc.

It is unlawful to discriminate against individuals directly or indirectly in respect of their race, sex, or disability. Almond Care Children's Services fully complies with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 (including the 2023 amendments) and other relevant statutory requirements.

Although it is unlawful and against Almond Care Childrens Services policy to positively discriminate in favour of certain groups on the grounds of their race or sex, positive action to enable greater integration and representation of under-represented groups is permitted by law and encouraged by Almond Care Children's Services.

Almond Care Childrens Services ensures that applications for employment are attracted from both sexes, all races and from disabled people and will ensure that there are equal opportunities in all stages of the recruitment and selection processes. Promotion within Almond Care Childrens Services is based solely on merit, and without regard to race, sex or disability.

This policy is monitored by Almond Care Childrens Services to judge its effectiveness. Almond Care Childrens Services monitors the cultural and sexual composition of its existing staff and will review its equal opportunities policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring.

Almond Care Childrens Services treats discrimination seriously and acts when any employee, or child has a grievance because of discrimination or harassment on sexual or racial grounds or on grounds of disability. Any such grievance or complaint should be made in writing to the Senior Manager (SM).

Managing Diversity Statement:

Diversity in the population, the workforce and the marketplace are a fact of life within British society today. Valuing diversity by welcoming, recognising, and cultivating differences among people so they can develop their unique talents and be effective organisational members are paramount considerations within Almond Care Children's Services. Almond Care Childrens Services aims to recruit, train, and fully utilise employees who reflect the broad spectrum of British society in all areas - gender, race, age, disability, culture, religion, education, and economic level.

Almond Care Children's Services values diversity and will enforce this value in our day-to-day decisions.

Children's Rights:

The views of children are that children *"may have little influence because they have less power than adults"*.

The idea of the National society for the prevention of cruelty to children (NSPCC) children's rights is one way of trying to acknowledge this lack of power. It gives adults the responsibility to protect children and not exploit or abuse them.

Almond Care Childrens Services believes in a pro-active approach to children's rights. Care members fully understand the concept of children's rights and the relationship of these rights to their responsibilities. This underpins the development of trusting relationships between children and care team to develop safe and trusting relationships.

Staff responsibility in relation to children's rights

Children's rights are paramount within residential care. The rights of children to be treated with respect, to be asked for their views and to be listened to and to be involved with decisions about their future and about how they are cared for are fundamental to positive experience in residential care.

Almond Care Childrens Services will ensure that the care team care for children do not feel disempowered by this concept of children's rights, but actively encourage children to:

- Have their wishes and feelings considered in respect of their care
- Express what they think and feel
- To be consulted
- To have access to information
- To not be unjustly punished
- To be protected from abuse
- To have personal privacy
- Access to health care
- Access to education
- Access to leisure activities
- Make a complaint
- Have or refuse family contact

The team working with children in our care, whilst encouraging children's rights, must have a clear understanding that they have a responsibility to protect children from taking on too much responsibility at a young age. It is our philosophy that good parenting skills will gradually allow children to make more decisions for themselves. Therefore, the issue of children's rights is an ever evolving one.

Staff working with the children placed at Acorn House will if requested or feel necessary support the child in seeking the aid of an independent advocate so they can have the support needed in having their views heard independently and without prejudice.

Responsibility of children

Children in our care will be encouraged to develop positive views about their rights. This will include:

- That with rights, come responsibilities
- They must respect the rights and responsibilities of others, both peers and staff.

By providing a positive environment, which encourages children's rights can learn to exercise their rights and understand their responsibilities. It is important that our team educate our children through their

relationships and conversations about issues concerning rights. These issues can come from everyday situations such as through children's handbook, television programmes, social media, school, newspaper articles, etc.

Education

10. Details of the provision to support children with special educational needs.

Acorn House is part of Almond Care Childrens Services and most of our children will attend local schools in Leicestershire or continue at the school they are at prior to coming to Acorn House. All children where appropriate will be encourage and supported by our team to attend mainstream school.

Each child has an EHCP, IEP, PEP, of personal attainment on his file, this is regularly updated in line with statutory reviews, also Educational Statement reviews are held annually or as and when details change.

