

Annex 1
LARCHWOOD SHORT BREAK UNIT STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2014



This document fulfils the requirements of Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5: Children's Homes (2011), Children's Homes: National Minimum Standards (2011) and requirements from The Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013.

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INTRODUCTION

Larchwood Short Break Unit has been in existence since 1977 and has evolved over the years to meet the changing needs of children with disabilities and their families.

Bracknell Forest Council and Larchwood as an establishment are committed to the principles of narrowing the gap for every disabled child. We have, and continue to improve the range of services and the experiences that children with disabilities and complex health needs and their families receive from Larchwood. This has involved significantly increasing the number and range of short breaks, not just for those carers struggling to maintain their caring role, but also to routinely help parents and carers to maintain and improve the quality of care they naturally wish to provide.

Larchwood Short Break Unit provides in the region of 18,000 hours of short breaks per year to children with disabilities and as such represents the largest provider of short breaks for disabled children within Bracknell Forest. The unit has increasingly focussed on aspirations and outcomes for individuals, working on specific targets and experiences whilst attending Larchwood.

Along side this Larchwood assist with enabling the smooth transition of young people who have received a service from Larchwood over to Adult Social Care. In particular Larchwood works closely with Waymead Short Term Care Unit, a local resource for adults with learning disabilities, and has developed a transitional link to ensure joint working and successful outcomes.

SERVICES PROVIDED

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

The main aim of the unit is to make a positive difference to the personal, social and learning lives of the children and young people who attend. Larchwood offer planned short breaks for children/young people, tailored to meet individual Needs. Creating a positive environment where children are offered experiences and opportunities to assist with achieving their aspirations and outcomes

Children and Young people are supported to aspire to the continuous development of knowledge, understanding and skills, whilst being safe, socialising with friends and having fun. Larchwood use a holistic, person centred approach to the care and development of children and young people and endeavour to ensure that they are enabled to overcome barriers, whatever and wherever these may be.

Larchwood staff work in co production with the child, their families and professionals involved with each child, to ensure that children's can achieve and enjoy in accordance with their wishes and to the best of their ability.

Parents and siblings are also provided with a short break from caring for their child/young person. There is therefore a beneficial effect for both parent and child. The unit has access to, and works closely with the Aiming High Behavioural Specialist, who is supervised by an Educational psychologist. This ensures a consistent approach to children's behavioural needs in all relevant settings.

The Unit is situated in a quiet residential area close to the town centre, local leisure resources and facilities. The accommodation is all on the ground floor and there is appropriate access to all areas. Larchwood has developed links with the Local

Community support Police Officer as part of our partnership working, consulting with them and others relevant to review our Environmental Risk Assessment every year

Facilities in the Unit include an adapted bath, fixed and mobile hoisting equipment, a sensory room and fully accessible gardens which include specialist sensory and play equipment.

Larchwood provides weekend, school holiday day-care and after-school care for children of both genders aged Five years old up to a young persons 18th birthday.

Larchwood is registered for five beds with additional three spaces per day for after school visits or day care. Larchwood can offer a maximum of eight day care places when no children are staying overnight.

The team offers a high standard of care in a child-focused environment. Providing a range of activities and opportunities both in house and within the community.

The unit works to ensure continuity of care patterns and consistency within the peer group settings. In exceptional circumstances due to urgent and unforeseen need, variances to children's packages may be necessary, e.g. parental illness or other unanticipated emergencies.

ELIGIBILITY

The Larchwood service is designed for children with complex needs who have a learning and/or physical disability. Eligibility for the service is based on the outcome of a Children's Services and Resource Allocation Assessment and in line with the Local Authorities Children's Services Department's published policy for access to children's services. (For guidance on Access to Children's Social Care Services and the Multi-Agency Needs/Risks Matrix. See <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/access-to-childrens-social-care-services.pdf>

In accordance with the Council's overall policy for the support and care of all children and young people requiring accommodation services, before considering placing a young child aged under 10 years in a residential setting such as Larchwood every effort will be made to arrange an alternative within the community such as short break carers in the local area or the use of direct payments.

The service will only be provided to children below the age of 10 years in exceptional circumstances with the prior agreement of the Head of Service.

The unit offers a culture that unconditionally values each child and respects their individual cultural background. <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/access-to-childrens-social-care-services.pdf>

CHILDREN USING THE SERVICE

A maximum of five children/young people receive a residential service from the unit at any one time. Some children/young people may come for an after school visit on one afternoon per week, and others may come for as many as three or four nights per month.

In 2013/14 twenty seven children/young people are using the service on a regular basis.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Larchwood takes referrals primarily from within Bracknell Forest but will also consider referrals from Windsor other local authorities.

All children eligible to attend Larchwood will have a social work assessment. Following assessment and in co production with the child and their family the child/young person's needs and outcomes will be identified, and a proposed support package developed which may include short break or day services from Larchwood.

