

## Statement of Purpose Gables House



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**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

---

**Contents**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Overall aims and objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Care, education and treatment</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Ethos and philosophy	4
2.2	Data protection	5
2.3	Admissions policy and criteria	5
2.4	Age range, gender and numbers of young people	6
2.5	Any special needs of the young people accommodated	6
2.6	Range of needs the home is intended to meet	6
2.7	Specific therapeutic techniques used in the home	7
2.8	Individual psychotherapy	8
2.9	Evaluation of the placement	9
<b>3.</b>	<b>Consultation with young people about the operation of the home and the quality of their care</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>The group environment</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Equality, diversity and young people's rights</b>	<b>14</b>
5.1	Anti-discriminatory practice	15
5.2	Young people's rights	16
5.3	Restriction of liberty	16
<b>6.</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>16</b>
6.1	Exercise	17
6.2	Diet	18
6.3	Smoking	19
6.4	Alcohol, drugs and illegal substances	19
<b>7.</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>19</b>
7.1	Special educational needs	21
7.2	The education structure	22
<b>8.</b>	<b>Young people's participation in cultural, recreational and sporting activities</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Promoting appropriate behaviour, control, physical intervention and discipline</b>	<b>23</b>
9.1	The creation of positive relationships	25
9.2	Restrictive physical intervention	25
9.3	Rewards	25
9.4	Sanctions procedures	27

**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

9.5	Searching children / bedrooms	28
9.6	Prohibited methods of control	29
<b>10.</b>	<b>Safeguarding</b>	29
10.1	Preventing bullying	30
10.2	Child sexual exploitation	30
10.3	Radicalisation of children	31
10.4	Internet safety	31
10.5	Female Genital Mutilation	32
10.6	Significant events	32
<b>11.0</b>	<b>If a young person goes missing</b>	32
11.1	Action taken when the young person returns	33
<b>12.</b>	<b>Contact between young people and parents, relatives and friends</b>	33
<b>13.</b>	<b>Cultural, linguistic and religious needs</b>	34
13.1	Religious instruction and observance	34
<b>14.</b>	<b>Complaints</b>	35
14.1	Complaints by young people	35
14.2	Complaints by employees	36
14.3	Complaints by third parties	36
<b>15.</b>	<b>Facilities and services</b>	36
15.1	Suitability of location	37
<b>16.</b>	<b>Accommodation and room sharing</b>	38
<b>17.</b>	<b>Surveillance within the home</b>	38
<b>18.</b>	<b>Fire precautions and emergency procedures</b>	39
<b>19.</b>	<b>Registered Provider and Registered Manager</b>	39
<b>20.</b>	<b>Consultant to Gables House</b>	40
<b>21.</b>	<b>Residential Therapeutic Staff</b>	40
<b>22.</b>	<b>Staff supervision and training</b>	44
22.1	Supervision	44
22.2	Training	45
22.3	Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST)	45
<b>23.</b>	<b>Organisational structure</b>	46
23.1	House	46
23.2	School	46

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

#### **1. Overall aims and objectives**

Gables House is one of five therapeutic communities, managed by the charitable organisation Childhood First. Our work is based on our Integrated Systemic Therapy (IST) model, which has evolved over 40 years. This is a holistic group-based approach founded on the twin traditions of milieu therapy and systemic psychotherapy.

Gables House is a specialist residential therapeutic community providing therapeutic care and treatment along with family support to psychologically traumatised young people. Gables House specialises in the treatment of young people who present severe emotional and behavioural problems as a result of attachment difficulties usually rooted in early life trauma. We offer an integrated systemic programme of care, therapeutic work and education for up to eight children and young people, aged eleven to thirteen years old on admission with a ratio of three teams of up to eight therapeutic care workers. This staff ration will allow for potential staff loss and enable us to offer our integrated systemic programme of care, therapeutic work and education for up to eight young people without any impact on their care.

Placements are for 52 weeks a year with facilitation of all necessary arrangements for contact with families and significant others.

Gables House provides a safe environment designed for group living and learning. The Young People require and we provide dedicated, understanding and knowledgeable Therapeutic Care staff who support young people to work through their experiences of past trauma. We meet each young person's needs through, individual and group psychotherapeutic work which enables the Young People to be supported in working through their experiences of past trauma. Over time the aim is to enable the young people to engage as members of a group who are valued both collectively and individually in order to better prepare them for future relationships. Our aim is to help the young people to develop the ability to create and sustain meaningful and trusting relationships with others; providing them with interpersonal skills which can then be transferred onto other relationships in their next placement and later in their life.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

## **2. Care Education and Treatment**

### **2.1 Ethos and philosophy**

The Childhood First document - Integrated Systemic Therapy for Traumatized Children and Young People - describes in detail the ethos and philosophy on which the care, education and treatment at Gables House is founded. This document is held in the home and additional information regarding our approach is available on request. Young people placed at Gables House have experienced severe difficulties in their relationships with others and in relationships between those around them. By attending to both these aspects the capacity to relate can be recovered and outcomes in all areas of life are then seen to improve.

Our therapeutic expertise is located in systemic and psychoanalytic thinking and practice which offers transformative insight, particularly in a group setting, to young people suffering profound emotional or mental trauma. Robust theory and organisational structures together provide the setting within which the art of healing can take place, and traumatised young people can learn the ability to make healthy attachments, process feelings and relate to others.

Our family systems-based approach allows healthy relationships to develop across the group of young people and staff. The group experience powerfully counters the dangerous sense many young people have formed that they do not matter to anyone, and that nobody matters to them.

In addition, our facilities present a warm, creative, extended family home environment. The environment is of a high quality and care is taken to ensure it represents security, wholeness and warmth at all times. The young people's participation in thinking about all aspects of living together, including the environment, is a significant part of the group work and treatment.

## **GABLES HOUSE Statement of Purpose**

---

### **2.2 Data protection**

In compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) Childhood First is committed to being transparent about meeting its data protection obligations and how it collects and uses the personal data of those in our care, their families and wider networks as well as our workforce. Our policies relating to data protection and records management can be accessed via the Childhood First Procedure Manual.

<http://childhoodfirst.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

### **2.3 Admissions policy and criteria**

Following a referral from a Local Authority, the Gables House referral panel consisting of the Community Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Director Clinical Practice, Assistant Director Statutory Compliance, Individual Child Therapist and Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher will consider young people who are aged eleven to thirteen years old, who have experienced inadequate early attachment and are assessed to possess sufficient intellectual capacity to be able to benefit from the treatment philosophy, regardless of their educational attainment. This forms part of the Assessment Placement Treatment Transition (APTT) Impact Assessment which is completed prior to a young person's placement within the home.

As part of the admissions process we provide the social worker with our 'Pre-Admission Information Request' list outlining documentation we require prior to admission. Alongside documentation essential to meet statutory requirements, we also request relevant court reports, a detailed social and educational history and a chronology of previous placements (including an assessment of their success and/or failure).

We invite the young person's social worker and other involved professionals to visit Gables House and discuss the young person with the panel. Following this process, if it is agreed that Gables House can meet the needs of the young person and the young person is an appropriate match for the current group of residents, an offer of a placement will be

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

made. Where appropriate, parents are invited to visit Gables House to meet key staff. This visit may take place prior to the young person's move or at a later stage as guided by the social worker who has knowledge and understanding of the needs of the family.

Each young person who is offered a placement at Gables House must possess sufficient intellectual capacity to enable them to respond to our therapeutic approach. We therefore cannot consider any young person who is diagnosed with psychosis or has significant learning disabilities, nor can we consider those who are significantly physically disabled due to the nature of the premises.

#### **2.4 Age range, gender and numbers of young people**

Gables House can accommodate eight children and young people of mixed gender aged from eleven to thirteen years old on admission, all of whom are unable to live in their own family setting and dependent on need and in consultation with the placing authority we may accommodate young people post sixteen if their continued placement supports the individual care planning such as attendance at college.

#### **2.5 Any special needs of young people accommodated**

Young people who come to Gables House have been severely traumatised or psychologically deprived. The young people therefore have individual special needs relating to their life experiences and circumstances. Many of the young people have suffered the extremes of neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Their patterns of attachment are often disordered due to interruptions in their early care. Additionally, many are dealing with the consequences of overwhelming events from which they have been unable to recover. These early experiences have had the most serious effect on their ability to function appropriately, both with respect to their own lives and in relation to others.