Key workers are identified to support each child, this will include attending meetings on a regular basis with teachers to discuss their development within the school. Our Child will be encouraged to attend school on a full-time basis, and support them through an introductory period, where required.

Acorn House will ensure each child has access to relevant learning tools to enable them to complete homework set to enhance his/her learning, the children within the home have access to a computer with monitored Internet use by staff supervision as per individual risk assessments if required.

In caring for children, looked after, or accommodated, it may be the case that obtaining a suitable and continuous educational placement could be difficult to find. We have a contact in Leicestershire and will work in partnership to find a positive outcome for all the children in our care.

We do not believe it is in the best interest of any child to suffer long gaps between school provisions, or that the child should be expected to have to cope with an inappropriate educational experience due to the lack of suitable resources.

The home will work with the Local Authorities to ensure each child is receiving appropriate education to prevent drift and delay.

Most of the children who come to Almond Care Childrens Services will have experienced a sense of failure in their education. The education system may not have worked for them - either by exclusion or their desire to opt out. We can ensure that residents of Almond Care Childrens Services are provided with the standard of education that will reinstate their sense of self-esteem, provide them with learning opportunities according to their needs, and teach them how to conduct themselves so that they may relate to others in a socially acceptable way, thereby enabling them to enjoy a full and satisfying life.

Many see the word 'education' as being closely allied to 'failure' and their inability to conform, or to perform, to adult expectation. Emotional trauma is a huge block to the use and development of talent and resources, as education is seldom high on their list of personal priorities. Our greatest challenge in caring for children away from home is to try and reverse negative attitudes and habits to enable the child to begin to enjoy the process of learning.

Due to the location of the home, the children who are admitted to the home will be offered the opportunity to visit and enrol within an education provision which is set up to cater for children with varying educational needs, which offer alternative education to children unable to access mainstream education for whatever reason.

The information below, are details relating to educational provisions varying from Mainstream to alternative Education.

- Highgate Community Primary School
- Cossington C of E Primary School
- Seagrave Village Primary School
- Cedars Academy
- Rawlins Academy
- Wreake Valley
- Humphrey Perkins School

11. If the home is not registered as a school, the arrangements for children to attend schools and the provision made by the home to promote children's educational achievement.

All Children admitted to Acorn House will access education through a provision that meets their individual needs. Whilst children are out of education an individual programme of full-time education tailored to their specific needs; bespoke packages of education will be developed for each child.

Each child will follow the National Curriculum at their own level and pace, in a culture that sets realistic, yet high expectations of everyone. Staff are trained to recognise the types of challenges that children with these problems face in achieving their full educational potential. All children will have the opportunity to aspire to and obtain qualifications and certificates of attainment at GCSE and QCF's and certificates from social care training hub.

Children residing at Acorn House who attend an education provision are supported in this by the care team within the home; attend regular meetings, parents evening and feedback sessions to gain knowledge of the child's attainment. This in turn filters into the care provided in the home which supports any type of education being undertaken by children, for example mainstream schools and colleges, apprentices, and work-based learning to external educational provisions such as Duke of Edinburgh awards. Staff within the home help children with homework, also planning and where needed support for educational trips.

Children can be supported to study for A Level and/or vocational qualifications, as appropriate, in conjunction with the local Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges. There are extensive educational resources and facilities for young people to undertake private study.

In the event a child can attend mainstream school, Staff will transport the children to and from school, or when possible, the children may use the school bus or public transport. The use of mainstream schools in the local area offers positive facilities for the children and promote development, further opportunities to socialise and independence.

Enjoyment and Achievement

12. The arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.

Children will be encouraged to participate in recreational activities of their choice, each week they will plan with staff what they wish to attend, and which staff will support which child. The care team will support the child in accessing local clubs and groups to promote self-esteem and inclusion. However, this may prove difficult for some children who reside at the home, and in this event, alternative local activities will be accessed to aid in the child's development of social skills and self-esteem with the support from the care team.

We offer a wide range of recreational opportunities and support the children to participate as fully as possible. Considering their creative, intellectual, physical, and social interests. As well as being enjoyed for themselves it is recognised that these activities also have a therapeutic value.