Referrals based on assessments from other authorities are discussed with the Unit Manager, Disabled Children's Team Manager and Head of Service at a Referrals Meeting to ensure they are in keeping with the stated aims of Larchwood, and appropriate to the needs of the child/young person. Admission to Larchwood must be approved by the Head of Service, Specialist Support.

After a referral is accepted, a link-worker is identified from the Larchwood staff team. He/she then makes contact with the family. The child/young person and his or her family are invited to visit the unit, and the link-worker carries out a home visit to gather the information necessary to write a care plan and formulate an initial risk assessment. Following this, a formal multi professional planning meeting will be held. The care plan, risk assessment and other relevant documents are finalised at this meeting and introductory visits arranged.

The unit does not specifically hold an emergency bed. However Children and young people requiring care in a severe emergency would be considered through the appropriate social care team.

1) CARING FOR CHILDREN

THE LARCHWOOD PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

At Larchwood we strive to provide children/young people, their families and carers with a flexible and high quality short break care service where we aim to improve the independence and life chances for children and young people by working in a multi-agency approach to ensure that they are able to reach their full potential and achieve positive life outcomes. At the last Ofsted inspection Larchwood was graded as a "Good" Unit with outstanding" features.

We strive to be inclusive and sensitive to individual needs and aspirations, of children, young people and their families.

We also aim to be family orientated, and culturally competent, respectful of children and young people who have a diverse range of needs and backgrounds.

The philosophy of care at Larchwood is based on guidance laid out in the Children Act 1989, Volume Six, Children with Disabilities. This states that children and young people should be provided with services which are designed to minimise the effects of their disability and are given the opportunity to lead lives that are as normal as possible. (Schedule 2, paragraph 9).

Working under this philosophy the unit adopts the following principles described in volume six of the above guidance.

- The welfare of the child/young person should be safeguarded and promoted by those providing the service.
- A primary aim should be to promote access for all children and young people to the same range of services.
- Disabled children are children first.
- The importance of parents and families in children's lives must be recognised.
- There must be effective partnership between parents, Local Authorities and other agencies.
- The views of the children/young people and parents should be sought and taken into account.

The aim of Bracknell Forest Council is to facilitate Larchwood to provide an integrated service, and a more flexible approach to working with children/young people with a disability and their families. To provide services to meet the needs of children and to ensure that we monitor the impact / outcomes to that aim.

This unit has been actively involved in the development of services to achieve positive outcomes across the service to disabled children/young people and will continue to be involved in future development and business planning of services for children with disabilities.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Children and Young People are regularly consulted with about their stays at Larchwood and how they would like the service to develop. Larchwood recognises that Children and Young people should have opportunities/choice and control where appropriate. The 'Titans' is Larchwood's participation group, providing feedback to the management team about the unit on a regular basis.

Meals are provided for the children/young people based on choice, individual likes, dislikes and special diets. Children/young people who stay overnight are offered three meals a day, with drinks and snacks. Children/young people attending for day-care are required to bring a packed lunch. Children's diets are considered as part of Larchwood's overall commitment to healthy living.

Personal care is carried out by support workers on shift who follow agreed care profiles to ensure each child/young person's needs are met in the most appropriate manner. Risk assessments covering intimate personal care, bathing and showering are an integral part of a child/young persons care profile.

A link-worker is assigned to each child/young person on referral. Their role is to assist with the admission process; liaise with the family, collate and monitor the child/young person's care profile, carry out risk assessments, and support them through their placement at the unit.

Laundry facilities are provided. All clothes for children/young people staying overnight will be laundered, unless parent/carers request otherwise.

Provision of play equipment and outings is a key aspect of the service. A wide range of play activities are provided. These include art, games, puzzles, sensory toys. The Unit has a secure garden and play area to the rear of the building. Facilities include a trampoline, climbing frame, swings, water play and outdoor toys.

The indoor sensory room provides a space for children and young people to enjoy a range of sensory activities in a calm and relaxing environment.

The Unit has access to a mini bus and drivers, which are used to provide a variety of outings and enable the children/young people to access local community facilities.

The Unit is kept secure by having an electronic door alarm on all external doors and a key pad exit lock on the play room and residential area exit. These measures are designed to enhance the children/young person's safety and welfare which is reflected in our Building Risk Assessment. Young people are able to use the voice switch to request access to alternative areas in the unit.

CHILD CARE REVIEWS

All children/young people attending Larchwood Short Break Unit including those accessing overnight accommodation are reviewed every six months in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements, and as part of the overall package of support.

The children/young people are encouraged to participate in their reviews and complete a Larchwood consultation paper with their link workers. Those that are unable to participate as effectively due to their disability are supported via their social workers using ipad technology or videos. An appropriate range of communication aids and techniques are used to maximise the contribution of the child to the review. Link-workers maintain achievement folders, which document a child's progress at Larchwood and are used to inform the review process which is also recorded on the young person electronic file.

LARCHWOOD INSPECTIONS

Regulation 33

In line with new regulations Children Social Care will no longer carry out regulation 33 visits. A member of the Performance Management & Governance team for Children Young People & Learning, Bracknell Forest will undertake an unannounced inspection of Larchwood each month to comply with Regulation 33 of the National Minimum Standards Children's Home Regulations 2011. Some of these visits will be carried out with another individual either a professional partner or a Bracknell Forest councillor.