#### **2.6 Range of needs the home is intended to meet**

Young people who have suffered in this way often interact with their environments through



## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

extremes of fear and anxiety, or overconfidence. Some are unable to cope with the demands of almost any new challenge, however small. Others have developed a certainty that any interaction or investment will have a painful outcome. Young people who come to Gables House are therefore overwhelmed with feelings of worthlessness, low self-esteem, believing themselves to be unlovable and believing relationships with others will inevitably fail. They find it difficult to enjoy themselves, learn, make friends, or share in any group activity. They cause concern in others and, while desperate for the reassurance of an adult who will love and care for them, they are unable to trust or to invest in any emotional attachment.

The range of difficulties young people may therefore present includes: eating disorders, borderline personality disorders, school refusal, self-harm, violence towards others, ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome, oppositional defiance disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, together with a variety of attachment disorders. Young people with disabilities and special needs outside the criteria as set out above can be considered, as long as the criteria for admission is met and we feel we can appropriately meet the individual needs of the young person. Young people with a disability or special needs would need to be capable of engaging in the therapeutic process.

### **2.7 Specific therapeutic techniques used in the home**

Gables House offer an integrated programme of care, treatment and education based on psychodynamic and systemic principles. Our document Integrated Systemic Therapy for Traumatized Young people and Young People describes in detail the framework and range of groups and facilitators used to support this therapeutic methodology.

All aspects of the programme are regarded as part of an overall living-learning experience, from structured education and small discussion groups, this can include community meetings, through to informal trips out, buying new clothes, interacting with peers and staff, spending time with a key worker, or playing in the grounds. Each young person who comes to Gables House is given the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities



## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

in both individual and group situations which will challenge all that they have experienced in the past. There are many ways the key elements of the "treatment process" offered by our community could be described. It is the integration of the care, treatment and education offered which constitutes the totality of what we feel is necessary for the successful development of each individual young person.

It is through the interaction of each individual with the social and physical environment of the community that the experiential and cognitive levels of the treatment process occur. It is our belief that real psychological change can only be facilitated through addressing the early life trauma experienced and redressing the emotional and psychological imbalances that have occurred as a result of their early years. We endeavour to create a social and physical environment which will create a sense of hope from the moment a young person first arrives, something different to what they have experienced before. This provides each young person with the possibility of an experience that will challenge their conscious and unconscious assumptions about themselves and their expectations of others. It is also our aim to continuously strive to create a total environment in which each young person will have a compensatory primary experience; this may go some way to redressing the imbalance of their past experiences.

Our treatment model enables us to keep detailed records which inform individual Placement Plans outlining how each young person's needs will be met. There is a monitoring process in place to ensure plans are fit for purpose for each young person and accurately reflect their individuality as well as their ability to function within the group. Incorporated into the IST treatment model, is a comprehensive and robust assessment framework APTT. In addition to this, there is ongoing monitoring, evaluation and measuring of outcomes for the young people and the service provided.

### **2.8 Individual psychotherapy**

In order to address some of the difficulties that the young people face and to assist the healing process, Gables House offers young people the opportunity of having individual

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

psychotherapy sessions. The model of psychotherapy offered is psychoanalytic, with young people being seen once weekly for regular, on-going sessions. Therapy is offered for a minimum of a year, but can often be longer dependent on the young person.

The initial assessment conducted on admission informs the treatment plan and is regularly reviewed. Following a period of settling in at Gables House and in discussion with a young person's local authority, a psychotherapy assessment is arranged consisting of three once-weekly sessions. A meeting is then convened between the young person psychotherapist, the young person's social worker and the senior management team. They discuss the assessment and whether commencing psychotherapy is in line with the young person's needs. If psychotherapy does start, regular reports are included in the young person's Looked After Child (LAC) reviews and the psychotherapist is available to discuss the young person's progress where this is necessary, if it doesn't the psychotherapist is still part of the young person's care and has an input in the LAC review and other meetings that involve the young person.

### **2.9 Evaluation of the placement**

Childhood First belongs to the CAMHS Outcome Research Consortium (CORC) and Gables House has an Assessment, Evaluation and Research Officer who conducts standardised measures (or questionnaires).

- Children's Global Assessment Scale - CGAS
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires - SDQ
- Goal-based Measure
- Experience of Service Questionnaire (CHI-ESQ)

These assessments are conducted every 6 months initially and then annually, the information collated is shared through the LAC Review process. The information can be accessed in line with data protection guidance and our internal Childhood First Data Protection Policy. In addition, there is a tailor-made questionnaire cross-referenced with Ofsted's domains for evaluating outcomes for young people, to ascertain young people's

## **GABLES HOUSE Statement of Purpose**

---

opinions about the impact of the Childhood First community on them. This work is overseen by one of Childhood First's Senior Clinician. Where appropriate each young person placed at Gables will receive a psychotherapeutic and education assessment. This shapes the work and ensures a baseline to enable us to demonstrate progress and improvement for the young person. Any concerns that arise will be investigated and further assessments requested e.g. Educational Psychologist assessment. The psychotherapeutic assessment and CORC data enables all the staff to be aware of the young person's state of mind and informs the placement plan, risk assessment, behaviour management plan and their interactions with each young person.

### **3. Consultation with young people about the operation of the home and the quality of their care**

In keeping with our therapeutic approach the culture of Gables House is established on the basis of listening to, valuing and thinking with the young people. Young people are encouraged and supported in expressing their thoughts and feelings regarding all aspects of their lives and experiences at Gables House and the quality of care they receive. Their views are sought and collected on an ongoing basis within the culture of day-to-day life within the community; these inform decisions in relation to their care as individuals and as a group.

Community meetings are held once a week on a Tuesday morning for 45 minutes and are attended by all the young people and the care staff on shift. These meetings are a central part of our therapeutic model and provide a forum to discuss with the young people plans for the forthcoming days, wishes and feelings, any visitors to the home, any complaints or grumbles, etc. They provide an important forum for young people to experience being listened to by staff and peers. Young people are given the opportunity to share their opinions on any topics relating to the home or their placement in the home. These meetings also provide the opportunity to reflect on their own personal experiences and talk about these if they choose to do so, in a supportive environment, alongside receiving peer group

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

support with areas of difficulty.

Other meetings can be called by anyone at any time to address an issue which they feel may be undermining the wellbeing of the community or any individual within it. Young people are supported to reflect on their behaviours, receiving support from staff and peers to encourage less negative ways of expressing difficult emotions. Such conversations support young people in reflecting on any difficulties experienced in their relationships with one another, highlighting ways in which these can be resolved.

In keeping with our treatment methodology, young people at Gables House are enabled to participate in all aspects of their lives and to consciously contribute to activities, daily groups and discussions, and as appropriate, decision-making and complaints. We actively maintain a culture of openness where all opinions are listened to and young people are valued and respected by staff and young people are helped to value and respect both one another and themselves. This programme of group and individual work helps young people build on their strengths.

These systems promote and encourage open communication about all aspects of the young people's lives including everyday living together. Staff encourage, listen to and respond to both 'minor' and major complaints and are trained and experienced in remaining alert to young people's welfare at all times. Young people are encouraged to raise concerns and make suggestions for changes and improvements. The young people at Gables House are very traumatised, it is therefore essential that staff know when it is helpful for young people to be consulted and when it is more appropriate to make decisions in the best interests of the young people, in line with good parenting.

Each young person's right to be listened to is paramount, staff are therefore highly skilled in responding to their individual wishes and feelings, whether these are communicated verbally or in more subtle ways. This is evidenced through the attuned relationships staff develop with the young people. The young people (along with the young person's social worker and school) complete a CHI-ESQ, an experience of service questionnaire, every six months which enables us to monitor and develop the quality of service that we provide.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

Each young person is additionally engaged in the process of developing their ‘Child Friendly Placement Plan’ as appropriate to their age and level of understanding. This booklet outlines the care they require throughout each day, and identifies areas where they need support from staff as well as areas where they may have made progress with reducing a negative behaviour or developed independence.

The young people at Gables House have individual key worker sessions; these are focused on areas that are current for the individual young people such as internet use/school attendance and any issues that may manifest on a day to day basis.

The home has a wishes and feelings log where the young people can share their thoughts. This is regularly reviewed by the senior team/Director who respond to the young people accordingly. This is also discussed within the Community Meetings with the young people to ensure that further conversation is engaged in if necessary.

#### **4. The group environment**

Outcomes from Gables House and other Childhood First communities demonstrate that the wide mix of young people and the larger group experience we offer presents significant opportunities to the traumatised young people who come to us; they are unlikely to find this in a smaller, less group-oriented setting. The peer group is an essential element of our treatment model and group living is what makes a placement at Gables House an effective form of treatment for the young people we care for.

Young people who come to Gables House have been damaged within their relationships with adults and through their experience and witnessing of adults’ relationships with one another. The consequence of this is that the young people find themselves unable to relate to others in a healthy and productive way. The group environment offers three channels of repairing these relational problems, which are inextricably linked through a programme of supervision and consultancy.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

Firstly, the staff team work together in a way designed to offer young people healthy experiences of adult interactions and new forms of dialogue. Secondly, the staff are clinically supervised in relation to their management of the young people including the impact of the young people on themselves. They are encouraged in this forum to link their personal experiences with the impact of the work, so that they can make this material available to work on with the staff group. This enables exploration for the young people of their impact on others, both peers and staff. Thirdly, formal and informal groups with the young people concentrate on their communications and relationships with adults and one another.

Throughout the process of psychotherapeutic change, young people are offered the opportunity to learn new skills and acquire knowledge of the world outside their own emotional spheres and immediate preoccupations. The aim is for the young people to develop, eventually becoming responsible for their own lives in a practical, as well as a psychological sense. The work undertaken at Gables House focuses on each young person's emotional development and helping them to understand the feelings that lead to destructive and anti-social behaviour. This takes place individually with the young person through the provision of 1-1 relationships and experiences with staff, as well as through a young person's individual weekly psychotherapy sessions and in a variety of group settings.

For some young people the severity of the abuse experienced within a family environment severely impedes their capacity to function in similar settings. Many of the young people who come to Gables House have experienced multiple foster-placement breakdowns, which we are anxious not to repeat. For a significant proportion of young people placed at Gables House, we aim to equip them with the internal emotional resources to enable them to eventually live in a family setting, either with their birth family (if this is in line with their individual Care Plan) or with a foster family.

For all young people placed at Gables House we aim to achieve the following positive outcomes:

- Be safe in the present and to develop ways of relating and skills which will help

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

ensure future safety.

- Have a positive experience of being well cared for.
- Become healthier, physically and mentally.
- Benefit from the experience of play.
- Experience positive relationships with reliable adults.
- Develop the capacity for making healthy relationships.
- Develop emotionally, educationally and socially.
- Be able to engage in verbal communication, and that this should be developed as an alternative to acting out difficult feelings in the form of anti-social behaviour.
- Develop internal resources (with support) to cope with everyday situations which previously may have caused high levels of stress.
- Develop internal personal boundaries and a sense of an autonomous self.

#### **5. Equality, diversity and young people's rights**

Gables House is committed to equality, diversity and young people's rights. Young people are treated with dignity and respect at all times. Staff members demonstrate the principles of dignity and respect for others throughout their professional relationships, offering good role models for young people in their care. Over time this enables young people to develop a positive self-view, emotional resilience and knowledge and understanding of their background. Staff members aim to mitigate and repair the effects of stereotyping and discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, age, gender or level of ability or understanding. Staff members are proactive in making sure that neither they nor the young people are ever treated unfairly.

The promotion of equality and diversity is intrinsic within the culture of the community at Gables House, incorporating acceptance and understanding across all protected characteristics and individual differences. Staff members actively promote a culture of openness and acceptance within the day-to-day life of the community; this includes role



## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

modelling in a parental manner, being open minded and challenging others where there may be differences in attitudes. This is consistent both in 1-1 work with the young people and within the group as a whole. Young people are encouraged to develop close relationships with staff over time where they feel safe to explore their personal beliefs, views, values and attitudes. These relationships also provide a forum for young people to be appropriately challenged and supported with their attitudes or behaviours where necessary.

Ensuring each young person's individual needs are met is part of the planning process prior to the young person's placement at Gables House, this is then reviewed in consultation with the young people and others where appropriate to ensure the young people feel safe in the knowledge that their individuality is embraced and supported.

Prior to the admission of a young person with specific needs such as ethnic, cultural or religious needs we endeavour to ensure the resources within the home are sufficient to accommodate these needs, alongside researching local cultural groups or places of worship as appropriate should the young person wish to access these at any point. We give additional consideration to the impact of moving to the Kent countryside and support young people with adjusting to a different area, for example moving from an ethnically diverse major city. Whilst we appreciate the importance of ensuring we are adequately prepared to meet a young person's specific needs, we work to ensure that the details of their care and treatment at Gables House are ultimately determined by their needs as a young person foremost and in line with their individual wishes and feelings. We access support from partners where appropriate to ensure the young person's needs are met, for example if a young person or their family members did not have English as a first language we would access local translation services in consultation with the placing authority and we would expect this to be built into the overall care planning for the young person.

We regularly mark a culturally diverse range of festivals and celebrations through activity evenings linked with the experience of new foods. This ensures that all young people develop an understanding and appreciation of a diverse range of cultures alongside traditional UK celebrations.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

#### **5.1 Anti-discriminatory practice**

Every effort is made to ensure that Gables House is welcoming to all young people, their families and others significant in their care and wellbeing. The Director monitors the range of young people placed within the community in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure the service provision is reaching all and not creating barriers to particular groups. Young people are offered opportunities to try out new experiences, which are not restricted by traditional gender options. Young people have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

#### **5.2 Young people's rights**

Young people are encouraged and supported to understand their rights and ways of challenging any form of discrimination. Young people are enabled to express their views about the services and if necessary to be supported by an independent person should they wish to complain.

#### **5.3 Restriction of liberty**

By the very nature of our work at Childhood First in providing a service to psychologically traumatised children and young people we may on occasion adopt practice that could constitute a restriction of liberty (The Law Society) such as the physical restraint of children and increased monitoring and supervision that would be normal and good practice in a range of circumstances. Failure to monitor and supervise children and young people dependent on their age, understanding and vulnerability would be negligent.

The best interests of children and young people are best protected by open, transparent and honest practice therefore individual practice with children and young people will be undertaken in consultation with placing authorities and where appropriate with children, young people and their families. All interventions with children and young people including

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

any practice that may constitute restriction of liberty will be subject to regular review and consultation.

#### **6. Health**

Although particular significance is given to a young person's emotional health throughout their placement at Gables House, we believe a young person's physical well-being is equally important. Each young person who comes to Gables House becomes a patient at our local GP surgery which has a good understanding of our task and the experiences and specific needs of the young people we care for. If a young person wishes to be seen by a female or male doctor this is respected. Young people are also registered with local dental and orthopaedic practices. We ensure each young person has an annual full health assessment, alongside regular dental and optician check-ups. Where appropriate young people are consulted and can contribute to their health plans.

We have written procedures relating to the storage, rotation, recording, administration and disposal of medication, both prescribed medication and homely remedies. Staff receive medication training to ensure administration and storage of medication in line with best practice guidance. The young people are encouraged to discuss openly all aspects of their health and well-being, while their right to privacy and confidentiality is respected. Support and education in relation to wider health education issues is offered on a 1-1 basis or in small groups according to the young person's age and stage of readiness for this input, for example sex and relationships education, smoking, alcohol and substance misuse. There are close links with the LAC professionals in the area and individual programmes are discussed as and when required with both the young person and others as appropriate.

Where appropriate and following a risk assessment, some young people may on occasion self-administer medication, this decision is based on a range of factors and is reviewed on a regular basis.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

#### **6.1 Exercise**

Every young person is encouraged to take exercise in a way that they enjoy. Staff are available to join in and organise games and sports. There is a wide range of informal and formal opportunities to exercise including individual activities (e.g. walking, bike-riding, swimming); group games (e.g. football) and organised classes and team sports (e.g. dance, football training) through to pursuing more specialist hobbies like kung fu, kick boxing, swimming, horse riding, dance and drama. These are provided for their physical health benefits as well as their contribution to the young people's emotional development and well-being.

Relaxing, resting and being able to sleep well are essential elements of young people's lives and part of our treatment programme aims to help young people use opportunities to rest and relax, giving their minds and bodies opportunity for quiet and replenishment. All young people are supported at bedtimes with individual attention based on their individual needs to best enable them to make the transition into sleep and being on their own.

#### **6.2 Diet**

Eating well has a critical impact on physical health. All young people are provided with a balanced diet and helped to develop healthy eating patterns. We have a good understanding of the specific needs of our young people and their, sometimes, complex relationships with food and diet. Each young person's individual needs are taken into consideration in the planning and preparation of meals. We recognise the importance of the provision of good food and its contribution to a young person's development, identity and emotional health therefore attention to detail in relation to food preparation is essential. Young people are encouraged to become involved with menu planning, the preparation of meals and to engage in conversations and meetings about what they like to eat and about the food provided. Young people's individual choices and food preferences are incorporated into each weekly menu and helping to buy, prepare and cook food is part of their experience of day-to-day living within the community. Young people are supported to attend group mealtimes as a

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

social occasion; cultural differences in food are attended to and celebrated and all young people are encouraged to try different foods in gaining experiences of a range of cultures. Throughout the year we hold a variety of themed evenings celebrating different cultures and faiths, food is a central part of these experiences. Young people with specific dietary requirements are supported through their individual plans and in consultation with health professionals as appropriate.

### **6.3 Smoking**

Gables House is a non-smoking premises and has a non-smoking policy for young people, staff and visitors. If a young person was nicotine dependent on admission Gables would work closely with health partners to support the young person in ceasing their habit.

### **6.4 Alcohol, drugs and illegal substances**

No form of alcohol is allowed on our premises. No recreational drugs are allowed on our premises. Should any young person access alcohol or drugs this would be addressed immediately and if necessary consultation would take place with the relevant agencies.

## **7. Education and facilities for private study**

Our Integrated Systemic Therapy considers that alongside the care and treatment it is essential that young people receive education which is similarly adapted to their emotional state and which can deliver the best possible educational outcomes. Specifically, throughout the duration of each young person's placement we aim to help them 'catch up' educationally, as far as possible. We aim to help each young person achieve as much as their abilities and time permit, while helping them achieve a true sense of worth. We work closely with both Greenfields Lower and Upper School and any outside schools where our young people attend. The Lower school is located around half a mile from Gables House and the Upper School is located in the grounds of Gables, both of which provide excellent education.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

Greenfields Lower School is a converted house consisting of three classrooms, plus a kitchen for cooking. It also has a large playground with play equipment. To create a nurture-based primary school experience in a smaller setting, young people are in small class groups where they are taught the majority of their lessons. The expectation is for the young people to work as part of a small group with their peers, with the understanding that this may sometimes be difficult for our young people.

Greenfields Upper School is a purpose built educational unit with 4 classrooms, a teaching kitchen and a school hall. To create a secondary school experience in a smaller setting, young people are supported to manage the transition between classrooms and teaching staff for different subjects. The expectation is for the young people to work as part of a small group with their peers, with the understanding that this may sometimes be difficult for our young people.

The staff to pupil ratio in both Lower and Upper school is based on individual needs and classes range from 1:2 to 4:2 supported by the Head Teacher, Assistant Head Teachers, Teachers and Learning Support Assistants across both schools. This level of staffing ensures that whilst our emphasis is on group working each young person can receive individual support when necessary.

The curriculum is individually tailored to engage the interest of the young people and differentiated to meet their specific educational needs. The school has a well-rehearsed young person-led induction programme which encompasses our systemic and psychodynamic thinking, focusing on building relationships with the educational staff and allowing joined up thinking with the educational and residential teams, necessary for successful outcomes in terms of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties coupled with those additional barriers to learning.

School staff and residential staff have a daily handover to pass on relevant information home/school, school/home. They also meet each term to discuss the young people's educational progress. Staff regularly attend school events and take an interest in all

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

aspects of school life. School staff are always invited to participate in reviews, key working group and planning meetings for each young person and residential staff contribute to the delivery of the educational programmes to ensure that there is a focus on individual educational needs.

Young people are encouraged to use the library and visit places of interest related to their school projects. To enrich the curriculum and broaden the young people's life experiences, the school plans frequent school excursions linked to the curriculum topics. There is a quiet room available for the young people to complete their homework with staff members on hand to offer any support that may be required.

For those young people who reach Key Stage 5, the Head Teacher at Greenfields School will work in partnership with care staff, the local authority and the host authority virtual schools structure to identify an appropriate education provision that supports the individual needs of the young person. Greenfields School is well established within the host authority and the Head teacher has good links with the virtual school head as well as links to partner organisations that provide alternative education programmes for those young people who have difficulty in accessing mainstream provision.

#### **7.1 Special educational needs**

When a young person is admitted to Gables House, particular attention is paid to their educational needs. Education is provided by our own well-staffed registered independent school for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as identified additional educational needs. Full time education is provided by well qualified teachers with a special needs background and wide experience, who are committed to working alongside the residential staff in a holistic and therapeutic way, so that the young people feel 'contained' and supported. The young people are also supported by well qualified and experienced learning support assistants who work alongside the teachers to promote learning, social and independence skills.



## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

Currently we enjoy excellent liaison with Kent Local Authority and thereby local authority maintained schools; this means that we are able to advocate and negotiate for a young person to enter an appropriate local school where a young person remains in the area after leaving Gables House.

#### **7.2 The education structure**

The residential team at Gables House work very closely with both Greenfields Upper and Lower School and a sense of community between all sites is very much promoted. The Head Teacher is part of the senior management team, which encompasses both home and school across the Gables Community, and attends various meetings, business and young person focused, at the house throughout the week. The residential and educational team work closely together to support in the link of psychodynamic and systematic thinking and practise between both settings. A member of the residential team is available throughout the school day for school support to continue the day to day therapeutic thinking across the community.

All of the young people at Gables House are in full-time education regardless of their age. We are pro-active in responding to non-attendance and planning supported re-integration following any period of absence. When a young person refuses school we actively try to engage them in conversations about the reasons behind their refusal whilst holding in mind the emotional impact of their personal histories on their ability to attend education. Communication with Greenfield's School and other offsite schools plays an important part in helping them to understand the young person's needs and how best to engage them in school and in learning. If non-attendance becomes a persistent problem, we work closely with the young person's school and social worker to develop interests which will help to re-engage the young person.

#### **8. Young people's participation in cultural, recreational, sporting and cultural activities**

Cultural, recreational and sporting activities form important building blocks in a young

## **GABLES HOUSE Statement of Purpose**

---

person's life. Young people benefit enormously from individual and group activities in terms of social interaction with their peers and building their individual self-esteem. Young people living at Gables House are actively encouraged to experience a variety of activities and once settled in the home are encouraged in choosing to follow a hobby or activity for which they have a special interest. Young people are encouraged to pursue external hobbies and interests in line with their wishes and feelings and as appropriate to their individual stage of readiness for increased social engagement; attending clubs or activities provides young people with opportunities to develop their sense of identity alongside the opportunity to relate socially with peers. This enables links to the community and provides the opportunity to develop relationships outside of the community that also support young people through their transitions. Where young people make friends through these activities whom they wish to invite to Gables House, or who invite them to their own homes, this is given careful consideration and fully supported if deemed appropriate.

There is a wide range of choice available locally in relation to clubs and activities, including horse riding, dance and drama classes, swimming, kung fu, gymnastics, kick boxing, canoeing, football, hockey as well as more community-based activities such as Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides and Youth clubs. There are also opportunities for group excursions to places of interest and activity parks. Whatever the activity, young people are supervised by appropriately trained staff. Group activities are planned in conversations between staff and young people ensuring that plans benefit each young person.

Cultural activities as outlined previously are supported on an individual needs led basis, however we also offer group activities to support all young people in their understanding of difference, such as celebration of different cultures and religions.

### **9. Promoting appropriate behaviour, control, physical intervention and discipline**

We believe the foundation to achieving our therapeutic task at Gables House is the fostering of positive relationships between the staff and the young people within a clearly defined

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

set of boundaries. We aim to establish good and appropriately professional, interpersonal relationships between the staff and the young people. These relationships provide a sense of containment, through a consistent but appropriately flexible understanding of the many different situations they must manage on a daily basis, underpinned by a sense of personal concern and commitment to each young person.

Young people placed at Gables House are severely emotionally traumatised by their past experiences and have difficulties in relating to others. They therefore display negative, unkind, destructive and aggressive behaviours at times, especially when their feelings become overwhelming for them. The histories of the young people we care for are such that the focus of their personal development is inevitably taken up through the interplay of their past conflict and trauma in the present. Crossing boundaries within the community is an inevitable part of the work with the young people, while they struggle to begin to establish a more trusting and co-operative partnership with those around them.

Through Integrated Systemic Therapy we seek to view the young people's behaviour as communication and over time use this in helping them develop a greater understanding of themselves, their past experiences and their day-to-day thoughts and feelings. We support young people to manage their challenging behaviours and in time develop more appropriate ways of communicating their feelings to others.

The management of difficulties resulting from negative behaviour is often the focus personal meetings with key workers, staff, and community meetings. Young people are encouraged (and supported) in raising matters which concern them. Each young person is helped towards a sharing of the responsibility for group and individual well-being, and supported in finding verbalising their feelings and listening respectfully to others. Acknowledgement and understanding are generally the main aim of such a task, but occasionally a sanction may be incorporated as part of an appropriate response. Where a sanction has been the appropriate response, there will be the opportunity for young people to reduce or indeed lift the sanction dependent on the individual circumstances, enabling a positive outcome for the young person. We are proactive in planning rewards and incentives

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

to help young people have positive experiences to aim for each week, in attempting to encourage positive reinforcement and discourage negative behaviours.

Individual risk assessments enable staff to make informed judgements, in conjunction with each young person's individual behaviour management plan which details the methods of control that are used and states the young person's preferred method. When there are concerns about an individual young person, our risk assessment process allows a systematic process of assessing risk, determining strategy and informing practice around a young person to contain the situation.

#### **9.1 The creation of positive relationships**

Our therapeutic approach is formulated on the creation of positive relationships. Young people are supported to develop an understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others and to express their feelings about others' behaviour. High levels of supervision and guidance are offered to encourage behaviour and relationships which have a beneficial impact for each young person and the group. Achievements and participation are celebrated and rewarded. Where behaviour is unacceptable or has a destructive impact, it is responded to with consistency and clarity within the context of understanding the individual young person's history as well as the group dynamic.

Relationships between staff and young people at Gables House are based on honesty, mutual respect and understanding. The staff team is expected to maintain clear safe consistent and understanding boundaries for the young people. Rewards and sanctions are part of the mechanisms for care and control within the context of thoughtful consistent relationships and these are monitored by the management team to ensure that rewards and sanctions are proportionate to the event and appropriate to the needs of the individual young person.

#### **9.2 Restrictive physical intervention**

Restrictive physical intervention is permitted only in circumstances when a young person may be intent on causing harm to him/herself or to another person, or when causing damage

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

to property. In all cases where a restrictive physical intervention occurs, staff use minimum necessary force, and place an emphasis on the sense of being held and not punished and in being looked after and not humiliated. It is emphasised that a young person should be held only for the time that it takes them to regain inner control. Our Therapeutic Staff are trained in restrictive physical interventions (Safety Intervention) and this is delivered by our in house trainers, trained by Crisis Prevention Institute. A training manual including descriptions of each of the holds is available in the staff office for reference.

Young people who have suffered traumatic early life experiences often display violence, self-harm or damage of property as a way of communicating their distress. We find that some young people go through periods of time whilst living at Gables House when they are involved in a number of incidents of violence towards others which often necessitates restrictive physical intervention. For most young people the relationships they develop with staff at Gables are their first experience of safe adult relationships and therefore they will at times communicate their extreme emotions associated with their early life experiences through their behaviour towards these trusted adults. Over time, the young people are helped to learn to communicate these feelings in a more appropriate manner.

Following an incident where restrictive physical intervention has been used the young person and staff involved are always given the opportunity to give their opinion about it and are supported to reflect on how a similar incident could be avoided in the future. We monitor levels of physical intervention through weekly Incident Review Meetings and thorough regular analysis of restrictive physical interventions. These meetings guide our practice in relation to how best to avoid the need for restrictive physical intervention with each individual young person. Staff closely analyse each incident and adjust risk assessments and behaviour management strategies within individual Placement Plans accordingly.

### **9.3 Rewards**

Rewards for thoughtful and acceptable behaviour are most often in the form of praise and encouragement within both individual conversations and within group forums. Contribution to and participation in the group is noticed and encouraged. Small

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

achievements are praised and noticed in the context of young people's individual areas of difficulty rather than relative to each other.

We are proactive in planning incentives to help young people have positive experiences to aim for, thereby encouraging positive reinforcement and discouraging negative behaviours, alongside helping young people to measure their progress. We use many positive rewards and incentives and these are recorded in each young person's Placement Plan. Positive incentives and rewards are highly individual according to each young person's preferences and motivations, alongside their age and stage of development. We believe that positive incentives are effective in helping to motivate young people in working towards individually identified areas of development and supporting their development of self-esteem.

#### **9.4 Sanctions procedures**

Where patterns of persistent negative behaviour become apparent for any individual young person or combination of young people, we support them to change these patterns over time through combining supportive reflection with staff they share close relationships with, positive incentives to help motivate them to work towards behavioural goals and occasional sanctions as appropriate. Responses to individual young people's negative behaviour are carefully considered by the staff team who offer young people supportive alternatives to negative behaviour and the opportunity to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on others, as appropriate to their age and level of understanding.

Sanctions are used as part of establishing positive relationships with young people to maintain boundaries. They are used to engender the concept of restitution and reparation; the notion that mistakes or wrong-doing can be repaired and things, (including people) can be 'made better'. The sanctions imposed are usually seen as being related to a particular incident, particularly if an acknowledgement of the consequence of a particular behaviour is not possible in an alternative way. We endeavour to ensure all sanctions adequately reflect the behaviours, and are varied and effective, and decided following discussion within the staff team. Managing group and communal boundaries within the community is normally

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

seen as a precursor to providing an appropriate guarantee to managing group outings from the community and a "grounding" may follow a serious incident. However, grounding does not apply to any educational or family visit. Fines are rarely used at Gables, and only in context of reparative payment in relation to damage for which they are held responsible. Young people are invited to share their views following a sanction.

The following are Permissible Sanctions:

- Restitution  

'Making good' or repaying an individual or community for the consequences of unacceptable actions or damaged caused. A proportion of pocket money may be withheld to facilitate this.
- Reparation (for example by helping to repair damage)
- The curtailment of leisure activities
- Grounding

Increased supervision or restrictions on the availability of transport is used as a tool for safe management but not as a sanction.

### **9.5 Searching children/ bedrooms**

It may be appropriate to conduct a search of a young person or a young person's belongings, including the searching of their bedroom, if there is reasonable cause to believe that the young person has concealed weapons, illegal drugs or other items which may place the young person or other at risk of significant harm. If there is suspicion that such items are concealed staff will attempt to obtain the items with the young person's cooperation and give the young person the opportunity to handover the suspected items. In the event where the young person does not wish to cooperate with staff our Searching Children/ Bedrooms procedure will be followed in consultation with the Director/ Senior Management Team and the young person's social worker, unless in extreme circumstances, where it is felt the young person was in immediate risk.



## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

#### **9.6 Prohibited methods of control**

None of the disciplinary measures prohibited under Regulations 8 of the Children Act 1989 have ever been permitted at Gables House. No young person is allowed to be subjected to corporal punishment, deprivation of food or drink, restrictions of visits or communications with family and friends (except where young people need protection from a particular communication or visit or is not in their care plan), the wearing of distinctive clothing, physical restrictions imposed by accommodation, deprivation of sleep or intimate physical searches.

#### **10. Safeguarding**

Childhood First is committed at every level to safeguarding and child protection in order to promote young people's welfare. We take seriously our duty to protect every child from abuse and maltreatment and to prevent impairment of health or development.

Our Safeguarding Policy is available on request and underlines our commitment to interagency working. We have established a good relationship with our Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). All concerns of a child protection nature will be referred by the Director to the Local Authority. In any circumstances where Safeguarding procedures are undertaken, the child's social services and parents (where appropriate) will be kept closely involved and informed as required by Working Together to Safeguard Young People 2015. Child Protection matters are directly dealt with by the Assistant Director for Statutory Compliance (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and in their absence the Director.

On admission, a comprehensive risk assessment undertaken for each young person covers all aspects of safeguarding. This is reviewed regularly, or immediately if the need arises, to ensure that any new behaviours or historical information disclosed can be factored into our response in the safeguarding of the young person. All staff receive regular safeguarding training, together with support and guidance in safeguarding and promoting young people's welfare whenever required. Additional safeguarding training is implemented

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

when appropriate or when linked to a specific area.

#### **10.1 Preventing bullying**

Gables House does not tolerate any form of bullying and is committed to developing a culture within which all individuals are supported in confronting both being bullied and the potential to become a bully. We employ a restorative approach in relation to incidences of bullying or unkindness wherever possible, seeking to help the young people develop a greater understanding of themselves and of the impact their actions can have on others. We encourage young people to be assertive in response to bullying and to make staff aware of any interactions which have left them feeling upset.

We strive to create and maintain an environment where young people are treated with dignity and respect at all times. All staff are vigilant for signs of bullying and any concerns are brought to the attention of the Director and other senior staff. There is a clear system in place for reporting, tracking and responding to incidences of bullying. This is monitored by the Assistant Director. If bullying occurs, the young person will be encouraged and supported in expressing their concerns through open communication. Within the community this could be either in the Community Meeting or in conversation with a member of staff. All young people are aware of where they can find information regarding appropriate external contacts e.g. their social worker, Child Line or Ofsted should wish to contact them.

#### **10.2 Child sexual exploitation**

Staff complete training in the risks associated with child sexual exploitation, the vulnerability of our young people's group and potential behavioural indicators of a child being groomed/exploited. The management team ensure the assessment of associated risks is integrated within each young person's individual risk assessments e.g. arrangements enabling older young people to go for independent walks in the locality. The close partnership working ethos within the staff team, alongside the expectation for open communication in relation to all areas of the young people's care helps to minimise the risk

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

of exploitation from within the home.

A thorough Location Assessment is regularly reviewed and updated. The assessment concluded the location of Gables House is suitable for our purpose of residential therapeutic childcare, additionally the high supervision levels of the young people at Gables House minimises risks associated with our location.

### **10.3 Radicalisation of children**

Therapeutic staff members at Gables House complete Prevent and Radicalisation training and have an awareness that children can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means including the influence of family members or friends, direct contact with extremist groups and through the internet. Staff members understand that this can put a child at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause significant harm. The high supervision levels of the children at Gables House and careful risk assessment in relation to children spending time off site independently or attending clubs/groups significantly reduces the risk of radicalisation. Staff members seek to remain vigilant to potential indicators to radicalisation.

### **10.4 Internet safety**

Staff members complete e-safety training to ensure they are well informed as to the risk associated with use of the internet. We support young people to understand the risks associated with the internet and how to keep themselves safe, as appropriate to their age and level of understanding. Older young people may at times be able to work towards time on the internet unsupervised, as appropriate to their age and level of understanding and their ability to demonstrate skills in relation to safe and responsible use of the internet. This can include unsupervised access to the internet on a young person's mobile phone. To support young people with this we use a parenting application to support with parental controls and monitoring.

Childhood First uses an IT surveillance system called 'Securus' which enables

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

Directors/Registered Managers to pick up key words that staff and young people input into the Childhood First system through emails, reports, etc. This provides an early alert to any potential safeguarding concerns about staff practice and enables similar monitoring of young people's use of the internet.

#### **10.5 Female Genital Mutilation**

Staff members are aware of the issues associated with Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and in particular of our duty to inform Children's Social Care should we expect or know of any child who may or has been subjected to FGM.

#### **10.6 Significant events**

Events and notifications under Regulation 40 of the Children's Home Regulations are sent to the required authorities as well as to the Chief Executive (Responsible Individual). Notifications are held confidentially within the home and are cross-referenced with other systems such as referrals to LADO or LSCB, these are monitored by the Assistant Director/Director and through the Regulation 45 process and by the Regulation 44 visitor.

#### **11. If a young person goes missing**

Due to the high levels of supervision of the young people living at Gables House staff members on duty know where all the young people are at any given time. It is very unusual for a young person to go missing, however in this instance the senior member of staff would be immediately informed and would co-ordinate the search for the young person while ensuring the remainder of the young people's group is appropriately supervised; the missing from care checklist facilitates this process. The member of staff ensures the young person remains in sight wherever possible and that they are followed if observed leaving the grounds. If the young person is not found once the initial search of the house, grounds and immediate surrounding area has been completed the Director would be informed, or in their absence a Designated Senior Manager would deputise.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

If a young person goes missing an immediate search is conducted, Gables House would work with Police, social services departments and parents where applicable to locate missing young people and ensure their safety. As required there is a MISPER (missing person) protocol in place. During normal office hours the young person's social worker would be contacted, if unavailable information would be passed to the duty social worker. At evenings and weekends relevant Emergency Duty Teams would be contacted. Our 'Missing from Care' protocol has been developed in partnership with the Ashford Police.

#### **11.1 Action taken when the young person returns**

The young person is always welcomed back to Gables House in a non-punitive manner, space being given by staff to reassure them and assess any immediate needs, for example medical treatment, food, drink, blankets etc. If possible, the staff would determine where the young person had been and with whom, although this would be approached with sensitivity, recognising that they may be tired and frightened, depending on their experiences while absent. Other agencies/persons involved in the search for the young person would be informed as soon as possible that the young person has returned. Young people will be seen by an appropriate independent person, as soon as is practically possible, to explore the reasons for their absence and check on their wellbeing.

#### **12. Contact between young people and parents, relatives and friends**

It is our policy to work in partnership and facilitate positive contacts for each young person and their family and significant others who have been important in their past. Throughout each young person's placement at Gables House we encourage and facilitate contact with family and friends wherever possible and appropriate. For young people with little or no family contact we support their local authority in identifying significant external contacts such as an independent visitor. Contact with parents, families and significant others are arranged in consultation with the young person's social worker and in accordance with the young person's Care Plan. We endeavour to foster a normal home environment for the young people who live at Gables House, including promoting positive and normal friendships

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

within their peer group. Young people are encouraged to invite friends to visit and to visit friends within their own homes where appropriate.

There are quiet areas within the home which can be made available for family contacts. This allows the young person and their family to have contact whilst minimising the impact on the other young people and vice versa. Our Placement and Family Support service works directly with the young person's families, seeking to provide supportive relationships with the young person's parents and other family members. This role facilitates well supported and positive experiences of regular family contact for the young people wherever possible. Our Placement and Family Support service supports the young person's family members in developing their understanding of themselves and the events which lead to their young person coming into care, ultimately better equipping them to be able to relate to their young person now and in the future.

### **13. Cultural, linguistic and religious needs**

Gables House ensures that young people are supported in their wishes and the wishes of parents and guardians regarding their individual cultural and religious inheritance. We would however, challenge an understanding of any culture or religion which was disrespectful of others. Young people who wish to maintain a religious observance or to attend a religious institution, are supported by staff to do so alongside encouragement to explore and develop their own beliefs. Individual arrangements are incorporated into the young person's individual care planning process. In accordance with individual needs we would ensure that suitable quiet areas were facilitated to enable a young person the opportunity to practise their religion, for example identifying a space that is suitable for observance of the Muslim religion. We also seek to ensure that any specific linguistic needs are accommodated.

#### **13.1 Religious instruction and observance**

Gables House does not follow any formal religious observance, but young people who wish to practice a particular faith are supported in doing so on an individual basis. We consider that fostering a young person's growth in understanding their world, including their

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

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cultural and any religious inheritance is an important aspect of their wellbeing, and we seek to nurture this growth for each individual young person.

#### **14. Complaints**

Our complaints procedures are available in the home or can be accessed via the Childhood First Procedures Manual (<http://childhoodfirst.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>).

##### **14.1 Complaints by young people**

Complaints and ‘grumbles’ from young people can be discussed in Community Meetings and on a day to day basis where young people are supported in challenging one another or staff and in voicing their feelings if they are unhappy about something. Most issues are adequately and effectively resolved, which fits with our therapeutic model and is a healthy way of enabling young people to overcome issues with support from the group.

If young people feel that they have been treated unfairly or inappropriately in any way, they can complain to their key worker, to any member of staff or to the Deputy Director. The Deputy Director is the designated Complaints Officer at Gables House; if the young person’s complaint is about the Deputy Director, the young person can access other senior staff or use an external agency to express their concern/complaint.

If any young person wishes to make a complaint to a person outside of the community, they may do so directly to their social worker, Ofsted, Children’s Rights Director, Regulation 44 visitor, parent or other person they feel comfortable talking to. They may also contact directly, either by telephone or by letter, the Complaints Officer at Kent County Council with whom Gables House is registered or the Complaints Officer for their individual placing authority.

Information about how to make a complaint is available in a booklet kept in the hallway on the notice board listing relevant telephone numbers and websites, alongside young people’s complaint forms. We endeavour to resolve complaints internally where possible, but where



## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

complaints need to be taken up at a formal level, our complaint's procedure or the local authority complaints procedure may be utilised.

#### **14.2 Complaints by employees**

In line with our policy, wherever possible complaints and grievances shall be resolved in an informal manner, firstly by the establishment of a culture in which staff are encouraged and expected to address issues of concern and conflict at source. This informal framework is supported by a formal procedural framework, which guarantees that any complaints shall be addressed appropriately where informal means have failed; this is undertaken in consultation with HR.

#### **14.3 Complaints by third parties**

Where an external agency or other third party has a concern or complaint about any aspect of the work of any part of Childhood First, of its Directors, staff or young people, then it would be our wish that any such complaint be raised at the earliest opportunity. It would

be the Director's aim that the concern or complaint should be resolved, wherever possible in an informal way, unless of course where the complaint is of a nature where more formal action is appropriate, in which case it shall be the Director's responsibility to support such action.

#### **15. Facilities and services**

Gables House is a large, detached 1930's style house with accommodation on 2 floors. All young people have their own bedroom and there is no room sharing. A young person's bedroom is their own personal and private space. The home is located in a beautiful part of Kent, on the parish boundaries of Tenterden and Biddenden. It is within easy travelling distance of the nearest town Ashford, which enables ease of access to resources often found in town and city locations, and which can support young people in meeting their individual

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

needs and good transport links to London.

Gables House is a spacious home that provides areas for group work as well as allowing for individual space. It provides a warm and friendly environment that is furnished and decorated to a high standard. The home has a fully equipped kitchen and dining room, quiet areas and large recreational areas. Staff members have individual sleeping-in rooms with either a bathroom nearby or en-suite facilities; these rooms are equipped to ensure that staff who are sleeping in are able to rest and relax. Consultants work with the staff group to ensure that staff training and development are conducted to a high standard.

The house is set within spacious grounds incorporating, ample lawn area. Young people are encouraged to play in the garden and particular emphasis is placed on resourcing young people's play activities in the community.

#### **15.1. Suitability of location**

Gables House is a detached house with 8 bedrooms and additional bedroom space for staff sleeping in rooms on the outskirts of the small village of Tenterden in Kent. The grounds at Gables House cover two acres and include a large fenced garden with grass and trees.

Young people are not able to bring pets to Gables House due to the potential risks to the animal's safety that the behaviours of some young people may pose.

We regularly review and update our Location Assessment which involves consulting with a number of local organisations in relation to potential risks within the locality, in particular risks relating to safeguarding and child sexual exploitation. We also collect views from young people and staff on the suitability of the location. To date the Location Assessment does not present any risks which are not largely mitigated by the high supervision levels young people receive at Gables House. We are satisfied that the location of Gables House is suitable for

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

our purpose, both in relation to minimal risks within the locality and in relation to the diverse range of leisure opportunities easily accessible from our location.

#### **16. Accommodation and room sharing**

Gables House has a warm family home feel with good accommodation and spacious grounds. Each young person has their own bedroom, there is no room sharing. Young people are consulted in relation to furnishings and decor within the home and particular attention is paid to how and where their personal property is kept. All furnishings and fittings conform to health and safety regulations.

Each young person's bedroom is their own personal and private space. Staff respect the young person's right to privacy, however there are times when staff will enter the young person's bedroom, for example when invited by the young person, to tidy and clean, or if there are immediate concerns regarding the young person's safety. All bedrooms are furnished and decorated to a high standard taking into account the individual needs of the young people. During their placement at Gables House young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms according to their wishes and feelings. This will include observance of diversity and recognition of the young person's history, cultural, religious backgrounds etc.

#### **17. Surveillance within the home**

There is a buzzer system which alerts sleeping-in staff if any bedroom door is opened at night. This is in place to provide safeguards for both staff and young people. The system does not prevent young people from leaving their bedrooms, it enables staff to respond to a young person in need during night time hours as well as alerting staff to any young people trying to access other rooms or leave the building etc. This is outlined in each young person's Placement Plan. We seek consent from each young person's placing authority and/or parents, in accordance with their legal status. The buzzer system is explained to each young person on their arrival, as appropriate to their age and level of understanding, emphasising

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

---

that the system means a member of staff will always be available to them at night if they need somebody.

As previously mentioned Childhood First uses an IT surveillance system called 'Securus' which enables our Residential Services Director to pick up any concerns when key words that staff or young people input into the Childhood First system through emails, reports, etc. Any concerns raised are immediately raised with the Community Director.

#### **18. Fire precautions and emergency procedures**

Gables House has written statements in relation to fire precautions and evacuation procedures, which are known to both young people and staff and which are reinforced by regular recorded fire drills. Our Fire Safety Policy outlines responsibilities, recordings, drills, procedures, training and assembly points. Staff are aware of our health and safety policy and regular risk assessments are made which cover all aspects of the home and specified excursions beyond our community. Gables has a range of operational continuity plans that would be employed in the event of an emergency.

#### **19. Registered Provider and Registered Manager**

Gables House is fully owned and managed by Childhood First.

Registered Office: Childhood First, 210 Borough High Street, London. SE1 1JX

Registered Provider and Responsible Individual: Gary Yexley, Chief Executive

Work address: Childhood First, 210 Borough High Street, London. SE1 1JX

Residential Service Director: Robyn Bartram

Work address: Greenfields House, Biddenden Road, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6TD

Director of Gables: Daniel Weston

Work address: Gables House, Biddenden Road, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6TD

**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

**20. Consultants to Gables House**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Relevant Qualifications</b>	<b>Membership of Regulatory Bodies</b>	<b>UKCP Status</b>
<b>Group Organisational Therapist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma/MA Art Psychotherapy</li> <li>• BA (Hons) Fine Art (2:1)</li> <li>• Introductory General Course in Group Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Association of Art Therapists</li> <li>• RNMH, BA (Hons), PGDip/MA.AT</li> <li>• BAAT &amp; HCPC Registered Senior Art Psychotherapist &amp; Clinical Supervisor</li> </ul>	Employed by Childhood First
<b>Child Therapist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PG Dip Counselling</li> <li>• MA Counselling</li> <li>• Level 4 Certificate in Counselling Children</li> </ul>		Employed by Childhood First

**21. Residential Therapeutic Staff**

Staff are recruited through a rigorous selection process which involves both informal and formal interviews. The views of the young people at Gables House are incorporated as appropriate to their age and level of understanding. All appropriate checks are carried out according to current legislation and guidelines before any prospective member of staff begins employment with us. We endeavour to provide a range of appropriate role models of both sexes.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Relevant Qualifications</b>	<b>Professional Experience</b>	<b>UKCP Status</b>
<b>Registered Provider &amp; Responsible Individual</b> Gary Yexley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBA (Dist)</li> <li>• Leadership and Management in Healthcare (Cant Uni)</li> <li>• MA (Tavistock)</li> <li>• Psychoanalytic Observational Studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive, Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy &amp; Childhood First</li> </ul>	Child Psychotherapeutic Counsellor (UKCP accredited)

**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>UKCP Status</b>
<b>Director</b> Daniel Weston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 5 Leadership and Management in Children and Young People Work Force.</li> <li>• NVQ Level 3 in Children and Young People</li> </ul>	14 years' experience in children's residential services. 3 years' experience at Deputy Manager level	
<b>Deputy Director</b> Lisa Jury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) Early Childhood</li> <li>• iST Practitioner's Diploma</li> <li>• iST Supervision Course</li> <li>• iST Group Dynamics</li> <li>• Studying: iST Research Methods (MA)</li> </ul>	Commenced 2014	Child Psychotherapeutic Counsellor (UKCP accredited)
<b>Assistant Director Clinical Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCert Special and Additional Learning Needs</li> <li>• PDip Child Welfare and Wellbeing</li> <li>• iST Level 4 Certificate</li> <li>• iST Level 6 Practitioners Diploma</li> <li>• Teaching: iST Supervision Course</li> <li>• iST Level 7 Group Dynamics</li> <li>• Enrolled: IGA Diploma in Group Analytics</li> <li>• iST Level 7 Child Mental Health</li> </ul>	Commenced June 2019	
<b>Assistant Director Statutory Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies and Psychology</li> <li>• iST Foundation</li> <li>• iST Certificate</li> <li>• Studying: IST Practitioner's Diploma</li> </ul>	Commenced 2021	
<b>Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A level: Psychology and Public Services</li> <li>• iST Foundation</li> <li>• iST Certificate</li> <li>• iST Practitioners Diploma</li> <li>• Enrolled: iST Clinical Supervision</li> </ul>	Commenced 2018	
<b>Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NVQ Level 3 in Children and Young People</li> <li>• iST Foundation</li> <li>• iST Certificate</li> <li>• Enrolled : iST Diploma</li> <li>• Enrolled: iST Clinical Supervision</li> </ul>	Commenced 2020 15 years' experience as a Residential Care Worker	
<b>Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• iST Foundation Course</li> <li>• iST Level 4 Certificate</li> <li>• Enrolled: iST Level 6 Practitioners Diploma Year 1</li> </ul>	Commenced July 2021 as cleaner with Gables House	

**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>UKCP Status</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrolled: iST Level 6 Clinical Supervision</li> </ul>	Commenced June 2022 as Therapeutic Care Worker Previously worked with children and adults with Learning Disabilities	
<b>Deputy Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSc Policing Criminal Psychology</li> <li>MSC Psychology (Conversion Course)</li> <li>Level 3 Diploma Counselling and Psychotherapy Diploma</li> <li>Completing iST Foundation Course</li> </ul>	Commenced Jan 2023	
<b>Deputy Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NVQ Level 2 Child and Young People's Workforce. NVQ Level 2 Employment Rights and Responsibilities in Health and Social Care or Children and Young People's Settings.</li> <li>iST Foundation Course</li> <li>iST Level 4 Certificate</li> <li>iST Level 6 Practitioners Diploma Year 1</li> <li>Enrolled on: iST Practitioners Diploma Year 2</li> </ul>	Commenced 2020	
<b>Acting Deputy Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSc Psychology</li> <li>iST Foundation Course</li> <li>Enrolled: iST Certificate Course.</li> </ul>	Commenced June 2023	
<b>Therapeutic Care Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health &amp; Social Care City &amp; Guilds NVQ Level 3</li> <li>iST Foundation Course</li> <li>iST Certificate</li> </ul>	Commenced 2021  Previously Support Worker for adults with learning disabilities. 15 + years of support work	
<b>Therapeutic Care Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iST Foundation</li> <li>Enrolled: iST Certificate Course</li> </ul>	Commenced Aug 2023  9 years' experience as a learning support assistant	



**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

Position	Qualifications	Experience	UKCP Status
<b>Therapeutic Care Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iST Foundation</li> <li>Enrolled: iST Certificate Course</li> </ul>	Commenced Aug 2023	
<b>Therapeutic Care Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studying: iST Foundation</li> </ul>	Commenced Oct 2023	
<b>Therapeutic Care Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies with Criminology</li> <li>Enrolled: iST Foundation Course</li> </ul>	Commenced Oct 2023	
<b>Therapeutic Care Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studying: iST Foundation</li> </ul>	Commenced Dec 2023	

**Greenfields School**

Position	Qualifications	Experience
Head Teacher	BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance	Commenced: 2017 Prior: 4 years' experience as performing arts specialist, Many years' experience as Secondary Teacher including 3 years as Head of KS3 (Literacy) <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b>
Assistant Head Teacher	BA (Hons) Sociology	Commenced: 2014 Prior: 7 years' experience teaching as UQT. <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b> <b>Studying: iST Diploma</b>
Assistant Head Teacher	BA (Hons) Spanish PGCE Key Stage 2	Commenced: 2015 Prior: Prior experience as Primary Teacher <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b> <b>Studying: iST Diploma</b>
Unqualified Teacher	BSc (Hons) Economics	Commenced: 2014 Prior: Previously worked for many years in Financial Services Sector. <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b>
Classroom Assistant	BA (Hons) Fashion Design	Commenced: 2014 Prior: Worked in Insurance Industry <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b> <b>Studying: iST Diploma</b>

**GABLES HOUSE**  
**Statement of Purpose**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Experience</b>
Classroom Assistant	NVQ Level 2 in Health & Social Care	Commenced January 2022 20 years' experience in care industry <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b>
Clinical Education Support Assistant (Lower School)	BSc Clinical and Health Psychology Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care	Commenced: 2012 8 years' therapeutic care experience <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b> <b>Studying: iST Diploma</b>
Teacher	BA Primary Education 5-11 (Hons)	Commenced September 2023 5 years' experience as primary school teacher
Clinical Education Support Assistant (Upper School)	BTEC Music and Drama	Commenced: 2014 4 years' therapeutic care Experience <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b>
Teacher	BEd (Hons) Primary Education	Commenced: 2020 2 years' experience as Primary School Teacher <b>Completed: iST Certificate</b> <b>Studying: iST Diploma</b>
School Secretary	Extensive Secretarial Qualifications A Level English	Commenced: 2014 Prior: Over 40 years' experience as Secretary/PA and Office Manager.

**Administrative and Ancillary Staff**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Experience</b>
<b>Statutory Compliance Administrator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City and Guilds in Learning Support</li> <li>• Diploma in Clinical Risk and Claims Management</li> <li>• iST Foundation Course</li> </ul>	Commenced July 2021 Over 40 years' experience as an administrator and Compliance/Governance Officer

**GABLES HOUSE  
Statement of Purpose**

<b>Clinical Case Administrator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive secretarial qualifications</li> <li>• Pitman’s shorthand</li> <li>• AMSPAR</li> <li>• RSA Typing Stage I, II, III</li> </ul>	Commenced October 2022 Over 40 years’ experience as Secretary/Executive Assistant and Office Manager
<b>Business Support Administrator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive administrative/financial qualifications</li> </ul>	Commenced December 2021
<b>Estates Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive Maintenance Qualifications</li> </ul>	Commenced December 2013
<b>Estates Assistant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance Qualifications</li> </ul>	Commenced December 2016
<b>Estates Assistant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance Qualifications</li> </ul>	Commenced September 2022
<b>Estates Assistant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance Qualifications</li> </ul>	Commenced October 2022

**22. Supervision and Training**

**22.1 Staff Supervision**

Central to Childhood First’s Integrated Systemic Therapy is that staff work within a comprehensive framework which emphasises a thorough understanding of the young people and of themselves in relation to the therapeutic task. Staff members receive several group supervisions each week, including new group, key working group, case discussions, and staff dynamics meetings. These meetings offer a range of ways of understanding the history, inner world, current functioning and impact of the young people as individuals and as a group, as well as exploration of the impact of the staff on the young people. Staff members are also supervised individually by a line manager, all of whom are experienced practitioners, to facilitate the purpose of continually reflecting on and thinking about the overall task, it’s planning and integration. This work is supported by our Consultant who works with the staff team for 1 day a week facilitating our dynamic supervision programme. The work of the community is also supported by the input of our Lead Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist, who is present in many of our staff meetings and young person focused forums offering a clinical understanding when thinking about the young people.

**22.2 Training**

## **GABLES HOUSE Statement of Purpose**

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Childhood First is committed to in-depth staff training. Our work-based training programme has been developed in partnership with the Tavistock Clinic and the School of Social Science at Middlesex University. This programme together with our Integrated Systemic Therapy underpins our care and treatment of the young people and the professional development of our staff.

The training requires staff to understand and articulate the links between theory and practice in the context of their day-to-day work with the young people, with one another and the outside world. On commencing employment all staff undertake the iST foundation course followed by the iST Level 4 certificate. We also encourage staff to undertake further training which benefits both the individual and the community enhancing our overall practice

### **22.3 Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST) Training**

The aim of the Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST) programme is to provide a practice-based training for professionals caring for children and young people with complex emotional and psychological needs. iST training is professionally accredited by United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) via the College of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapies (C-CAP) and academically accredited by Middlesex University. Those who successfully complete the training qualify as UKCP-accredited Child Psychotherapeutic Counsellors.

The programmes are particularly aimed at group-based care settings (e.g. residential therapeutic communities, residential Children's homes and special schools and smaller units) where the assumption is that the core of staff training and development needs to be practice-based, with the essential aims of developing the individual, the team and organisational practice.

The main purpose of the Certificate, Diploma and Practitioner's Diploma, is workforce development for the staff who work within our own therapeutic communities. This training provides the basis for the staff to learn the theoretical and practical application of Childhood First's unique iST model, within which the whole organisation works.

## **GABLES HOUSE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

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## **23. Organisational structure**

### **23.1 House**

There are up to 24 members of staff at Gables House across 3 teams including 3 x team leaders and 3 x deputy team leaders. Supporting the Director are, 2x Assistant Directors. The teams provide 24-hour 365-day care for the young people, following a rota based repeating 3-week system. The senior team ensure a well-managed home in which the home's resources and staff development needs are met together with all the statutory requirements. Annual leave is carefully planned enabling rotas to be predictable for both staff and young people. In addition, ancillary staff who support the main team, covering the important areas of administration and the environment. At night, 2 staff sleep in once the young people are settled. Staffing levels are adjusted according to need and amendments to young people's individual risk assessments. The Director is able to monitor the welfare of young people through a variety of weekly forums as well as through ad hoc conversations.

### **23.2 School**

When a young person is placed at Gables House particular attention is given to their educational needs. Young people are able to attend the Upper or Lower school, both part of Greenfields School. Education is delivered in small groups allowing individual attention for each young person and the opportunity for each young person to reach their full potential.

We are committed to working in partnership with the young people's social worker to ensure individual educational needs are met. Staff attend school events and open evenings and take an interest in all aspects of school life. Additionally, school staff are regularly invited to participate in young people's reviews and planning meetings.