

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (SOP)

The Ride Children's Home

URN: SC062128

Updated – 05/08/2024.

The Statement of Purpose is freely available to:

- Any child accommodated in the children's home; (A summary of this document is available in the "Children's guide" which is more young people friendly).
- The parent of any child accommodated in the children's home.
- The placing authority of any child accommodated in the home.
- Any child being considered for accommodation in the home.
- Any other organisation or person involved in the placing of a young person in the home and any person who works at The Children's Home.

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QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIMS:

The home consists of two houses joined together but they are indistinguishable from other houses in the street. It is registered for 6 young people to live in, with 3 bedrooms in each house.

The young people who come to live at The Ride have often experienced significant loss and trauma in their lives.

Working in close co-operation with the young people, their social workers, and other professionals we aim to provide support to enable them to either return to a family living situation, to find a suitable place with foster carers or to work towards semi-independent living or if circumstances warrant, to move to a long-term specialist residential placement.

We carry out an impact risk assessment to ensure that young people being proposed for a placement will be compatible with those already living here. We will provide outreach support and assistance in learning living skills such as cleaning, cooking, and making and attending appointments.

At the age of 18, if the young person has been living here previously, we will assess their abilities and, if they are not ready, will risk assess their continuing residence here on the basis that the home remains a children's home and that it remains "wholly and mainly" for children.

The home is inspected by Ofsted once a year (on the proviso that it is rated good or outstanding); the inspectors are based at – Ofsted.

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Telephone 0300 123123

2. OBJECTIVES:

We will:

- Work in partnership with looked after young people, their parents / carers, social workers and other relevant professionals to meet agreed aims.
- Assess and meet the physical, intellectual, developmental, social and emotional needs of each young person.
- Build trust and positive relationships with the young people to ensure they feel valued and cared for whilst providing clear and realistic boundaries.
- Provide, in collaboration with the young person, parents and other professionals, a detailed care plan to meet assessed needs. The care plan must include specific roles and responsibilities for those contributing to the plan. It must also state agreed objectives and timescales for work to be completed and services provided. The care plan should also set

out clear guidelines for reviewing the plan and detail how changes to the care plan will be incorporated.

- Provide a safe and nurturing environment for young people that promotes individual well-being and protects from harm.
- Provide high standards of care appropriate to the individual needs of a young person as identified in their care plan.
- Help support the young people to explore some family dynamics and help them understand their feelings and difficulties.
- Empower young people to take control and feel more confident in taking responsibility for their own lives and behaviour.
- Ensure each young person and their family can make the best use of the home's facilities, the facilities of agencies working in partnership with the Home and those facilities provided within the wider community.

3. PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES

- The Home believes that all young people have the right to experience a family life, preferably within their own family or with carers within their own community.
- The Home believes that all young people have a right to be protected from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We recognise that many young people we work with are particularly vulnerable.
- The Home believes very strongly in working in partnership with parents and carers. We consider parents have an essential role to play in any plans made for a looked after young person and we will endeavour to include parents in all aspects of decision-making regarding their child.
- The Home believes very strongly in taking a holistic approach to the care of young people and to this end aims to work in close partnership with other professionals and organisations including health, education and the voluntary or private sector, recognising the value of alternative perspectives. The Home will aim to work closely with other relevant professionals and aim to include them where possible in looked after reviews and planning meetings.
- The Home believes looked after young people should have their own views valued and respected particularly as regards to key decisions in their future plans. Staff at the Home will strive to ensure the young person's views are heard and, where necessary, will act as advocates for a young person, or offer advice on independent advocates outside of the home.

- The Home believes in full, open, and honest consultation with young people. Providing regular opportunities for residents to voice their feelings on living at the Home and issues in general about being accommodated in care. The Home also takes service user participation seriously and aims to include young people in decision making around all aspects of their daily lives.

The services provided within the home centre on the work undertaken by staff at the home and include facilitating family contact, liaising with other agencies and support where appropriate in all aspects of the child's life whilst resident at the Home. Once a child has moved on, it is possible for staff to be involved in planned outreach support where appropriate. The structure of support for a young person at the home centres on the 'Keyworker' system.

4. WHO CAN USE THE HOME?

- The Home has six places and accommodates young people placed by the registered provider, the London Borough of Hounslow-ages of 12 – 17 gender inclusive.
- The Home usually offers initial placements of around 3 months until the second looked after review, unless agreed at the placement agreement meeting. These can then be extended if deemed to be in a young person's best interests. If appropriate short-term placements can be agreed on the basis of planned respite care, and shared care packages will be considered if assessed as in the best interest of the young person.