During 2014 we will undertake further work to develop the involvement of parents and young people in this work.

As a matter of good practice 'inspection' during these visits is broad and covers aspects such as monitoring the use of restraint, ensuring health and safety procedure is being adhered to and meeting staff and young people. An outcomes report is completed and an action plan which is implemented and stored in the unit.

Regulation 34

The Registered Manager will undertake the regulation 34 audits and monitoring including reporting to Ofsted every 3 months. Regulation 34 provides an opportunity for the Registered Manager to ensure that the regulation 33 feedback is used as one of the mechanisms to ensure Larchwood is a continually developing service.

Ofsted

Ofsted is responsible for ensuring Larchwood meets the necessary standards of care and practice to be registered as a care setting for children and young people. There is a minimum expectation of 2 unannounced inspections per annum. When published, copies of Ofsted inspection reports are available on application to the unit or can be found on the Ofsted website.

(See http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_providers/list/)

ANTI BULLYING

Bracknell Forest Council has an anti bullying coordinator who can be contacted for advice as necessary. The unit aims to maintain an open culture with respect to prevention of bullying. It is important for staff to be aware of the issues of bullying either within the unit or at school. All children and young people are expected to respect and value each other.

Should staff become aware that an individual is experiencing bullying they will offer immediate support and promptly address the needs of all concerned.

Larchwood will not tolerate any form of bullying within the staff team. Any concerns staff raise about bullying will be taken seriously by managers.

Anti-bullying measures in place include:

- Careful observation and monitoring
- Staff guidance on bullying
- Being vigilant in the link worker role
- Being aware of the signs and symptoms
- Raising concerns with parents/schools

It is important to maintain open links with other parties involved with the child/young person to ensure a clear and accurate exchange of information at all times.

MISSING CHILD/ UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE OF A CHILD FROM LARCHWOOD

The children/young people at Larchwood are closely supervised on a 1:1 or 1:2, and where there is concern that a child or young person may leave the building this is discussed and a risk assessment carried out immediately. Should a child or young person go missing staff will follow procedures as contained in the Larchwood Staff Guidance file. Children are encouraged to share their feelings with staff and we have tools available to support them. Staff will use words, Makaton and symbols to communicate effectively to prevent any incidents of a child or young person becoming missing from Larchwood.

Owing to the vulnerable nature of the children/young people who use the service, the police will be notified immediately in the unlikely event that a child or young person absconds or leaves the building without permission.

Larchwood have a “Children Missing from Larchwood or Absconding when off the premises Policy” that focuses on the prevention rather than action taken in the event. Any child found to be missing from Larchwood or from the care of staff whilst out must be treated as a serious incident and responded to with urgency. The senior shift co-ordinator initiates and co-ordinates the response.

As soon as a child or young person is found to be missing or whereabouts are not known. A brief initial search of the immediate area should be made.

Following a brief search or sooner where it is clear the child or young person has left the building or care of staff, the Police will be informed immediately by 999 call. Do not delay this action whilst continuing further searching.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Larchwood is subject to the Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures, which is constantly updated online <http://proceduresonline.com/berks/> and to all other Local Safeguarding Children Board approved guidance and policy.

Promoting children’s welfare and safety is paramount to the all services provided for example

- . Countering Bullying
- . Behaviour Support / Management
- . Additional Measures of Control
- . Unauthorised Absences / Missing From Care
- . Investigating and Recording Significant Events
- . Health & Safety
- . Fire Regulations

Safeguarding training forms part of the initial induction process for all staff and is discussed in staff meetings as a regular topic.

The safety and welfare of the children/young people is paramount. The staff at Larchwood will liaise with the social worker and parents (where appropriate) if there are any concerns for a child’s safety. All staff attend Child Protection training and all have attended training specifically relating to the safety of disabled children and young people.

Any Child Protection concerns about a child/young person are brought to the manager’s attention immediately, recorded on the child’s electronic file, and referred to the relevant Social Worker or Duty Team as necessary.

Larchwood works closely with parents, other agencies and services where a child is assessed as being at risk and subject to child protection procedures, and staff are often involved in ongoing monitoring, liaison, report and assessment work, and attending relevant conferences and core group meetings.

RECOGNITION OF CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC NEEDS

All the children/young people who receive a service from Larchwood are valued as individuals, with different needs and individual rights.

The values deriving from different backgrounds are recognised and respected at all times. Staff working with children/young people are encouraged to value and respect different needs within a multicultural society. The unit also aims to recognise different needs within the care planning process.

Specific religious/cultural needs are identified on the care plan, and staff aim to meet these in the most appropriate way in consultation with the child and parents.

Special dietary needs are recognised, and are included in the menu planning process.

Within the unit there are a number of resources which recognise ethnic and cultural differences, and allow the children and young people to explore these through play. They include books, posters, toys, games and cultural evenings. Support workers encourage children/young people to question and celebrate differences.

