

LARCHWOOD SHORT BREAK UNIT ANNUAL REPORT April 2016 – March 2017



Larchwood is a short break unit, providing short breaks, respite care and activities in the community for children with complex needs who have a learning and/or physical disability.

Larchwood short breaks provide children and young people with disabilities the opportunity to spend time away from their families in a planned way and for a specified period of time, in accordance with their assessed needs. This could be for a few hours at a time, or overnight stays, on a regular basis.

The time that young people spend at Larchwood is tailored to individual need. Larchwood is a positive environment creating experiences and unlocking opportunities that are aspirational for children and young people, whose achievements are celebrated. Larchwood contributes significantly to Childrens permanency needs being met within their own families to majority.

The outcome of the unit's most recent full Ofsted inspection on the 8th June 2016 was 'outstanding'. The interim inspection which took place on the 5th December 2016 achieved a rating of 'sustained effectiveness'.

1 Context and Finance

1.1 This annual report provides evidence that Larchwood delivers services in line with the Councils narrative of value for money, opportunities to thrive and contributing to safe and self reliant communities. With details of activity over the financial year April 2016-March 2017, it sets out the plans for continuous improvement for the year ahead.

1.2 The report should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Purpose revised in April 2017. Services are delivered under the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and associated Quality Standards which came into effect on 1st April 2015. The Statement of Purpose provides more service delivery detail and sets out the legislative and regulatory context in which Larchwood Short Break Unit operates.

1.3 The number of children receiving a service at Larchwood as at the end of January 2017 is 18 (compared with last year's figure of 24). Whilst the number of children is less, their needs and family circumstances are more complex. Consequently Larchwood are providing more over nights but for fewer children as can be seen below.

1.4 11 children have left over the course of the year, successfully transitioning to adult services or step down to Tier 2 services. Another three young people moved to residential placements, where their needs are being fully met. Four new children have joined, and there has been an increase to two pre-existing care packages within Larchwood.

- The number of overnights during 2016/17: 674 (626 in 15/16)
- The number of tea visits (under 4 hours) : 232 (211 in 15/16)
- The number of day care (over 4 hours) : 315 (266 in 15/16)

1.5 Of the 18 nine children currently receive an overnight provision is nine; three of these are Children Looked After who receive two nights per week each and some additional day care. The remaining provision is a combination of overnights, tea visits, day care, teenage group, and 'On the Move' activities.

1.6 The annual budget for Larchwood staffing and running costs for this period was £441,600, the total spend was £462,078. Positively this is offset by an income target of £102,650 (£30,000 more than the previous year) which was exceed with income generated being £149,062.

- Therefore the actual cost to the Council was £313,016,
- Divided by the 18 children attending is £17,389 per child.
- Three of the 18 children receiving respite are Children Looked After and would most certainly require full time care without the shared care arrangement Larchwood is able to offer. Placing these three children alone in full time residential placements would exceed the annually the annual cost of Larchwood. Additionally all the children attending Larchwood have complex needs and the provision provides services to prevent escalation of need.

2 Referrals

- 2.1 Larchwood is a specialist service for children and young people who meet the criteria for services from the Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST). To ensure fair access and the right offer to meet need, referrals from the CSST are discussed by a multi-agency team at the monthly Resource Allocation System (RAS) Panel. This also offers an opportunity to look at joint arrangements with representatives from Heath and the Special Educational Needs Team (SEN) attending this panel.
- 2.2 Children with additional needs who do not meet the criteria for Larchwood are signposted to the community Short Break Services, also run by the Children's Specialist Support Team.

3 Impact and outcomes

- 3.1 Impact and outcomes are reviewed under the nine Quality Standards (Children's Homes Regulations, April 2015) as follows:
- 3.2 **Quality and purpose of care** – The Unit Manager is required to undertake evaluations of the unit at least every six months under regulation 45. These reports focus on a specific Quality Standard, which is agreed with the Head of Service and Team Manager via the Larchwood monthly management meetings. The last two reports have focused on Quality Standard 7 'Protection of Children' (regulation 12) and Quality Standard 8 'Leadership and Management' (regulation 13).
- 3.3 **Children's views, wishes and feelings** – The children and young people have been actively involved in making decisions and choices in relation to matters within the home. There is a newly created consultation area which captures and evidences this work in a colourful, tactile and child focused manner. The most recent consultations have focused on the updating of the sensory garden.



- 3.4 Education** – Termly meetings are consistent throughout the school year between the Unit Manager and a representative from Kennel Lane School. They continue to afford informal opportunities to facilitate information sharing between Larchwood link workers and school staff. Larchwood staff also attend the Childrens SEN annual reviews and ensure there is continuous liaison with schools regarding transitions and transport. During this period a number of staff undertook joint Team Teach training with the staff from Kennel Lane School providing opportunities to share cost, learn together and further develop relationships.
- 3.5 Enjoyment and Achievement** – The teenage group have been busy this year learning about Bracknell Forest’s Local Offer, consulting and renaming their group to the ‘Larchwood Lions’, planning a Friday night sleep over and taking part in a Keeping Safe workshop, delivered by the CSST specialist workers for CSE and Missing.
- 3.6** The fortnightly independent shopping / cooking sessions continue to see great results with regard to young peoples’ confidence and skills. It is also a way for the children to try new foods.
- 3.7** Larchwood continues to have cultural and diversity evenings which have included an event based on the Rio Carnival and a Hindu meal with themed clothing and activities.
- 3.8** The goal ladder system has been redesigned and replaced this with ‘smart stars’ which are more focused and time limited. There is management oversight in place in which the senior practitioner will evaluate an individual’s progress on a termly basis. This then feeds into their achievement folders and reviews.