Activities to support social skills and development of inclusion are chosen around each of the individual child's skills, likes and abilities, to expand their interests and hobbies, where they can also contribute to the home and wider community. These are fully risk assessed prior to any activity taking place. Activity planners are encouraged weekly to support the young person to have an active and enjoyable childhood and learn and achieve new skills.

Life Skills:

Where possible the children are encouraged and supervised on a 1-1, staff will support children to cook and clean up after themselves, so they learn the basic living skills in preparation for future independence. If possible, they will also manage their own pocket money and, depending on age, their own clothing allowance. To help prepare them for Adulthood.

Health

13. Details of care support therapy provided, including CAMHS, LAC Health assessments: -

- a) details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing care and
- b) Information about how the effectiveness of any healthcare or therapy provided is attended and measured, the evidence demonstrating effectiveness and details of how the information or the evidence can be accessed.

All children will be registered with a local general practitioner who will complete the initial health assessment and 6-month check-ups etc. Children will also be registered with a local dentist and optician who will carry out checks for any treatment they may need.

It is important that a comprehensive medical history is given on the appropriate part of the Application Form to enable and to ensure that any appropriate medication or treatment is maintained, and to advise the G.P. of a child's medical background in the event of sickness.

All our care team are trained Medication handling and in emergency first aid and an accident book is completed even for minor cuts of both staff and children (separate books) to comply with statutory requirements.

At Almond Care Childrens Services our Health Education Programme is an integral and vital part of our care philosophy. It is both extensive and comprehensive covering, amongst other areas of work, mental health, sex education, diet, and nutrition. Additionally, there is great emphasis placed on counselling around alcohol and drug misuse which is being viewed increasingly as a precursor to offending behaviour in children. Staff will support children to gain access to appropriate services.

Our Child will not be permitted to smoke on the premises and will be challenged as to the negative health issues involved. If they do need to smoke, they will be able to take part in a reduction program.

Every child has an initial plan which is devised within the first 5 working days in placement, which outlines an initial formulation of the child. Intervention strategies and identified team needs which are then reviewed, amended, and addressed in subsequent team meetings and training sessions. Our team are experienced, trained and supported on an on-going basis to help them work with traumatised children with a variety of presenting difficulties. Children will have access to psychologist and psychiatrists if required.

Initially when a child moves into placement the priority is on establishing a sense of safety and containment for the child in a nurturing environment. The support workers in the home are encouraged to consider how the child may view themselves, the world and those around them, to interpret, manage and contain behaviours that may emerge.

Positive Relationships

14. The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their families and friends

We are committed to promoting contact were agreed and specified by the placing Authority between the child and natural parents or any other significant person/s. Based on trust and mutual respect, to encourage to understand acceptable behaviour, and respond to adults positively, to become self-aware. Children develop resilience and practice to learn skills to resolve conflicts. Children are supported to understand relationships of personal, sexual and social and to these can be supportive or harmful. To spot children at risk or to help the child to stay safe and reduce the risk of harm. Our team are familiar and know how to act in accordance with the homes child protection policies.

Our team are always available to family members for support and discussion. A quiet lounge is available for visitors at Acorn House. If contact is at a venue and it is requested from the placing authority that it is supervised, staff at the house will carry out this function and support the child during the contact.

Contact is integral to the placement process and there is a requirement for this to be specified at the outset in the placement plan for each child. The home will also encourage the children in our care to develop positive friendships and social groups and where appropriate facilitate contact with friends either in the home or in the community.

Protection of Children

15. A description of the homes approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children.

When required Door alarms will be fitted to the children's bedroom doors and will only be used with the permission of the responsible social care department and endorsed at a review meeting. The child will always be informed of the use of such an alarm, the purpose and their agreement sought where possible and other alternatives may be explored that are less intrusive. These alarms will only be used to ensure the safety and welfare of each child. There is written permission and risk assessment for the use of door alarms on each child's file. Door alarms are fitted to each bedroom room door and can be utilised dependant on the child and the risks they present. This would require a risk assessment to be implemented along with the social worker's consent. There are currently no alarms fitted on any of the doors at Acorn house.