Within the new induction standards and through ongoing training, including NVQ, support workers are encouraged to consider diversity and good practice. There is clear information on children/young people's rights, and the staff are encouraged through supervision, training and meetings to reflect the rights and needs of the children/young people.

PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Bracknell Forest Council and Larchwood are committed to the principles of The Human Rights Act 1998, The Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to children. Children with a disability are vulnerable their needs and interests need to be heard and used in decision making. Larchwood use every opportunity to promote the rights of children with disabilities to improve children's lives and social status.

Within the principle of equal opportunities, all young people have rights. At Larchwood children and young people have the right to:

- Be treated with respect, as a real person whatever their age.
- Be treated fairly whatever - their age, their race, their disability, their religion, what church they go to, or what clothes they wear.
- Be listened to when people are making plans about their future.
- Be able to go to School.
- Be in good health.
- Be able to complain if I am unhappy or worried about something, like being bullied, abused or being picked on.
- Be able to have an advocate who can advise and help sort out matters when their stay is not going well.

- Be heard, particularly if residents feel they are being treated unfairly, are not being included in decisions about their life, if they disagree with a decision that has been made about them and if they feel they are being treated differently, picked on or bullied because of their race, gender, age, sexuality, disability, ethnic origin or for any other reason.
- Be looked after by staff supporting the above rights.

The concept of the 'best interests of the child' is paramount in the values of Larchwood.

Larchwood is committed to promoting the rights of disabled children and ensuring they are able to make a positive contribution. Children and young people are involved in decision making and planning about their care and wider service developments. During the last year service users meet with an independent consultant to obtain their views which are incorporated into the ongoing development and focus of provision in Bracknell Forest. One outcome of choice and control for this year is that young people have chosen the colours and fabrics for a redecoration of the Unit.

Children/young people are valued as individuals in their own right who have the right to access the community and its services without impediment. Larchwood staff actively promote inclusion by accessing mainstream activities such as going to the cinema and youth clubs in the community.

The Friday night teenage group meet as the 'Titans' on a fortnightly basis to discuss topics and issues affecting their lives, to plan and deliver special outings and trips with support from the staff team.

The Unit supports the social model of disability and works to uphold the principles in working with disabled children/young people.

The children/young people are encouraged to complete a Larchwood consultation form prior to reviews and workers use a range of communication aids and techniques to help children communicate their views.

We have good links with our local Child Participation Development Officer (CPDO). Links are developing with the Looked After Children's Council (Silsip) as some of the children who use Larchwood are Looked After.

The CPDO offers opportunities for young people to have their say on the development and delivery of services that affect them through facilitation of SiLSiP (Say it Loud Say it Proud), Bracknell's Children in Care Council. All children in care are members of SiLSiP, but a small cohort attends regular monthly meetings. This enables looked after children and young people to have their say on what's good and what can be improved about the service they receive. The CPDO has visited Larchwood and representatives from SiLSiP have also visited young people. This is so that they can begin to make links with other young people who receive services and gather views from those who may not be able to attend regular meetings. We are hoping with the support of young people this initial meeting will develop into regular contact between the groups.

A Children's Guide to the service at Larchwood is available offering text and photographic description of the building and environment. There is also a DVD available which shows and explains the service offered.

ADVOCACY

Under section 26A of the Children Act 1989 the Local Authority is under a duty to make arrangements for the provision of advocacy to children and young people making or intending to make representations (including complaints).

Children and young people who want or require an advocate can access advocacy and support from both within the Council and/ or from a number of preferred providers. Referrals can be made via workers, directly to the CPDO or from young people themselves. Information leaflets are displayed in Larchwood and staff have access to a bi-annual induction session on participation and advocacy led by the CPDO and Action for Children. In relation to children and young people accessing Larchwood both Wokingham and Bracknell District Mencap and Action for Children are available to young people if they wish or require advocacy support.

Where a child or young person at Larchwood requires support to express their views or make a complaint they will be provided with the available options. Children and young people may prefer to be supported by someone they know, for example within Larchwood at their six month children in need review and where possible this will be supported.

LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICES AND NETWORKS

The unit aims to work closely with partners to ensure that the service to the child/young person is well co-ordinated between the different professionals involved and tailored to their particular needs. The unit seeks to ensure in all areas of its work that open communication is developed and encouraged through a variety of forums such as liaison meetings, joint team meetings and multi-agency training days.

We facilitate parent/careers coffee mornings at Larchwood once a month, parental consultation groups are held from time to time and the bi-monthly Parent Carer Dialogue Group is attended by Larchwood representatives.

Wherever possible Multi agency forums are used to inform development and planning and joint initiatives are encouraged.

TRANSITION

The transition to adulthood is recognised as a significant time in a young persons and families life. Larchwood has a close working relationship with Waymead Short Term Care Unit for adults with learning disabilities and we have our own identified transition worker who attends some of there staff meetings to ensure a smooth transition and flow of information. The unit manager meets quarterly with the transition worker from CTPLD (community team for people with learning difficulties) and the manager of Waymead to discuss identified young people coming into transition. Transition planning starts from around the age of 14.