- 3.9 Health and well-being** – Staff continue to receive training in individual's health care plans which include gastrostomy feeding, rectal paraldehyde, buccal midazolam and growth hormone injections. One staff member has undertaken training in administering the growth hormone so is competent to train and refresh staff in this procedure. Staff continue to support children and young people with making healthy food and lifestyle choices and in keeping their food diaries up to date.
- 3.10** The report from the full Ofsted inspection in June 2016 states that 'the home's objective to make a positive difference to the personal, social and learning lives of the children and young people is thoroughly demonstrated by progress made in a range of areas, with some children and young people having shown remarkable improvement in skills and behaviours'.
- 3.11 Sleep Clinic** – We have successfully run intensive programmes for five young people and their families during the year. We have delivered a sleep clinic presentation to the Adapted Webster Stratton parenting course and to a Kennel Lane parent/carers forum. We also presented a lunchtime seminar to Children's Social Care.
- 3.12 Positive relationships** – We continue to work closely with parents/carers and professionals. Larchwood promotes 'a friendship matters' culture where children with disabilities are encouraged to make friends and interact with peers as well as paid support workers. Children and young people's transitions are carefully planned and special celebrations are tailored to the individual's interests. The Ofsted Inspector reported: 'Many children and young people attending have considerable difficulty and often little interest in making relationships with peers, nonetheless sterling efforts are made to help them share experiences and to stay overnight when there are others known to them. One mum told me her son had his first friend to visit ever recently.'
- 3.13** Outcome pictures of working together on the sensory garden



- 3.14 Protection of children** – Larchwoods safeguarding policy was updated in June 2016. It contains specific details on the use of the varying forms of communication, guidance on non mobile bruising and management/ on call arrangements. Larchwood currently provides services to one young person subject to a Child Protection Plan.

The Unit Manager attends child protection core groups and conferences, ensuring care plans are kept relevant.

- 3.15 Leadership and Management** – Larchwood is part of the Childrens Specialist Support Service. The full Ofsted Inspection Report, June 2016 quotes ‘ this is very effective leadership which ensures consistently high standards are maintained to meet the needs of the children placed’.

- 3.16** The Registered Manager continues to be supported by the Head of Service for Children’s Specialist Support (Responsible Provider Role), and managed by the Team Manager of the Children’s Specialist Support Team.

The management team work closely together to enable continuous improvement. Joint Team meetings are held regularly as well as those just for Larchwood staff. The unit manager attends the RAS and a staff member represents Larchwood at the quarterly front line liaison meetings and another represents Larchwood within the CSC participation group. As a management team we are aware of the importance of good staff supervision to good outcomes for children and 1-1 supervision’s are provided at all levels in accordance with our policy.

- 3.16** The team continues to be fully staff with permanent workers. Supported by the retention and recruitment of a relief pool of staff.

- 3.17 Care Planning** – During the year staff have worked on the introduction of link worker profiles for all the children and young people. This has involved a consultation with all the children who use Larchwood, in regard to what they would like to know about their linkworker and then they complete the profiles with their linkworkers. The aim of this was to build relationships and ensure there was a method in place so that each individual child was able to recognise their linkworker. Children and young people have enjoyed coproducing these with the staff.

Comprehensive risk profiles are in place for all children and young people and Larchwood staff continue to attend C.I.N/ L.A.C reviews and Education reviews.

4 Ofsted Inspections

- 4.1** Larchwood is inspected by Ofsted a minimum of twice a year. As previously stated Larchwood had a full inspection on the 8th June 2016 and the overall outcome of ‘Outstanding’ was achieved. The inspection report stated ‘ the premises are welcoming with lots of displays of children and young peoples’ work and photographs of them participating in activities. The manager has enhanced facilities to ensure that children and young people enjoy their breaks.’

- 4.2** The full inspection was followed by an interim inspection on the 5th December 2016 in which the outcome was ‘sustained effectiveness’. The inspection

report quotes 'the manager and staff at the home continue to provide an excellent service to children and young people, one that is highly valued by parents and professionals alike. Children are helped to enjoy experiences that they may not otherwise have and to make progress. Families manage better because of the short breaks that their children access, these may have averted the need for full-time residential care.'



5 Staffing Profile

5.1 Full time

- Responsible Person
- Registered Unit Manager
- Senior Practitioner
- 5 Care Officers

5.2 Part time

- Waking Night Care Officer – 30 hours
- Administrator – 30 hours
- Domestic – 30 hours
- 2 x Care Officers – 20 hours each

5.3 The Registered Unit Manager Samantha Whitehouse is based full time at Larchwood and is line managed by the Team Manager, Lou Richer of the Children's Specialist Support Team, who is managed by the Head of Service, Sonia Johnson, (the named 'responsible person' for Larchwood).

5.4 All employees have undertaken the required statutory training, and additional training is provided in accordance with need. We have three joint team meetings with the Children's Specialist Support Team per year, and the next one is planned for 27th June 2017.

5.5 The overall training experiences for staff include -

- Child Sexual Exploitation

- E-safety
- Fire Safety
- Team Teach
- Information Security and Data Protection
- Information handling
- Epilepsy
- Food Hygiene
- Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Manual Handling
- Prevent
- Motivation and Team Morale
- Managing Resilience

6 Developments/plans for the year ahead

- 6.1** This year Larchwood will be working more closely with Adult Social Care colleagues to further enhance our provisions for adolescents approaching adulthood and young adults. This will be an exciting piece of work which may result in joint ventures for 16-25yr olds with the potential use of staffing from each team. This forward thinking initiative will benefit those young people and their families approaching adulthood.
- 6.2** Along side this ensuring that Larchwood contributes too embrace the recommendations and opportunities that arise from the CYPL Transformation programme.

Samantha Whitehouse
Registered Unit Manager

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Team Manager

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Responsible Individual

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