CARE PLANNING

1. Admission Criteria

The Home is not able to meet the needs of children with profound physical disabilities, as the building is not suitably adapted.

The Home is also not able to meet the needs of children with profound learning disabilities. The Home is registered to look after young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Our priority is the children that we serve and therefore we have a duty to protect but we also have a responsibility to the local community of which we are a part. For these reasons we may not be able to meet the needs of children with the following needs or behaviours:

- Young people requiring specialist residential mental health care necessitated by psychiatric diagnosis.
- Young people who have a recognised addiction to drugs or alcohol. (As opposed to substance misuse).
- Young people who have a history of sexual offences and / or present with persistent sexually abusive behaviour.

- Young offenders with a recent history of persistent serious offences against property e.g., burglary and car crime.
- Young people with a history of violent offences and/ or persistent violent behaviours e.g., a record of serious assaults on other young people and/ or staff. Young people with a recorded history of arson or persistent dangerous fire lighting.
- Young People on Remand.

Any young person with one more of these or similar behaviours will be risk assessed by the Registered Manager. Admission will only be considered if there is no significant identified risk to himself/herself/themselves, other young people, staff or the local community.

5. Admission to The Home

All new referrals to the home come through the Placement Team. The impact risk assessment is completed as soon as the referral is received and discussed in the Admission/Discharge meeting. For emergency admissions, The Placement team will liaise with the Home Manager or Deputy Manager and discuss the suitability of the proposed admission and complete a new referral impact risk assessment with reference to the Homes' aims and objectives' and 'admission criteria'. Any emergency Admissions will only last for not more than three days before an assessment is undertaken between the relevant managers and the social worker to determine whether the placement is appropriate to become longer term (see emergency placement procedure). For planned admissions only, if there is agreement between the home manager, the Social Worker, the child and their family to proceed, then the Home will follow its admission process which normally takes between 3-5 days, depending on individual cases, from the initial referral. This allows time for the Home to receive relevant accurate and up to date information on the child, including what alternatives to accommodation have been explored and to risk assess further if necessary. It also enables the Home:

- To allocate a keyworker.
- To arrange visits to the Home by the child and their family / carers.
- To meet residents and have an overnight stay.
- For a pre-admission placement agreement meeting to take place.

This meeting should be attended by the child and their carers (where appropriate), the social worker, the keyworker and if possible other relevant professionals. The meeting will be chaired by the Registered Manager or Deputy Manager and will address the following:

- The appropriate Looked After Children (LAC) forms will be completed and signed including the Care Plan and Placement Plan.
- The meeting will draw up a Placement Plan for the young person, which will define roles, responsibilities, the expected outcome and time scale of the placement. This will include a detailed Home day-to-day care plan.
- The first Looked After Review date will be set.
- A time scale of visits to the young person by their allocated social worker will be drawn up and agreed.

- Arrangements for family contact will be agreed.
- Any outstanding issues and details as regard to the health, education of the young person will be addressed including appointments, medication, and therapeutic input.
- Arrangements for supporting regular activities/clubs will be agreed.
- Expectations of the young person's behaviour whilst in placement will be outlined, including school attendance, boundaries within the Home, and staff responses to unacceptable behaviour and the registered provider's response to dangerous or disruptive behaviour that causes risk to themselves or others.
- Any individual and cultural needs will be addressed including diet, religious observance, and any other relevant supports for the young person.

6. Emergency Placement Procedure

In the event of a referral for an Emergency Placement, the person receiving / administering the referral should do all that is reasonable to get as much information on the child from the referring agency.

However, any decision to admit a child in these circumstances must be based on an assessment of the available information that the child's needs are likely to be met by the home (if out of hours the on-call manager must be consulted prior to accepting the referral).

For emergency admissions, staff should follow the same process as for planned admissions. However, given the time constraints, the risk assessments will be carried out from information provided over the phone or e-mail. Referral forms need to be completed and received before the young person is admitted despite the time pressures with emergency placements.

As a minimum, the following information will be required at the time of the placement:

- The contact arrangements that may be permitted between the child and their parents, siblings, relatives, and friends – no contact may be allowed without the approval of the social worker, in writing (or set out in the child's Placement Plan).
- A copy of the Child's Health Care Plan or, if this isn't available, details of any healthcare or medical needs/requirements that the home should be aware of e.g., Home Remedies or Medication that the child may require.
- Copies or information relating to any Court Orders that may be required or influence the Child's placement e.g., if the child is subject to a Remand.