THE FUTURE

We continue to run the travel training scheme and have recently made links with the local college.

The sleep clinic service is still developing, to date we have worked intensively with 3 families and run a number of workshops for parenting groups.

2) CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Larchwood operates within the Bracknell Forest Council Behaviour Management Policy Statement and Guidance. The document was reviewed in April 2014 and all staff receive training annually. The children/young people's behaviour care plans are updated every six months and agreed and signed off by parents/carers.

Measures of control used at Larchwood are those approved by the local authority and as specified in the Children Act '89

The Policy has a strong emphasis on preventative strategies and partnership and the unit liaise closely with the families, the Aiming High Behavioural Support Team and other relevant professionals to look at specific behaviours, and identify the most appropriate way to help the child/young person manage their behaviour.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- It is the responsibility of the whole staff team to support the development of a caring and supportive ethos
- Larchwood has zero tolerance of bullying and racial and sexual harassment
- Fairness and natural justice must underpin the use of rewards and sanctions
- There must be a consistent use of above by all members of staff
- The staff must actively promote positive behaviour but deal with inappropriate behaviour, including seeking to understand any underlying causes
- We recognise that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, not the child
- We use praise and positive reinforcement; we provide children with replacement behaviours and strategies
- Induction procedures should include reference to behaviour, discrimination and bullying matters
- Learning behaviour and achievement should be recognised and acknowledged
- Whilst there will be reactive responses to incidents staff will also plan to actively promote appropriate behaviour.
- Good social behaviour at Larchwood should be recognised and acknowledged

Staffs always try to divert the children/young people from behaviour that is unacceptable, using methods agreed in individual care plans.

Staff will focus on positive reinforcement, modelling appropriate behaviour and redirection/distraction strategies.

At all times staff will try to ensure that the behaviour of one child does not harm another. A distressed child/young person may be supported by either withdrawing them from the group or vice-versa to enable a time for calming down.

All staff receive training annually by an external trainer in “Team Teach” which includes a strong emphasis on divert and distract techniques, and keeping the environment as safe as possible.

Should any child or young person need any type of physical intervention it is recorded on their electronic file which alerts their social worker and the record of physical interventions book. Accident and incidents are reported on line, which are then worked through to senior management. Significant issues are raised in senior manager meetings. Parents/carers are notified as soon as practicable and appropriate. Support workers also record the young person response / views on the incident and any impact.

Risk assessments are carried out with relevant people involved to identify potential areas of difficulty, and look at the best ways of managing them. These risk assessments are maintained electronically and also on an individual's care folder and outing file.

The use of restraint is rare and recorded in detail. This is monitored by both the managers within Larchwood and through the monthly Regulation 33 visits by a Senior Manager from Children Social Care.

A copy of the Bracknell Forest Council Behaviour Management Policy Statement and Guidance is available on request from Larchwood.

3) ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTACT

Parents are welcome to contact Larchwood at any time during their child's visit. No child/young person can be collected, into the care of a person not known to Larchwood staff without prior authorisation from the family. Larchwood will require a person not known to them collecting a child to produce evidence of identity.

Larchwood operates an “open door” visiting policy, and, subject to any legal orders, contact can be made with a child/young person at any time during their stay. Due to the fact that many of our activities include outings outside of the unit, parents and carers are advised to notify staff beforehand if they are intending to visit, in order to ensure the child/young person is in the unit.

Children and young people are able to call their families at any time, staff will support this if necessary.

4) EDUCATION

Children/young people during their stay at Larchwood continue to attend school as part of their daily routine. School transport will be consistent with that at home to ensure continuity. Children's escorts have a good relationship with staff in the unit and ensure that any communication from school or home is conveyed to staff.

Schools attended in the local area include:-

- Kennel Lane School (Bracknell)
- Manor Green (Maidenhead)
- Addington School (Lower Earley)

- Heathermount (Ascot)

Some families of children/young people have a home/ school/ Larchwood diary to help ensure a consistency of care between all carers and for information sharing. In all cases there is always a close liaison between Larchwood and families.

The importance of education is acknowledged and children/young people occasionally bring homework into the unit to complete. Staff assist with this where necessary, and they are encouraged to complete tasks. There is a wide range of books available in the unit, which children can access. Children/young people who are unable to read often enjoy looking at books, and enjoy stories being read to them.

In addition to books there are a number of other resources to support education. These include a computer with an iPad, games, toys, art activities, cooking etc.

Staff liaise with schools where possible to gain information on the child's progress, and often attend school reviews. Staff make visits to the schools to maintain contact, and look at any common areas of difficulty. A link person from Larchwood is usually invited to attend liaison meetings at Kennel Lane School.

Assisting children to achieve is a significant part of the units function.

5) HEALTH

HEALTH PROMOTION & MEDICATION

A number of the children/young people who come to the unit have a range of additional health problems. These may include epilepsy, chest or heart conditions. Health issues and concerns are identified in the child/young person's care plan, and emergency procedures are written if necessary.