Acorn House recognises the risks to children around radicalisation and have developed a policy which outlines how the organisation will minimise those risks for the children we support.

Fire Precautions:

Almond Care Childrens Services has been fully inspected and approved by an authorised fire safety company. The home operates a fire system with detectors in every room and bedrooms. The system is checked weekly and serviced every 6 months. Full evacuation drills occur monthly including night times or more with new care team members and children. All our team members are trained in the company's standard operating procedures. Upon admission, the child is informed of all aspects of the homes fire precautions and evacuation policy. They are expected to participate in all scheduled drills. All electrical and gas appliances have been extensively tested with full safety certificates available.

16. The homes approach to behavioural support including information about: -

- a) the homes approach in relation to children and
- b) How persons working in the home are trained in physical intervention and how their competence is assessed

Behaviour Support:

Almond Care Childrens Services aims to provide a high standard of individualised behaviour support within all homes. Our children are encouraged to actively participate within their behaviour support profiles, respecting their choices wishes and experiences. The 'children's Guide' clearly identifies the behavioural expectations of young people accommodated within the homes, alongside a range of appropriate and proportionate sanctions. This plan reflects positive behaviours, rewards and support for the children alongside positive intervention strategies which work for the individual child. Intervention from the Youth Justice Service will be included within this plan if appropriate for the child.

When caring for children there are times that there are extreme behaviours displayed by children that can pose a risk to the safety to themselves or others around them at these times the staff in the home may use physical intervention as a last resort.

All our staff are trained in physical invention procedures using Team Teach during a two-day accredited course and are re-assessed each year at the most to ensure staff remain competent in all aspects of the behavioural support.

Almond Care Children's Services will also utilise external consultants for advice and guidance as well as showing a firm commitment to holistic work practice and ensuring any consequences a child receives are in line with the child's developmental learning curve.

Almond Care Children's Services method for care and control emphasise communication, distraction, and de-escalation. Staff members are taught to safely restrain whilst continually communicating and supporting the child. Physical intervention is recognised as a tool of last resort and carried out for the shortest amount of time possible and technique used will be the very least intrusive, using minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied at any given time.

The placing authority will have been notified of the incident by email (copy of incident report). Any incident or physical intervention is recorded formally and is signed or commented upon by the manager. The child is also asked to read, comment, and sign the report to discuss the incident. The report is then sent to the placing authority.

Each physical intervention is taught and assessed on an individual basis. Each worker is assessed as competent or not competent in each technique. If a worker is judged as not competent in a certain technique, a development plan is put in place and monitored by the Home Manager to ensure the individual receives the necessary support to develop and reach a level of competence.

As part of Acorn House induction and probation period, a care worker must successfully be judged as competent in all elements of the assessment process. All workers will attend Annual refresher courses to ensure continual development and assessment.

The principles relating to the use of Physical Intervention may be summarised as follows:

- Staff should have grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child from significantly injuring himself or others.
- Staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for Physical Intervention, e.g. through dialogue and diversion and the child should be warned orally that Physical Intervention will be used unless she desists.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before conducting Physical Intervention. These staff can act as assistants and/or witnesses.
- As soon as it is safe, Physical Intervention should be gradually relaxed to allow the young person to regain self-control.

- Physical Intervention should be an act of care and support, not punishment.

A record of the Physical Intervention must be recorded in the children's file on SUE. All Physical Intervention reports must be signed by the Manager unless the manger has been involved in the PI in this case the Senior Manager will sign off the report. The child will be offered medical support or assistance after a physical intervention or serious incident.

After a suitable period, the children's key worker should seek privacy with the children to discuss the incident and explore possible ways of this being avoided in the future. A record of any Physical Intervention occurring is sent to the child's social worker.

MONITORING OF BEHAVIOUR AND INCIDENTS

The Registered Manager, & Assistant Manager monitor all incidents of behaviour support, discipline, and physical intervention to identifying trends and patterns that will assist with improving practice. The information from the analysis helps to inform our care planning, risk assessing and individual behaviour support plans.