The person administering this process must keep a record of the matters that are not undertaken and pass this to the chair of the Emergency Review, so that they can be followed up.

The Home may also offer no more than one placement at any time to young people charged and being held by the Police overnight until the next available court. This is under the provisions in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1983 to transfer from Police Custody to Local Authority accommodation. It is subject to a risk assessment of the young person and must have the agreement of the Unit Manager. Note: This is not in any way to be considered as a secure placement, nor is it a remand to the Care of the Authority.

7. Reviews / Placement Plans

The Home considers Looked After Reviews of young people as an essential requirement of providing an effective service for children and families.

Young people's needs, development and progress in all areas of their life must be formally reviewed and recorded regularly in line with 'Looked After Children' and 'Good Parenting' guidelines. All young people's reviews must take place outside normal school hours. The young person's keyworker and the Manager or Assistant Manager should attend the review.

The Home Manager ensures the allocated keyworker prepares a fair and accurate report of the child's progress in designated areas for the child's Looked After Review. The young person, before the review meeting must see the completed report and any comments by the young person added to the report. The Registered Manager should also check and sign the review report. The report should include any difficulties for the young person in placement and should specifically highlight the young person's achievements and any areas of progress.

Staff are provided with guidance on preparing for a looked after child's review in the Home's policy on reviews. The Home's review procedures also include guidance for staff in assisting the young person to contribute their views fully to the process and the use of an advocate for the young person where appropriate. This also includes guidance for staff on ensuring the young person is given the opportunity to contribute fully to the review process, both in the writing of reports and in the review meeting itself. Staff must ensure the young person is given the opportunity to discuss the outcome of the review and any issues arising.

The Manager also ensures that staff implement the agreed outcome of reviews as necessary in the day-to-day care of the child. This includes recording the Outcomes of the statutory review and the amendment of the day-to-day care of the young person as necessary. Individuals responsible in the home for pursuing actions arising from review decisions must also be clearly identified.

The Registered Manager has a duty to request an emergency statutory review for a young person where no review has been planned. Also, where there has been a major change in the plan for a looked after child a review must be called so that all parties can agree a change to the care plan. Any difficulties in arranging a young person's review within regulation time scales must be documented by the Registered Manager and reported to their line manager.

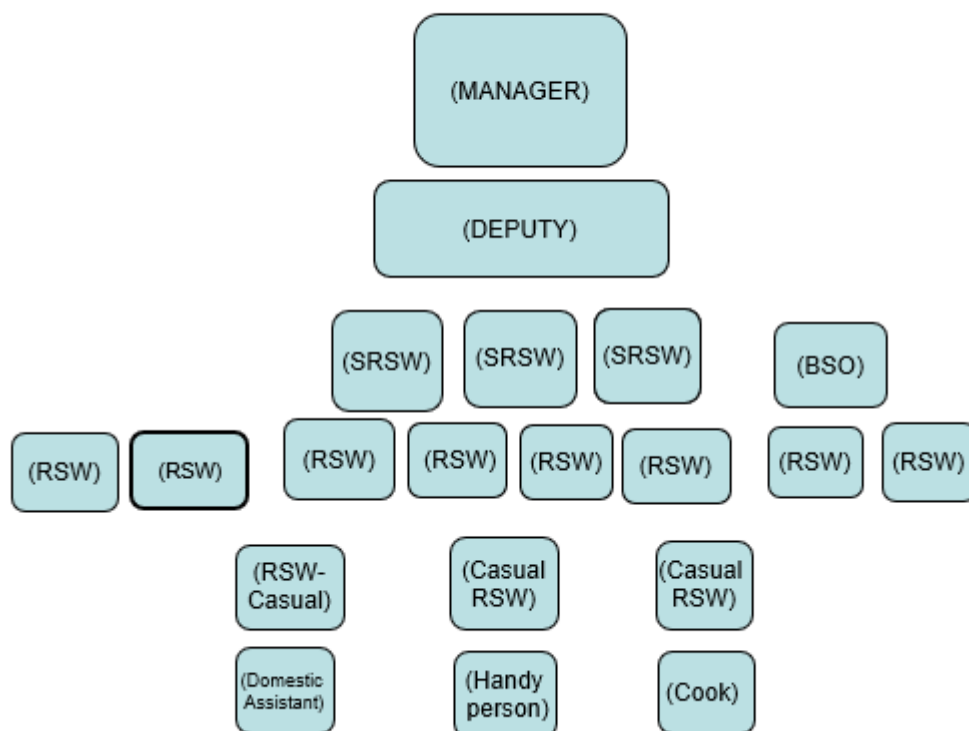
The young person should be given copies of reports and minutes of review meetings and be assisted by the keyworker to understand them and to store them appropriately. Details on the review process are provided in the Children's guide.