Many of the children/young people take medication, for which there is a 'Larchwood Safe Administration of Children's Medication Policy and Practice Guidance', this is reviewed and implemented in consultation with the community nursing team. If a child/young person are unwell while at the unit, parents will be informed and asked for guidance on what they wish to happen. It is expected that a child will return home if unwell.

Staff are all aware of the need to promote healthy living, and actively assist the children/young people in daily hygiene routines, dental care, food and menu choices. Health is also explored through play, stories and activities.

Occasionally, we have children who need to be observed during the night using an audio monitor. When this is the case agreement is sought from parents, social worker and the unit manager and a consent form is signed. The child or young person is made aware when the monitor is switched on and off each time using words, Makaton or symbols as appropriate to them.

Children/young people who have complex health needs are only able to access the service with prior agreement of the Primary Care Trust. It is the responsibility of the trust to provide a suitably qualified nurse to support that young person whilst in the unit. Currently there are no children needing this service. .

In order for Larchwood to adhere to the requirement of the Care Standards Act 2000, the local medication policy and approved procedures and to ensure safety of children/young people plus avoidance of errors, there are important instructions that parents, carers and staff must be aware of and follow when children stay at Larchwood: These are:

- All prescribed medication must be in the original bottle/box with the pharmacy label intact and unaltered. This label should have on it;
Name of the child/young person
Name and strength of medication
Dosage of medication
Times to be given
Current expiry date
Labels marked as directed or as before are not acceptable
- Always ensure there is enough medication for the child/young person's stay.
- Always ensure that any medication prescribed as required for the child/young person is sent in for each stay.
- Staff cannot change the dosage of medication administered to children/young people on the instructions of parents. It can only be varied under instruction from a qualified medical professional.
- Under no circumstances can another person's medication be administered to a child/young person.
- If any non-prescribed ('over the counter') medication is sent in parents must sign a consent form before medication can be given.
- It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that the above is followed. Otherwise, it may be necessary to require that a parent/carer attends the unit to administer medication or the child/young person will be returned home.

A copy of the Safe Administration of Children's Medication Policy and Practice Guidance is available on request from Larchwood.

CARE AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Larchwood is one of a number of services being provided for a child/young person, the unit work in partnership with the child's family and other providers to ensure the care provided is appropriate.

In order to maintain a consistent care plan a multi agency model is used, to include- :

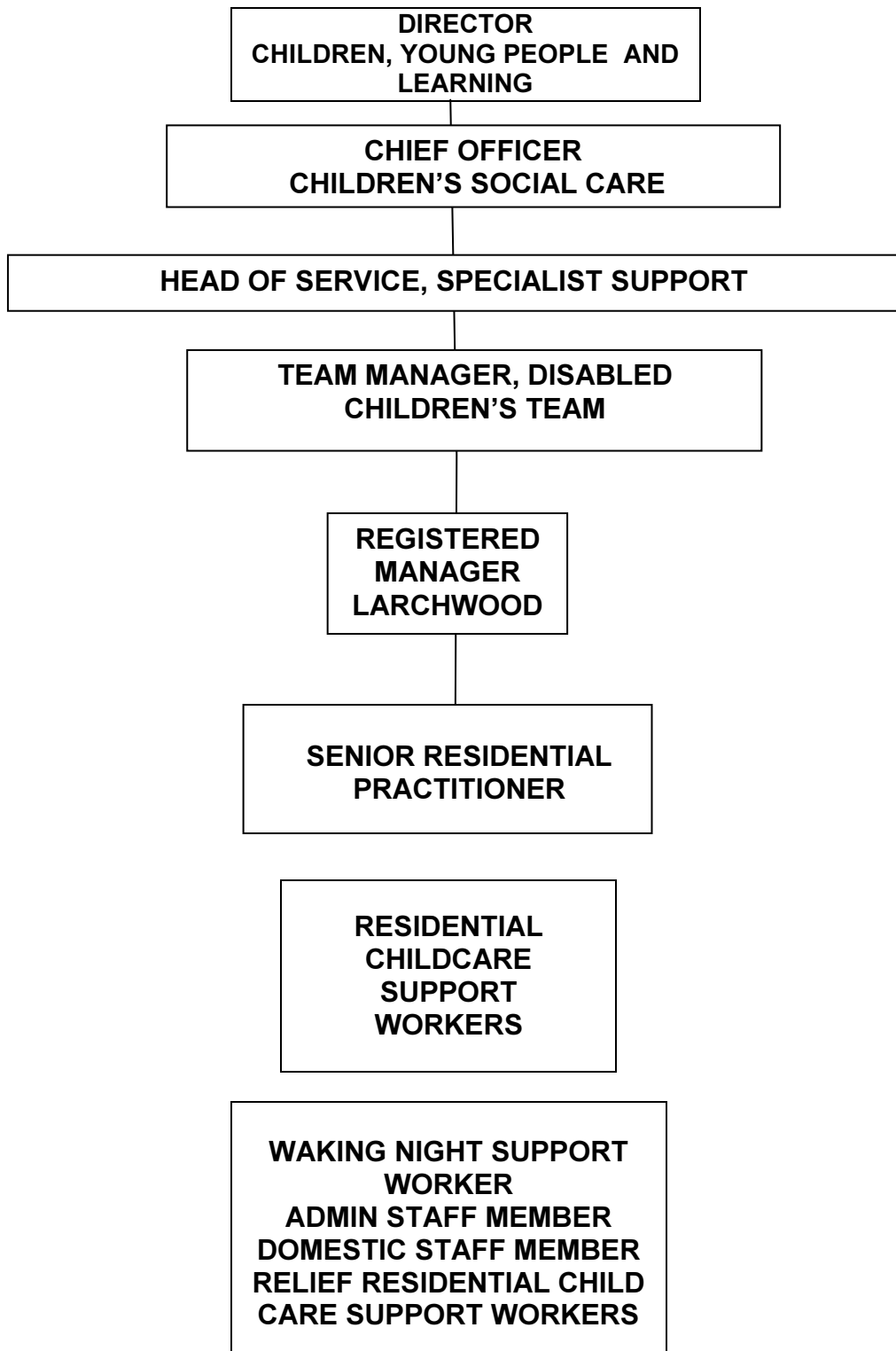
- Individual contact with Social Workers and Behavioural Specialist
- Regular liaison with the school
- Regular liaison with Children's Community Nursing Team and other health professionals as appropriate
- Link-worker liaison with the family
- School reviews
- 6-monthly review of care plan and risk assessment
- Child consultation and participation forms