Missing from care:

If a child were to go missing, the surroundings of the home would be searched. Depending on the protocol for that child, the placing authority would be informed, followed by the Parent/Guardian and then the Police. Children would be asked if they knew the whereabouts of the child. Should the child be at a great risk whilst missing, the police would be immediately contacted, and all relevant details given. Parents or other people who are deemed to have an appropriate interest or Parental Responsibility are also informed.

Upon a child's return, all contacted persons are notified. The child is welcomed back, and priority given to their need for sustenance, comfort, and possibly medical attention. An incident report for the missing from care period is completed, and a copy sent to the placing authority. A safe return interview is then carried out and this is normally carried out by an independent social worker or identified advocate from the young person's local authority.

In relation to an absence without authority, the placing authority would be informed, followed by the Parent/Guardian. Should all options be exhausted in aid of supporting the child to be returned home, their individual protocol would be followed, and the Police would be contacted.

In certain extraordinary circumstances physical intervention may be used where the danger of leaving the home may be serious and action will be required to prevent it. In all such cases the child's social worker would be involved at the outset and clear boundaries to staff intervention defined. Where staff are having to resort to frequent physical intervention a review will be convened to examine the child's reasons, the appropriateness of the placement and the views of the parents and those with parental responsibilities. The use of physical intervention will never be used as a substitute for secure accommodation.

Anti-bullying policy:

No child should have to put up with being bullied and no child should be allowed to bully others without this being formally addressed. All bullying behaviour will be challenged by staff and brought to the attention of the home's manager. A record will be made on the child's case files.

The child responsible may need support or counselling or firm boundaries to reduce bullying. In such cases, key worker sessions are held, to educate and reduce the bullying.

The victim of bullying may need support to empower them to challenge bullying behaviour. Again, key worker sessions supported by our staff is conducted.

Where there is persistent bullying behaviour a placement stability meeting may need to be arranged with the placing authority to agree a plan of action and obtain support.

Some of the children within our care who have been diagnosed with certain disabilities would be deemed as highly vulnerable, therefore Almond Care Children's Services is highly committed to safeguarding and protecting vulnerable young people across the spectrum of abuse and bullying.

Children placed at Acorn House will have a discussion with the team upon admittance surrounding the home's anti-bullying policy.

Leadership and Management

17. The name and work address of: -

- a) The registered provider
- b) The responsible individual
- c) The registered manager

Home Name is owned by Almond Care Childrens Services

Registered Provider address is Almond Care Children's Services

The Responsible Individual is Julia Senah

Email: juliasenah@almondcare.co.uk

The homes Manager is:

Name Alison Kenny

Email: alison@almondcare.co.uk

18. Details of the experience and qualifications of staff, including any staff commissioned to provide education or healthcare.

The quality and reliability of our workers are crucial to the success of Almond Care Childrens Services. The minimum standard for a Registered Manager at the home is an QCF level 5, or equivalent, and for Residential Support Workers NVQ/QCF Diploma Level 3 as a minimum qualification. To achieve both standards we actively support our staff through a personal development plan (PDP). The home management team ensures formal supervision of each care team member as well as structured one to one supervision, informal one to one supervision and group supervision within team meetings are undertaken. The staff team has full access to ongoing training both internally and by agreement to short term mandatory external courses. There are also clear policy and procedure guidelines in place to which staff have access and are trained. Applicants who are successfully employed at the home can work in partnership within a multi-disciplinary setting as well as with the child's family.

Our staff resources are profiled to ensure 24-hour cover is maintained always with a minimum staff group of 7, this being according to occupancy level and the needs of the young people, whilst providing for sick leave and holidays. We will provide a high staff to resident ratio according to their needs; the minimum day staffing based on 1 child ratio is 6 team members, 2 x sleep-in staff, with a manager who will be on call. We also aim to have several bank staff who can cover any shifts that require covering.

Our residential staff group will have acquired skills from a wide variety of training and have benefited from ongoing professional support in applying this information in a practical way. They are recruited based on their past skills, life experiences and their personal, emotional, and temperamental suitability to the task.

Our dedicated management team brings to the organisation vast experiences from different backgrounds and theoretical perspectives. The team values diversity, inclusion and equality and is enthusiastic and committed to providing the best possible services.

To help safeguard the children we have a home mobile phone. These are assigned to a team member each time a child attends education, contact or an activity of choice. This is to ensure contact with the children, staff or the home is always assured.

Our collective experiences and shared commitment to children will be combined to assist us in the process of continually reassessing and developing our services for the benefit of children at Almond Care Childrens Services. The home has a Staff Register in place regarding staffing within Acorn House; the document is separate to the Statement of Purpose but is in conjunction to it and is updated as and when there are changes to the staff team (available upon request).

The Responsible Individual: Julia Senah

Almond Children's Services was founded by Julia Senah. Julia is Almond Children's Services Managing Director and Responsible Individual. Her extensive career in healthcare and children's services saw her first qualify as a general nurse, spending over a decade in the NHS and private sector. She went on to specialise in paediatric complex care. She is registered with the NMC and is a member of the RCN, BABICM, CMSUK and Paediatric Palliative Care Forum, RCN Children & Young People Specialist Care Forum and RCN Children and Young People Continuing & Community Care forum.

The Manager: Alison Kenny

NVQ Level 3 caring for children and young people. Alison is enrolled on the QCF Level 5 Leadership and management health and social care. Alison has also completed numerous training courses which include Safeguarding level 3, Report Writing, Child Protection, Cultural Diversity, Supervision and Management of Staff and working within the National Minimum Standards. Alison has 18 years of experience working within the residential setting as a Residential support worker, Team Leader and deputy manager.

Learning & Development

Acorn House in co-operation with the Almond Care Children's Services are committed to deliver training of the highest standard and in line with best practice. All training courses are current and meet all essential legislation and regulatory reforms. Almond Care Children's pride themselves of going above and beyond the mandatory training with most of our courses accredited.

Our training is bespoke to meet the service needs and that of the young people. Our team will engage in a two-week initial induction programme prior to first contact with a child. We take exceptional steps to ensure that their training meets the needs of the children and is safe, relevant, proportionate and engaging.

Upon commencing their employment within the Almond Care Children's Services, the following training will be covered as part of the comprehensive induction:

Mandatory Training Online

Safeguarding Children Foundation Children's Homes Online Course
Risk Management and Safer Caring Children's Homes Online Course
Managers Only Advanced Safeguarding Children Children's Homes Online Course
General Data Protection Regulation Children's Homes Online Course
Food Safety and Hygiene Foundation Children's Homes Online Course
Food Safety and Hygiene Advanced Children's Homes Online Course
Health and Safety Advanced Level Children's Homes Online Course
Infection Control Children's Homes Online Course
Manual Handling Children's Homes Online Course
Fire Safety Children's Homes Online Course
COSHH Children's Homes Online Course
Medication Advanced Children's Homes Online Course
Equality and Diversity Children's Homes Online Course
Health and Nutrition Children's Homes Online Course
Radicalisation and Extremism Children's Homes Online Course
Reporting and Recording Children's Homes Online Course
Reporting and Recording Advanced Level Children's Homes Online Course
Female Genital Mutilation Children's Home Online Course
County Lines
PREVENT

Face to Face

Almond Care Children's Services Transitional Care Safeguarding and Safer Caring
Team Teach Physical Intervention Training 2 Year
First Aid

Mandatory Qualification's

QCF Children's & Young People Level 3
QCF Children's & Young People Level 5 leadership and Management

Acorn House Support Workers will be supported and encouraged to participate in the Induction process upon commencing their employment. All Support Workers will be enrolled on the QCF Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (previously the NVQ 3 Health and Social Care Children and Young People / Level 3

Diploma for the Children and Young Peoples Workforce) upon reaching 6 months of employment with successful passing of probation period. All our team are expected to have achieved this qualification within two years of employment in line with the Children's Home Regulations 2015. This will ensure care practitioners are competent and qualified within their role. Staff will have the necessary skills and knowledge to apply to their everyday practice to ensure the care for the children is sufficient and meets a good practice.

19. Details of the management and staffing structure of the home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff, including staff that provide education of healthcare.

Acorn House will be staffed as follows when occupancy is full: 1 x Registered Manager, 1 Assistant Manager. 2 x Team Leaders, and 3 x Support Workers and 1 bank staff . This standard model provides 2 staff on shift per day to support the children in residence. The team looks at a balance of both sexes where possible helping give the children positive role models to assist in their individual growth through nurturing, positive interaction, and care.

We believe that young people need continuity of care, and this is reflected in our rota system. Our care staff are on duty between 09.30.hrs – 23.00hrs and then we will have 2 sleep-in staff depending on the needs of the service and the occupancy level of the home. Each individual shift consists of either 1 or 2 staff members being on duty at any one time when lone working this will be carefully risk assessed by the Registered manager. The staffing ratio can change to reflect the care package for the children, however there will be two staff sleeping in, unless risk assessed to either increase staffing or implement night awakes under specific agreed measures. Each member of the team works in the home for 173 hours per month, which is incorporated into the rota, thus allowing the children to develop meaningful relationships with each individual member of the care team. Further to this, the manager is present throughout the day, and a manager is also contactable out of hours through our on-call support service.

In order to manage staffing shortfalls within the Rota the home operates the following local policy; pre booked shortfalls such as annual leave/training are generally covered within the homes Rota allocation without falling below the minimum staffing levels.

Immediate shortfalls such as short-term sickness is covered by the following means: -

- Overtime in the shape of part/full shifts is offered to the internal staff team. Alternatively, the same offer can also be presented to staff working within other Almond Care Childrens Services Homes and effective temporary relocation of staff from homes is regularly and an effective way of meeting emergency shortfalls as well as longer term vacancies or absences.
- Almond Care Childrens Services also has a bank staff system in place these staff have completed a condensed Induction Training Plan with the relevant checks needed to be suitable to work with children. This is in place to cover staffing shortfalls within our Residential Care Homes.
- The home will seek to use temporary staff from a registered staffing agency commissioned by the company. Full checks in line with national minimum standards are undertaken on any staff used within the home under these circumstances.
- There may also be occasions when to cover a long-term absence the home may seek to temporarily employ, via the agency a suitably qualified and experienced member of staff in order to offer stability and a consistent approach to running the home.

All our team, prior to being employed in the service, are subject to an extensive selection and vetting process. Checks are carried out with the Disclosure and Barring Service and previous employers to ensure that there are no aspects of their background that would make them unsuitable for work involving the care support of children.

All our team receive professional support and supervision. For staff completing their probation period they receive formal supervision which can include practical work-based learning every 2 weeks for a period of no less than 1 hour each supervision. Following completion of their probationary period Acorn House will provide

a lengthy supervision each month. Supervisors/line managers are competent in delivering high quality supervisions through training in this area.

An on-call system is in place regarding support to the staff. This is the following Monday – Thursday the Home Manager is on call to support their home. Friday 5:00p.m to Monday 7: 00a.m the appointed manager/team leader covers the home along with the other residential services, an appointed Senior On-Call covers the same weekend hours to offer additional support to the Service.

20. If the staff are all one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes

We are committed to providing a service which promotes appropriate role models of both sexes. The home has both male and female staff of different age, culture and background which provides positive role models for the children. We promote both role models by having a culture where we discuss and present influential people around the world both past and present to celebrate achievements. Gender roles are not stereo-typed, and children are promoted to achieve their set goals.

Care Planning

21. Any criteria used for the admission of children to the home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission

Acorn House will provide care for up to 1 child, male or female, aged from 7 years to 17 years old on admission. The home location is in Sileby Leicestershire. The homes have a clear referrals and admissions process that available at the home and briefly outlined below:

We will consider young people who:

- Exhibit verbal/physical aggression
- Expose themselves to risk of harm.
- Are victims of abuse.
- Self-harm
- Mild Learning Difficulties

We are unable to offer placements to children who have:

- Severe mental health disorders
- Severe physical disabilities
- Severe learning disabilities
- Made serious suicide attempts.
- Fire Setting
- Known risk around knives.

Planned Admission Procedure:

- Enquiry
- Referral Papers
- Impact assessment completed and agreed.
- Discussion with team and young people
- Initial Assessment visit to child and Assessment
- Placement Agreement Meeting held.
- Visit to the Home which will include overnight stays.
- Room prepared.
- Admission

Emergency Admission Procedure:

It is anticipated that some placements will be emergency admissions, however this will be avoided if possible. In these circumstances the manager will obtain the fullest information possible from the referrer to allow a decision to be made and ensure the following conditions are agreed / met.

- Planning meeting arranged within 72 hours
- There must be a named social worker with case responsibility
- All appropriate paperwork is provided and full history
- Impact assessment completed and agreed by Manager and LA
- Initial Assessment

On admission, our child receives a Welcome Pack. The Pack includes everything the child needs to know about the home and their rights whilst in care.

The bedrooms are fully refurbished and furnished to a high standard and all relevant requirements are in place to meet the child's needs and to ensure privacy is provided to our children.

We aim to consult with the children that reside in the home about any new admissions that may be joining them living at Acorn House, however there are times that we do take emergency placements this does not always give us the time to consult with the children. When this is the case, the adults will complete one to one work with the children to explain the reasons this has not taken place. House meeting will also be completed with the new child and existing children with aim to integrate all.

Aftercare:

At Almond Care Children's Services preparation for future independence begins at the point of admission. When it is time for a young person to move on to independent living we can, by agreement with the placing authority, provide an aftercare plan which involves:

- An outreach support worker from Almond Care Children's Services.
- Any additional support required with shopping, cooking, completing forms, attending work programmes or further education, and any other requisite skills area for living independently, can be undertaken through a comprehensive leaving care toolkit and direct one to one work.

Contracting:

Given that we are providing care on behalf of the child's local authority it is our policy to have clear contractual agreements which reflects this partnership. In the absence of block purchasing agreements the following defines the contractual basis of any partnership between Almond Care Children's Services and the referring agency:

- A completed referral
- Signed financial agreement.
- Individual Care Plan
- Individual Placement Plan

From the outset, we need to be clear that a management decision has been made supporting the appropriateness of an approach to Almond Care Children's Services A signed financial agreement is the only notification of such a decision we can accept, as it informs us that the referral to Almond Care Children's Services is one which has been carefully thought out and has everything in place for the application to progress without delay. We believe this to be good practice and in the best interest of all concerned. All applications received without a financial agreement are placed on our waiting list at the request of the referring authority.

Current Staffing Structure

AO	Home's Manager	QCF level 4 qualified, Now enrolled in QCF level 5 BA Hons in Child and Youth Studies	Experience 3 years in working in an education setting, and has worked at various levels within residential care, including team leader and deputy manager.
RS	Team Leader	QCF level 3 qualified	Roger has 15 years' experience in residential setting, Roger has supported children with Autism and ADHD. Now moved to sister home
TT	Team Leader	QCF level 3 and has now been enrolled in QCF level 5	Experience in residential setting for 8 years with children's services.
IA	SRCW	Enrolled on QCF level 4 90% completed	Previous experience working within children's services, now been with Almond children's services for nearly 2 years, Has now been moved to Acorn from Almond house sister home). Imre interviewed successfully for a team leader role at sister home Rainbow house and has now been transferred to that home.
CC	RCW	Passed probation, enrolled onto QCF level 4	New to children's services although she has worked in complex care.
BD	RCW	Passed probation, enrolled onto QCF level 4	New to Almond children's services, has 6 months experience in working with children in residential care setting. Bismark was also a nurse in Africa for 3 years.
MM	RCW	Passed probation, enrolled onto QCF	New to Almond Care children's services, has 28 years' experience in residential

		level 4	settings with adults. Very well versed with safeguarding. MM has moved to a sister home – Rainbow house.
BS	Senior	Passed probation, enrolled onto QCF level 4	Has been working in children's services for over a year. Although has worked with complex care with adults and children. Brian has also done a lot of charity work in Africa with orphan children and is looking into doing charity work in England with children leaving care.
SJ	RCW	Probation Period	New to children's services. Sylvester has previously worked as a sales assistant and a machine operator.
DM	Clinical Phycologist	Support the team on monthly basis	qualified counselling psychologist with over 10 years' experience working with children and young people