8. Staffing

The Ride operates on a 24-hour rota with a minimum of 2 staff on duty after 3pm. Usually there are 3 members of staff working at the home in the evening, but this may be reduced to 2 according to occupancy levels and the needs of the young people.

A minimum of two staff sleeps in each night. The shift starts at 2.30pm and from 2.30 – 3pm staff on duty receive a verbal and written handover from staff on the previous shift. The late or evening shift ends at 1am, with staff retiring to staff sleeping – in rooms (but are accessible if required during the night). Shifts then begin again at 7:30 am when staff give the on-coming shift a handover until 8am before going off duty. Occasionally the home may bring in Waking Night staff if needed. The manager and the deputy manager work Monday to Friday. At least one is on call out of hours and weekends on rotation.

STAFFING STRUCTURE



9. Complaints and Representations

The Home views the complaints procedure positively. Staff see it as a means of improving practice and a useful method of feedback about the service provided. It can also be empowering for young people to demonstrate that they can influence their lives.

If used constructively, the complaints process provides staff, young people and others connected with the service with a valuable means of highlighting and resolving potential areas of conflict.

The home follows The London Borough of Hounslow's complaints procedure. All staff receive training on dealing with complaints and the complaints procedure.

On admission young people and their parents or carers are made aware of the complaint's procedure. They are provided with a booklet, detailing Hounslow Council's complaints procedure, how to register a complaint and where to get help in order to register a complaint.

Summary of Complaints Procedure

There are three distinct stages through which a complaint may be progressed:

▣ Stage 1: The problem-solving stage

This stage provides the opportunity for an informal resolution of the complaint by means of a discussion between the Young Person and the manager of the relevant service.

▣ Stage 2: The investigation stage

Where a Young Person is not satisfied with the proposed resolution at Stage 1, then they may request for the complaint to be investigated by a manager unconnected with the service. In the case of a complaint under the Children Act an Independent Person will be appointed to take part in the consideration of the complaint.

▣ Stage 3: The review or appeal stage

If a young person is not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation, they may request for the complaint to be considered by a Review / Appeal Panel.

10. Child Protection and Safeguarding

The Ride follows the London Borough of Hounslow's Child Protection policy as agreed by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). These procedures are based on the London Child Protection Procedures and can be accessed online via Tri -X to The Rides online manual. <http://www.proceduresonline.com/hounslow/chomes/>

There are child protection procedures and training available for staff to ensure children are kept safe and an appropriate response can be made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse of children looked after at the Home. The core training is also available via e-learning through the virtual college. <http://www.virtualcollege.co.uk/eacademies/Safeguarding.aspx>

There are policies and procedures in place to safeguard young people resident at the home. These include detailed guidance on 'methods of care and control', 'permissible sanctions,' 'use of restraint,' 'regulating visitors' and 'medication policy and procedures.

Guidance on staff supervision of young people (residents) at the home also includes:

'night time supervision', 'physical contact with children,' 'spending one to one time alone with a child' and 'care practices towards children of the opposite sex.'

Other safeguards for young people are also identified in the risk assessment procedures, supervision of staff, missing from care procedures, whistle blowing policy, bullying policy, and complaints procedures for looked after children. These too are available to staff online.

A copy of the LSCB procedures and HM Government document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children – <http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk> which includes specific guidance for staff on protecting young people living in children's homes. These are accessible to all staff. The Manager of the home ensures that through supervision all staff are aware of and understand these guidelines and procedures.

Guidance for staff on responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse, including allegations against staff, allegations against young people, dealing with disclosure and suspicion of abuse is contained in the 'Reporting Child Protection Concerns' procedure.

The Home Manager regularly liaises with the LADO and safeguarding advisors to seek advice about local procedures and practice and how these relate to keeping young people safe whilst being looked after.

Guidance is available for staff subject to allegations about them, which details the information and support available whilst an investigation takes place.

Child Protection training for staff is part of an induction programme and includes safeguards to prevent abuse, dealing with disclosures and suspicions of abuse and the home's child protection procedures. Staff attend regular refresher training in child protection and a variety of other safeguarding training relating to sexual exploitation; gang related abuse, criminal exploitation, neglect, FGM, radicalisation, forced marriage etc.

Staff maintain routine links with the safeguarding team and the Registered Manager sits on the local MASE panel, by invitation if any current residents are to be discussed.

11. Bullying

Bullying is not tolerated in the home and staff are expected to work proactively to counter bullying and deal effectively with both the victims and perpetrators of bullying. Any issues or concerns regarding bullying will be addressed in the young person's care plan and the home's stance on bullying is made clear for young people in the Young People's guide.

The Home has a bullying policy, which defines different types of bullying, the symptoms, and effects of bullying and how staff should work with both the victim and the perpetrator.

The policy outlines procedures staff undertake following an allegation or suspicion of bullying of a young person at the Home including recording of incidents, informing, or involving other agencies, risk assessments and appropriate responses to counteract bullying.

The staff at the home will actively support a young person, parents or carers or other professionals to deal with bullying issues outside the home, in school or in the wider community.

VIEWS WISHES AND FEELINGS

12. Consultation with Children Looked After

Young People have weekly meetings with their keyworker where they are given the opportunity to discuss issues related to the Home and have the opportunity to contribute to the way the Home is run. Young People also have the opportunity in these sessions to discuss issues related to future plans, progress and positive outcomes and their placement at the Home and the care they receive whilst living at the Home.

Young people are encouraged to meet regularly in private with their social worker to discuss future plans and any issues they may have.

An Assistant Manager or a senior staff member will chair weekly meetings, where residents' views are sought and recorded on decisions that affect their lives, aspects of the running of the home and the care they receive. These views are then fed back to the weekly staff meeting by staff present at the residents meeting. Themed residents meeting is also planned to focus on specific topics relevant to residents at that time.

Young people resident in the home are given the opportunity to record their views in a number of ways including comments on daily recording, feedback re menus, any sanctions imposed and responses to the recording of any critical incidents. They also receive a Children's Guide which includes information on the complaints process on admission, and guidance on making a formal complaint.

All young people have easy access to an independent advocate through Action for Children and are supported to contact them if they need advice or support. The designated advocate is also invited to attend occasional residents' meetings.

13. Religious/Cultural/Linguistic Needs

Every young person has the right to follow a religion of their choice. Every effort will be made to ensure the young person has the opportunity to attend any service or meetings that helps them with their understanding or practice of that religion. Staff will also ensure the young person has an opportunity for quiet contemplation or to pray within one's daily routine if so required.

If a young person's religion requires a particular diet, clothing or additional resources every effort will be made to ensure that these needs are met. Advice will be sought where necessary from those with appropriate knowledge, including the young person's family and this should be identified in the care plan.

The Home celebrates a range of religious festivals throughout the year with decorations and cultural meals, all young people are encouraged to participate and celebrate the diversity of Hounslow's community.

Those young people who use a language other than English will be supported. Documents will be translated upon request and an interpreter will be employed to use in any formal meetings if necessary.

14. Anti-Discriminatory Practice & Children Rights

The Ride adheres to the London Borough of Hounslow's Equal Opportunities Policy, which identifies the right of service users to receive an appropriate service without receiving less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, religion, disability, sexuality, or class.

The Ride also believes that all children come first, and the service provided should be based on respect for the individual, honesty, and equality regardless of race, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or religion.

The staff team at The Ride reflects ethnic and cultural diversity and staff are encouraged to discuss cultural issues at team meetings as part of the weekly team meeting agenda.

Staff are provided with guidance in addressing anti discriminatory practice through guidelines including the Home policies 'meeting the care needs of children from minority ethnic groups' and 'practices in the Home to combat racism'.

Staff are also provided training in anti-discriminatory practice in relation to issues of race, ethnicity, religion and gender.

The Home believes that all children looked after have the same rights as any other child in the community which includes access to education, health care and leisure services.

Young people's rights whilst being looked after are detailed in the Young People's guide provided on admission. The young person's keyworker has a responsibility to explain these rights to children and advocate for the young person where appropriate.

All young people have access to an independent Young People's rights service, which can provide appropriate advice and support on their rights in care and any issues they may have whilst being looked after. Keyworkers have a responsibility to ensure young people are aware of this service and can access support if required. Young people are also given details of advocacy services as regards complaints or any legal issues they may require support with.

EDUCATION

15. Education

The Home is committed to ensuring that every young person receives full time education that is appropriate to his or her needs. Staff, in close liaison with other responsible agencies will actively pursue the young person's education needs, which are identified in their care plan.

The Home will support a young person in continuing to attend their local school wherever possible. Being placed in local authority care should not necessarily entail a change of school unless the travel involved is deemed too far to be in the best interests of the young person.

Many young people at the Home will have experienced difficulties at school and may be at risk of exclusion or are currently excluded from mainstream education. Exclusion from education is likely to have a significant detrimental effect on the life chances of looked after children.

The Home will actively engage with schools and representatives from the virtual college to maintain a young person's full time school placement.

Where a child is excluded or has no school place, staff will work closely with education professionals to ensure full time schooling is provided as soon as possible and within the minimum statutory timescale of 20 days.

Where young people are excluded or have no full-time school place, staff will in collaboration with the parents / carers, social worker and other professionals supervise education work set by schools or the P.R.S. Where young people are excluded for more than 5 days an individual education programme will be devised by staff in conjunction with Hounslow's Virtual School.

Young people on reduced timetables at school will be expected to continue to participate in schoolwork within the Home before they leave for school if they are on a restricted timetable e.g., afternoons only. If they only attend school in the morning, then they will be encouraged to do schoolwork on their return to the Home until 3pm unless otherwise agreed in individual Care Plans. Family contact does not normally form part of the school day unless agreed in the young person's care plan.

Where young people are only receiving part time education staff will work closely with the school to increase schooling to full time hours if possible or seek extra home tuition during unfilled school hours.

During the normal school day 9am – 3pm access to leisure facilities in the Home will be restricted unless they form part of an individual education programme. Access to travel passes and travel allowances will also be restricted during these times for non-school attendees.

School attendance will be checked daily with local schools and recorded by staff.

Young People receive weekly rewards from the Home for regular school attendance. Young people can also receive other individual rewards for sustained improvements in school attendance and performance commensurate with their care plan.

Staff will encourage young people to complete homework on their return from school, liaising closely with schools around homework diaries and working to individual education programmes.

All young people are provided with a desk and suitable chair in their rooms for private study. Young people can request extra books and have access to computers at home and are

provided with laptops by the Virtual College if in education. Laptops are sometimes provided by the Virtual College for young people evidencing their commitment to education.

No looked after reviews, planning meetings or social worker visits are held during school times unless agreed in the young person's care plan.

The care plan will make provision for how a young person should be accompanied to school and how school activities such as PEPs and parents' evenings will be provided for by the home's staff. The Home, in collaboration with the young person's social worker, will also provide school uniform and education equipment and supplies for young people, as well as funding for school meals, school trips and excursions.

Staff will attend PEPs, parents' evenings, and other school meetings where agreed in the care plan and support young people attending after school clubs and appropriate extracurricular activities.

ENJOYMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

16. Hobbies, Recreational, Sporting and Cultural Activities

Staff at the Home will prepare activities together with young people to celebrate birthdays, cultural and religious festivals as identified in individual care plans.

A young person's expressed interest in leisure pursuits and / or membership of local community clubs or groups will be recognised in placement planning and arrangement made for them to continue their interests or attendance of the group or club.

All group outings away from the Home will be appropriately risk assessed and adequately supervised by staff before being cleared by the designated senior worker/shift leader on duty.

Staff will encourage young people to contribute to the planning of leisure programmes and recreational activities during school holidays. Activities are regularly discussed at weekly residents' meetings.

Young People at the Home have age-appropriate access to leisure facilities including books, magazines, newspapers, board games, music systems, computers, television and streamed films. Certificate 18 videos and computer games are not allowed in the Home. Young people under 15 are not allowed access to Certificate 15 films and computer games.

Young people have access to the internet through a safeguarded connection monitored by The London Borough of Hounslow. The Wi-Fi has web filtering that blocks inappropriate sites and notifies the manager if young people attempt to access these sites. It is of course possible that young people will access unsuitable material via friends' mobile phones etc so staff will be vigilant to this.

All young people are encouraged to access recreational and leisure activities provided by partnership agencies in the local community which includes activity programmes specifically

for looked after children run by the participation service. Young people are offered free access to swimming and gym facilities within Hounslow.

HEALTH

17. Individual Health of Young People

On admission to the Home all young people will be registered with a GP. If possible, they will remain with their local GP but if this is not feasible a local Health Centre is willing to register any of our young people.

The individual health needs of the child will be incorporated into the Care Plan and Placement Plan.

The home will work with the looked after children's nurse to provide a medical assessment including any emotional support needs the young person may have.

The young person keyworker will monitor and record attendance at any health appointments and ensure these are followed up. Health promotion will be addressed both individually with young people through health assessment summaries and also in group work with health professionals who provide guidance on contraception, giving up smoking, drugs or alcohol and other health issues affecting young people.

18. Drugs / Alcohol

Smoking is not permitted inside the Home. Young people are actively discouraged from smoking. It has been agreed that young people that do smoke can smoke cigarettes in the back garden to avoid congregating in the road and disturbing neighbours.

Young people are made aware of the rules regarding drugs, alcohol and smoking at their admission or pre-admission meeting and this is made clear in the young person's guide.

The Council has a drugs and alcohol policy for residential Homes which all staff are made aware of as part of their staff induction. The policy includes:

- Guidance and directions on how to respond to young people using drugs and alcohol or abusing other substances, including how to manage young people returning to the Home under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This may include agreements on staff response made in consultation with parents or carers, the looked after children's nurse or other professionals.
- Directions for staff on when to inform the Home Manager, Social Worker, Police and other agencies. Including actions specified in individual care plans.
- Possible effects of drugs and alcohol use and how to recognise symptoms.

- Details of how to contact or refer to other agencies, which may assist a young person or carers to deal with drugs or alcohol use or substance abuse.
- Training for staff and guidance for young people is also available from designated drugs and alcohol workers and offered on a regular basis.

19. MEDICATION

Staff are trained in managing and recording young people's medication which is stored appropriately. If a young person is deemed to be able to self-medicate, they will be allowed to do so however their supply will be monitored.

On admission the young person's parent/carer or Social Worker signs a home remedies form to agree which home remedies can be administered.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

20. Family Contact

Whenever possible family contact will be actively encouraged, and when necessary, facilitated by staff at the home. Parents, siblings, and extended family will be welcome at the home if requested by the child, in line with the home's visitor's policy.

Similarly, staff at the home will actively support a young person's visit to family or relatives if agreed in their care plan. Where contact is not possible, due to practical reasons such as where a parent / carer lives abroad or is in hospital, staff will actively promote contact by letter, telephone, or any other reasonable means.

The only exception to this is where contact has been denied or restricted on a legal basis to protect the child.

Young people are also able to invite friends to the home in line with the home's visitors' policy. This policy ensures young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their visitors and respect other residents' needs at the home. Young people must first ask staff if visitors can be allowed into the home. Details of the home's visitor's policy are contained in the Children's guide.

Young people will be able to stay with friends with appropriate risk assessment and permissions.

21. Outreach Work

Staff carry out outreach work with ex residents and keep records of each contact.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

22. CCTV

The home has CCTV Security covering the external grounds of the home, this is to ensure the safety of staff and young people and to assist in the detection of crime. The system is based in the main office and can be monitored on a daily basis if necessary.

23. Unauthorised Absence

There are procedures and protocols to follow if a child is missing from the home.

Young people who break a court-imposed curfew will be reported to the Police as soon as the restrictions of the curfew are broken, as identified in their court order, bail restrictions or care plan.

If a young person is missing from the home with no contact the young person's social worker, team manager and the head of service for the Ride or EDT at a weekend or out of hours, will be informed as a matter of urgency and a strategy meeting may be convened. For absence the Philomena Protocol will be followed.

A record is kept in the home of all unauthorised absences/missing periods and monitored by the Registered Manager monthly.

24. Behavioural Support

We believe control and discipline should be maintained on the basis of good personal relationships between staff and children within a consistent and safe environment. Staff are provided with guidance in this area in the home's policy. Individual young people will be risk assessed regarding their behaviour and forms of control and strategies highlighted in individual risk assessments, behaviour management plans and care plans.

It is recognised that young people may demonstrate behaviours that are inappropriate, unwanted, and sometimes unsafe. On occasions staff will have to work with young people exhibiting unwanted behaviour. In this instance staff will endeavour to assist and support the young person to refrain from such behaviour and seek an alternative, more positive forum for their feelings of anger and/ or frustration. Where possible staff will attempt to diffuse a situation and use de-escalation techniques to calm a young person and prevent a serious incident. These could include offering to take them out on a 1-1 basis to talk through the situation or setting up an alternative activity within the home i.e., cooking, art etc.

Where conflict has arisen between individual young people, staff will attempt to provide the opportunity for children to resolve their differences in an acceptable way. This may be by addressing the issue later on when the atmosphere is calmer and encouraging young people to reflect on the causes of their behaviour, how they may have reacted differently and how they will deal with such conflicts in the future.

Where conflict has arisen between the young person and a member of staff, we will similarly attempt to provide an opportunity for the young person and staff member to reconcile differences by use of a third party, if necessary.

Where these approaches are unsuccessful, and the young person is still presenting unwanted behaviour then the imposition of a sanction may be an appropriate response to the young person's negative behaviour.

Sanction may also be imposed if the young person repeatedly fails to adhere to the agreed to house rules, which are communicated at the outset of the placement and agreed in the young person's care plan. This is only enforced where it is made clear to the young person that a sanction will be the consequence of this failure to adhere to house rules. The Home has a 'sanctions policy' for staff, which provides guidelines on the appropriate use of sanctions in accordance with Children Act 1989.

The Quality Standards provides guidelines for staff regarding physical restraint of young people in the 'physical interventions of staff' policy. This is available for all staff and details the appropriate use of physical restraint to protect young people or staff from harm and / or avoid serious damage to property. It may also be necessary to lock external and internal doors in order to de-escalate a situation or to prevent the young person from causing harm to himself, others or property. Any decision to do so must be agreed by the manager on duty and for a minimum period so as not to restrict the liberty of the young person involved or other residents.

All permanent staff receive training and regular re-certification of skills in Positive Behaviour Training. All young people are risk assessed and guidance is held on the assessment as to what level of intervention staff should impose with physical intervention only being used as a last resort. In most instances the situation can be diffused by staff recognising the warning signs, diversion and occasionally using less restrictive techniques i.e., guiding them away from the situation and focusing on strategies identified in their Behaviour Management Plan.

All sanctions, critical incidents and incidents of physical intervention are recorded, discussed with the young person and signed by a manager and monitored.

25. Fire and Safety Precautions

All London Borough of Hounslow premises must meet certain standards identified in the fire risk assessment which is updated annually. An experienced RSW takes responsibility for the effective operation of the homes fire policy and procedures and the firefighting equipment is inspected annually by Walker Fire. All young people are aware of evacuation procedures and the fire policy is explained to them prior to or on admission. This information is also made available in the Children's guide.

26. Health and Safety

The Ride works closely with the Department's Health and Safety Officer with regard to current legislation and risk assessments. The allocated officer undertakes a rigorous health and safety audit every 3 years which is reviewed annually by a manager at The Ride. The home's

handyman also conducts working environment risk assessments 6 monthly to identify any damage to property, repairs needed or areas of concern within the home.

All portable electrical equipment is tested annually to ensure it meets regulated standards set out by the London Borough of Hounslow.

The use of any toxic cleaning materials is risk assessed, as is any other potentially harmful substance or equipment.

The contractors to maintain the home are managed via Facilities Management team.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

27. THE REGISTERED PROVIDER:

The London Borough of Hounslow, Children's, and Adult's Services, Hounslow House,
Bath Road, Hounslow, TW3 3EB

- i. **Responsible Individual: Director–Childrens Safeguarding and Specialist Services**
- ii. **Head of Corporate Parenting**
- iii. **Residential Group Manager**
- iv. **Registered Manager**

28. Current Staffing Establishment

All staff have extensive experience in Residential Childcare. The staff team also reflects a mixture of cultural backgrounds. The team is well balanced in terms of age and gender. All staff are qualified to a minimum of CACHE Level 3 Children and Young People Workforce Diploma or equivalent or required to undertake the qualification on appointment to the post.

All full-time residential workers receive regular supervision lasting at least one and a half hours every month. New staff, during the probationary period, receive supervision every two weeks. Arrangements are made to cover long-term absences of supervisors. Training and development needs are addressed in supervision and records kept on Clear Review system in line with departmental procedures.

29. Location of The Ride

The Home is located in the London Borough of Hounslow.
The location risk assessment is up to date.

30. Contacts

For a list of relevant contact details please go to The Rides online manual: -

https://proceduresonline.com/hounslow/chomes/files/organ_struct_mang_contacts.pdf