Should a child/young person or family member wish to access their records the Department has a policy on access to records which can be instigated following a

written request to the Local Authority. This can be via the manager at Larchwood or the local authority's website.

6) STAFFING MATTERS

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



CHANGES IN STAFFING STRUCTURE SINCE 2013

We have successfully appointed a new full time member of staff this year. A decision was made to enable a full time staff member become part time to attend college. With an existing part time vacancy a full time post was created.

A new head of service was appointed early last year and has completed the registration as the responsible individual for the service.

The current full-time unit manager returned to post in May 2014 after taking maternity leave

STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN THE UNIT

The staff team work on a shift rotation basis. In the event of staff being absent due to sickness or annual leave relief staff are employed who know the children and young people using the service and can provide consistency of care.

Agency staff are very occasionally used in the event of no other staff being available to work. At these times every endeavour is made to use agency staff who are familiar with the unit and the children who attend. Staffing arrangements are made with regard to the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2011. The number of sessions of agency staff used in 2012 was 134 this was due to a number of children requiring an increase in staffing levels to a 2:1 ratio

At present, seven of the staff team are female and two are male, providing appropriate gender role models for the children/young people.

All full time staff within the unit have monthly supervision, part-time and bank staff are supervised regularly pro-rotta and there is an annual appraisal system to ensure personal and professional development.

There is a high commitment to training in the unit. This is reflected in the profiles of the staff and their care practice.

STAFF ROLES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Team Manager, Disabled Children, is responsible for the supervision of the Registered Manager and is accountable along with the Registered Manager for ensuring that a high standard of care is maintained within the unit, and that the unit's resources are effectively deployed within budget.

The Team Manager's Qualifications are:

- Chartered Management Institute Diploma in Leadership & Management.
- Certificate of Qualification in Social Work
- Practice Teaching Award
- PQ Child Care Awards
- Sleep clinic counsellor qualification

The Registered Manager is responsible for the day to day operational management of the unit.

The Registered Manager's Qualifications are:

- ❑ NVQ 5 in Management
- ❑ ILM level 5 Award in Management
- ❑ NVQ 3 in Nursery Nursing
- ❑ NVQ 3 in Team Leading

Experience: Extensive experience of managing a respite setting and the team within, many years of working with disabled children

The Senior Residential Practitioner supports the Registered Manager and has the following qualifications:

- ❑ Post Graduate Certificate in Education (secondary) with QTS
- ❑ Practice Teaching Award
- ❑ Diploma in Counselling
- ❑ N.Q.4 in Management.

Experience: Extensive experience of working with both disabled and mainstream children and young people in education, respite and residential settings

Qualifications among our staff team include:

- N.V.Q. Level 3 Social Care
- Social work qualification
- Advanced Diploma in Child Care and Education Level 4
- Team Teach qualifications
- Qualification for driving the mini bus.
- Makaton

Experience among our staff team include:

- Mental Health awareness
- Knowledge of the Webster Stratton Parenting Course and how to support families with this strategy.
- Delivering Youth work services with children overseas
- Nursing experience of adults and children including discharge care planning
- Supporting adults with learning disabilities in their own and group homes to live more independently.
- Post qualifying experience in nursing
- Teaching assistant in a special needs school
- Extensive experience of working with adults with disabilities in a residential setting.
- 15 years social work experience

The Larchwood team as a whole has extensive experience of working with disabled children with behaviour that can be challenging. Most of the staff have worked at Larchwood for over 10 years.

Currently there are no commissioned staff to provide Education or health services to the young people

TRAINING

All staff have completed a wide range of training both in-house and through the Bracknell Forest Council training department. This includes: Safe Guarding, Epilepsy, Communication, Team Teach, Moving and Handling, Behaviour Management, Fire Safety, Risk Assessment, IT skills, Food Hygiene, Medication Administration and First Aid. Additional training, in particular from health, has been arranged to manage those children with individual complex needs.

SUPERVISION

Full-time care staff are provided with supervision regularly on a monthly basis in line with Care Standards Act 2000 and Children's Homes Regulations 2011. Relief or agency care staff receive supervision in accordance with their participation within the unit.

New staff receive a comprehensive Bracknell Forest Induction and are also required to complete the 'Bracknell Forest Child Workforce Development Council (CWDC) Induction Standards' workbook. Supervision is provided fortnightly as a minimum for the first six months and monthly thereafter as specified in the Children's Social Care Supervision Policy. In addition to supervision, there is a regular staff meeting every month (excluding school holiday times). This session is used to inform and update staff on departmental matters, discuss any day to day running issues, and to carry out team supervision, discussing a case or a concern in a problem-solving manner. Guest speakers are sometimes invited to team meetings. Team Days are held on a quarterly basis and are used for training and team-building as required. Larchwood staff and staff from the Disabled Children's team have recently had a joint away day (March 2014)

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND MONITORING

Larchwood follow Bracknell Forest Council policy, safer workforce practice and safer recruitment guidance when recruiting staff.

Applicants who wish to work within the unit are subject to the following recruitment procedures: -

- Application forms are viewed by a minimum of two senior members of staff, one of whom is at least second line manager for the post to be recruited to. A short list is formulated, ensuring all applicants meet the person specification and fulfil the essential requirements
- Applicants are invited to the unit for an informal visit, to allow them the opportunity to meet the children (under staff supervision), look around and ask questions about the job.
- On the day of the formal interview applicants are asked to complete a written exercise and undertake a formal interview lasting approximately one hour.
- References are followed up as soon as possible, and a verbal reference is obtained from the present/previous employer.

- Applicants are subject to a number of checks including social services checks, health monitoring and Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (POCA) checks.
- Applicants are not permitted to commence work until all checks and references have proven satisfactory.
- New staff are then monitored through a number of systems including the probation period, induction and supervision.
- Children and young people and their family play an active part within recruitment process, this takes a variety of forms and has included being part of the interview through to showing candidates around the unit.

A copy of the Recruitment Policy is available on request from Larchwood.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Unit follows Health and Safety procedures as laid out in the Bracknell Forest Health & Safety Manual. The unit has a trained health and safety representative who monitors health and safety within the unit, and attends meetings with the Health and Safety representatives from Bracknell Forest Council.

All staff receive additional training in health and safety issues including Food Hygiene and Moving & Handling and are encouraged to promote good health and safety practice at all times. The unit has a clear fire procedure, which entails one member of staff per shift being the allocated fire person who would take a lead in the event of the fire alarm going off. All staff receive regular Fire Safety training.

Health and Safety is raised as a regular agenda item at staff meetings, and accident / incident forms are discussed and monitored by the manager and child's link- worker.

DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

Bracknell Forest Council has a complaints procedure, copies of which are available in the unit for the children/young people and/or their families.

Larchwood also has its own Children's guide which offers information on how to make a complaint and where to find support in doing so.

Larchwood is committed to receiving and acting upon feedback from service users, whether this is positive or indicating dissatisfaction with the services provided. Complaints and compliments are monitored by the Regulation 33 visits each month and the Complaints Manager.

The unit has a separate telephone line for children and young people to access should they wish to complain directly to the Complaints Manager, or to the Head of Service Specialist Support.

Children and their families are also able to make a complaint to Ofsted.

Enquiries should be addressed to:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate

Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

0300 1231231
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

**Sonia Johnson, Responsible individual
May 2014**

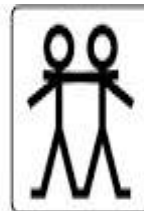
LARCHWOOD

Summary of the Statement of purpose for Children and Young people



Larchwood provides Children and Young People with a short break away.

This is a safe place where you can have fun and meet new friends



Some children stay for tea

Some children stay over night



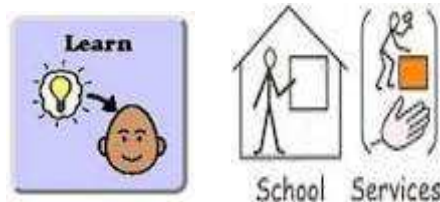
Larchwood staff are there to listen to you, help you and make sure you are safe



Larchwood staff can help you be healthy



Larchwood can help you with homework and learning



Larchwood can help you achieve your goals



If you are worried about Larchwood or have an idea



Phone 01344 352020



Ask for Sam

Whitehouse Unit Manager / Sonia Johnson Head of Service.

Or email - Childrens.SocialCare@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk

