

LARCHWOOD SHORT BREAK CHILDRENS HOME STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2020



This document fulfils the requirements of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 Schedule 1, the Department for Education Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards April 2015 and the Social Care Common Inspection Framework April 2017.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The statement of purpose is a requirement of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations, April 2015.
- 1.2 It is not a brochure, it is a manual that is used by all those who have an interest in the service. It performs a task for those internal and external to the home.
 - It connects the needs of the child with the aims and objectives of the setting.
 - It connects the home's definition of good practice and the clear objectives through which that practice can be achieved.
 - It connects policy with practice.
 - It connects the quality and range of services provided.
- 1.3 The statement of purpose is formally reviewed annually and approved by Bracknell Forest Council's Executive Member for Children and the Executive Director of People Services on an annual basis.
- 1.4 There is a more accessible guide for children

2 QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE

Statement of the range of needs

- 2.1 Larchwood is a short break Children's home, providing respite care for children who have complex needs, a learning and/or physical disability. The children and young people who access Larchwood require personal care, medication, behavioural support and support with learning and achievements.

Aim and Ethos of the home

- 2.2 Great and aspirational care is taken of the children who attend Larchwood. The service adopts an approach which is child centred and supports collaboration with all.
- 2.3 Larchwood plays an active part in delivering Bracknell Forests Council's People Directorate Vision

'People at the heart of our services

We are here to:

- *Protect you from harm if you need us*
- *Help you to get support so that you can be physically and emotionally healthy*
- *Work with you and your community to help you to be independent and resilient*

We'll do this by:

- *Focusing on quality practice*

- *Integrating services with partners*
- *Providing information & choice*
- *Focusing on what is most important'*

2.4 Larchwood achieves this by ensuring children have the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and positive experiences, which promote their development, whilst delivering sustainable support to the whole family. We believe that every child is an individual with the right to enjoy life within the community, appropriate to his or her age. Larchwood advocate respect, dignity and freedom of choice for all, working with future in mind.

2.5 We create a positive environment which promotes a 'friendship matters' culture, and where children and young people are offered experiences and opportunities to assist them with achieving their aspirations and goals in life.

Accommodation offered

2.6 Larchwood is registered with Ofsted and has five bedrooms meaning that a maximum of five children or young people can stay overnight, alongside those children who attend for tea or day visits. We ensure individuals have a choice of bedding and will purchase preferences to make them feel welcomed and valued.



Larchwood is a detached home. The accommodation is all on the ground floor with all areas accessible to people with mobility difficulties including wheelchair users..

2.7 Internal facilities include an adapted bath, fixed and mobile hoisting equipment, a sensory room and fully accessible and spacious gardens which include specialist sensory and play equipment.

- 2.8 The lounge and playrooms areas are light and spacious and contain a wide range of toys and activities for the children to access, maximising their opportunities to learn through play.



Location of Larchwood

- 2.9 Larchwood is based in Bracknell, Berkshire and is situated in a quiet residential area close to the town centre, local leisure resources, and two local parks. In close proximity to the home there are two supported living houses which accommodate adults with learning disabilities, offices which accommodate council employees and a number of private residential homes. Above the unit are four flats that provide temporary housing for families. The location of the unit has been formally assessed and there are no known significant risks in regard to location. There is ample parking close by, and the train station is within walking distance.

Arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children

- 2.10 The work done in advance of a child starting to stay at Larchwood is designed to ensure that everyone working with the child has the necessary information about a child's communication, cultural and religious needs and how those will be met.

- 2.11 Larchwood is inclusive and responsive to the 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. All the children/young people who receive a service from Larchwood are valued as individuals, with different needs and individual rights.
- 2.12 The values deriving from different backgrounds are recognised and respected at all times. Within the care planning process the team recognise different needs in relation to ethnicity, culture, religion, diet, gender identity and sexual orientation where they may exist.
- 2.13 Larchwood has a number of resources which recognise ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences, and support workers enable the children and young people to explore these through play. They include books, posters, toy figures, games, multi-cultural music and cultural events. Support workers encourage children/young people to question and celebrate differences through activities, role modelling and discussions.
- 2.14 Being part of Bracknell Forest Council, Larchwood has access to services that can provide translation of documents into other languages, braille and audio, and interpreters to attend reviews or meetings where necessary.
- 2.15 Special dietary needs and individual preferences are recognised, and are included in the menu planning process and the child's individual care plan
- 2.16 Larchwood celebrate special times of the year e.g. Eid, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Easter, St Patrick's Day etc. to help us understand all religions and cultures. We also make a special effort to celebrate children's birthdays. If a child or young person wishes to participate in any religious activities or observance, we will make arrangements within the home e.g. a quiet place to pray or read
- 2.17 People who work at Larchwood have knowledge of Makaton and PECS to assist communication with the child or young person. If the child or young person is able to communicate orally, support workers will listen and act upon what they say. Social stories and picture boards and iPads are also helpful ways for us to communicate with children and are used as necessary.



Arrangements for dealing with complaints

- 2.18 We encourage children and their families to be open and honest about any concerns or worries they have, and we listen and act upon any concerns promptly.
- 2.19 Complaints are responded to at the earliest opportunity and by the most appropriate person in accordance with Bracknell Forest Council's complaints procedure, copies of which are available in the reception area of Larchwood, or on the Bracknell Forest Council website.
- 2.20 Within Larchwood we have developed various ways in which children and young people can make formal and informal comments, observations, or complaints. These include;
- An accessible Children's Guide found at the entrance to the unit, which includes information on how to make a complaint and where to find support in doing so.
 - A post box system that is freely used within the lounge area, with a range of tools such as symbols and tick boxes to ensure varying levels of communication are catered for.
 - A children and young person's consultation form, which children are supported to complete before their reviews.
 - Children are also visited regularly by their Social Workers which offers a further independent opportunity to feedback in regards to the service they receive.
 - Visits from an independent Advocate
 - Consultation board in the entrance hall affording opportunities to communicate with the use of picture exchange communication systems (PECS), pictures and or switch buttons.
 - A visual book for support workers to record any observations they might make of non-verbal children communicating or expressing unhappiness or worries, in recognition of the significant difficulty these children have in making a complaint.

- 2.21 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 44 Independent Visitor each month, and by the Councils Complaints Manager.
- 2.22 The unit has a separate telephone line for children and young people to access should they wish to make a complaint.

Children and their families are also able to make a complaint to Ofsted or to the Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield (appointed March 2015) at:
Office of the Children's Commissioner
0800 528 0731
advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Or

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
0300 1231231
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

And or Bracknell Forest's Children's Services Complaints Manager:

Alison.Keeling@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

tel:01344 351682

[Access to the home's child protection and behaviour management policies](#)

- 2.23 Larchwood adheres to the Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures, a 'live' online document which can be found at:
<http://proceduresonline.com/berks/>
- 2.24 Alongside this Larchwood also has an approved bespoke safeguarding policy, which includes an easy to follow flow chart. This policy is available to support workers as a paper document in the policies and procedures folder, on a shared computer drive and available to children, young people, families, carers, professionals and others involved in the care and protection of a child upon request.
- 2.25 Larchwood also has a Behaviour Management Policy, available in the above formats and upon request.

3 VIEWS, WISHES AND FEELINGS

Consulting with Children and Young People

- 3.1 Regular consultation takes place with children and young people regarding their experience of Larchwood and how they would like the service to develop. Larchwood recognises that children and young people should be offered opportunities, choice and control at every appropriate opportunity.
- 3.2 Consultation is part of our everyday work however the below illustrates some of the other methods we use:
- The 'Larchwood Lions' - Larchwood's Participation Group, which provides feedback to the support workers and management team about the unit on a regular basis.
 - Interactive consultation board with varying topics
 - Post box system -user friendly informal way to ascertain views
 - Choices in the meals provided
 - Children's consultation booklet
 - Structured / direct observations from support workers
 - Analysis of behavioural incidents
 - Children's consultation forms
 - Feedback from parents/carers and other involved professionals
 - All children have a link worker, who's role it is to get to know them especially well and advocate for them/ help them to advocate for themselves where needed.

The children and young people at Larchwood are also encouraged and supported to attend Bracknell Forest Council's Council for Children with Disabilities – BOOM (Because Our Opinions Matter) to provide an opportunity to share their views about the unit and the wider services they receive.



Larchwood's policy and approach to anti discriminatory practice and children's rights

3.3 Larchwood creates a climate that is committed to equal opportunities, inclusion and challenging barriers and discrimination. We work within the Equality Act 2010 which sits alongside the requirements in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

- All Larchwood employees are 'signed up to' the Council's Values and Behaviours Framework and we adopt these values and behaviours which form part of annual performance appraisals
- Larchwood recognises that all people are unique and have a contribution to make for the benefit of all.
- Employees understand that discrimination arising from disability is treating a disabled child unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability, and work to ensure that children in their care are protected from any such experiences.

3.4 The protected characteristics as below are understood and reasonable adjustments made as necessary to break down barriers for inclusion.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership

- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Larchwood has a policy on anti-discriminatory practice that all employees adhere to. No child or groups of children or their families will be discriminated against. Our support workers will not judge or treat children at Larchwood or their family unfairly or unequally

- 3.5 Should support workers come aware that an individual or a family is experiencing discrimination they will offer immediate support and promptly address the needs of all concerned. This will then be passed on to the Registered Manager to address as necessary
- 3.6 Anti-discriminatory measures in place to protect children and their families include:
- Careful observation and monitoring
 - Accurate case recording
 - Being vigilant in the link worker role
 - Having an understanding of the families' needs
 - Raising concerns with others
 - Whistle blowing policy
 - Larchwood Advocate
- 3.7 Bracknell Forest Council and Larchwood are committed to the principles of The Human Rights Act 1998. Children with disabilities are vulnerable. Their needs and interests must be heard and given the utmost consideration in decision making. Larchwood use every opportunity to promote the rights of children with disabilities and to improve children's lives and social status.
- 3.8 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
 - Be treated fairly
 - 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 they are unhappy or worried about something
 - Be able to have an advocate who can advise and help sort out matters when their stay is not going well
 - Be looked after by support workers who actively promote the above rights

4 EDUCATION

Supporting children with special educational needs

- 4.1 Children/young people during their stay at Larchwood continue to attend school as part of their daily routine. School transport will be consistent with the child's home to school arrangement to ensure continuity. Collaboration takes place between children's escorts and Larchwood employees to ensure that any communication from school to home or transport is fluid.

- 4.2 Schools currently attended by children attending Larchwood are:-
- Kennel Lane School (Bracknell)
 - Manor Green (Maidenhead)
 - Henry Tyndale (Hampshire)
 - Chilworth House (Oxfordshire)
- 4.3 Where it is helpful or requested some Children and Young People have a home/ school/ Larchwood diary to help ensure a consistency of communication between all carers/settings. This enables support workers to gain an insight into the child or young person's day and help to reinforce praise events and achievements that day/week or share worries. There is always close collaboration between Larchwood, families, school and the Special Educational Needs team.
- 4.4 The importance of education is acknowledged. If children and young people bring homework into the unit to complete, support workers assist with this where necessary and they are encouraged to complete tasks. There is a wide range of books available in the unit, three iPads, a large touch screen television with a wide range of applications, games, toys, art activities, and opportunities to access activities which support the development of independence skills, such as shopping and cooking..

Supporting education and educational achievements

- 4.5 Larchwood employees attend school reviews and make visits to the schools to see their link children. The link worker will maintain good contact, and work together with the teacher and young person to plan their smart star achievements in line with those educational targets set at school. There is an achievement rewards box at Larchwood in which children and young people can choose an item/certificate when they have reached or made good progress in working towards their smart stars. We also recognise and celebrate achievements through the use of our 'WOW' board which is displayed in the dining area.



The Registered Manager meets termly with a designated member of the school staff to identify areas of concern or improvement with either individual young people or services, and attends the professional liaison meetings held at Kennel Lane School when required.

5 ENJOYMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Activities within the home include

- 5.1 We provide an extensive variety of activities which take into account a young person's individual likes, choices, needs and aspirations. The provision of play equipment and outings is a key aspect of the service. A wide range of play activities are provided, these include, up to date I.T systems (iPads), art, games, puzzles, sensory 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.
- 5.2 A safe and secure garden which provides opportunities for enjoyment with specialist outdoor play equipment such as a wheelchair accessible swing, water play, trampoline and climbing frame with slide.
- 5.3 Access to a mini bus and drivers, which are used to provide a variety of outings such as trips to the coast and enable the children/young people to access local community facilities.
- 5.4 An 'On the Move' service for children or young people where there is an assessed need to have the opportunity to access and enjoy the local community either alone or with their peers with appropriate support. This is particularly valuable to young people approaching adulthood.
- 5.5 A weekly teenage group, that meets at least monthly to have an experience / activity that promotes independence i.e. cooking session. This involves decision making, team work, shopping for ingredients, preparing and cooking the main meal for the evening, and eating together.



6 HEALTH

Health care provided within the home

- 6.1 Larchwood supports children with a range of health needs. These include epilepsy, asthma, eczema and gastrostomy feeding. Supporting individual children's health is covered within the child/young person's care plan, and emergency procedures are in place where necessary. Where nursing care is required we liaise with our health partners to ensure this service is commissioned.
- 6.2 As part of thinking future and reducing dependency, children are encouraged to take an interest in, and as far as practical be responsible for their own health and that of others. We will aim to support children to be as independent as possible with all areas of their care and be healthy individuals
- 6.3 The local community nursing team deliver specific care plan training for the Larchwood team in the administration of hormone injections, emergency epilepsy medication and procedures, competencies for gastrostomy feeds and an overview on tracheostomy care. Providing continuity the nurses delivering this training are usually the named specialist nurse for the young people. The health care plans and support workers training sheets are located in individual care plans.
- 6.4 Children are always listened to which ensures that support workers are aware of, and can address any ailments or an emotional need causing concern.
- 6.5 Larchwood has access to the Occupational Therapist within the Children's Specialist Support Team who provides support in meeting the needs of children and young people requiring manual handling and specialist equipment. The Occupational

Therapist is fully involved in the care plan and risk profiles of those children and young people.

- 6.6 The unit is able to provide a service for and assist children/young people who are prescribed medication, for which there is a 'Larchwood Safe Administration of Children's Medication Policy and Practice Guidance'. Children and young people who have complex health needs are able to access the service with prior agreement of the Primary Care Trust. It is the responsibility of the Trust and the Unit Manager to ensure a suitably qualified nurse is available to support that young person whilst in the unit. Support workers are all aware of the need to promote healthy living, and actively assist children and young people in daily hygiene routines, dental care, food and menu choices. Health is also explored through play, stories and activities.
- 6.7 Larchwood carries out a constant cleaning programme to prevent infection.

7 POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Promoting contact between children, families and friends

- 7.1 Larchwood is a Short Break Unit, therefore the aim is to provide children with enjoyable respite /short breaks whilst also giving their families a break – this in itself assists with family relationships and resilience and supports permanency for children within their own families.
- 7.2 Larchwood operates an "open door" visiting policy, and, subject to any legal orders, contact or visits can be made with a child/young person at any time during their stay. As many of our activities include outings outside of Larchwood, parents and carers are advised to call / check beforehand if they are intending to visit, in order to ensure the child/young person is at Larchwood at the time of any planned visit.
- 7.3 Children and young people are able to telephone /face time / skype/ e-mail their families at any time. In certain circumstances the frequency and duration may be specifically outlined in their individual care plans. Support workers will be aware of each individual's level of support needed as outlined in their care plan and will support as necessary.

8 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Homes approach to monitoring and surveillance

- 8.1 Larchwood has no sophisticated or recordable form of surveillance of the children. For children with health needs that require a higher level of monitoring then an audio monitor or bed alarm for example can be used i.e. if a child has nocturnal epilepsy.. Such devices are only used when this is identified as a need in the care plan and prior agreement is sought from parents/carers, wherever possible the child/ young person, and the placing authority. To ensure maximum privacy 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 for them.

- 8.2 In accordance with need, children and young people staying at Larchwood are provided with support that includes a level of supervision based on their assessed individual needs, as identified in their needs profiles on ratios such as group, 1:1 or 1:2. Larchwood is designed so that children and young people can have access to all shared areas of the home, enabling independence and privacy where safe to do so.
- 8.3 Larchwood has an electronic door alarm on all external doors and key pad exit systems on all three external doors that lead to the car park and main road. There is unrestricted access to a large garden / play area.
- 8.4 The external front access alarms are not to restrict children / young people from leaving, but to ensure they are safe in doing so. Young people have a variety of communication methods available to them to be able to ask a member of staff if they want to go on an outside activity or to be picked up by a parent/carer. These identified risks are reflected in the building risk assessment.
- 8.5 Larchwood support workers are aware of the procedures and protocols in place with regard to children who go missing and who may be at risk of child sexual or criminal exploitation. A location risk assessment has been undertaken and there are no known risks associated with the location of the unit.

Behavioural support

- 8.6 Larchwood operates within the Bracknell Forest Council Behaviour Management Policy Statement and Guidance. All Larchwood employees receive training (Team Teach) every two years. The children/young people's care plans/risk profiles are updated every six months, with multi-agency input, and are agreed and signed off by parents/carers.
- 8.7 A multi-agency approach is always used to support behavioural needs in partnership with families, and the Behaviour Support Specialist, to identify the most appropriate and helpful ways to support children and young people with a range of emotions and behaviours, and to ensure behaviour management responses are consistent across settings.

Team Teach Aims:

- To promote the least intrusive positive handling strategy and a continuum of gradual and graded techniques, with an emphasis and preference for the use of verbal, non-verbal de-escalation strategies being used and exhausted before positive handling strategies are utilised.
- To enable services to develop acceptable and authorised responses to disruptive, disturbing, angry and aggressive behaviours in a manner that maintains positive relationships and provides safety for all, by training in Team-Teach.
- To reduce the amount of serious incidents involving physical controls in all settings and to emphasise the importance of exhausting behaviour management strategies in the first instance.
- To increase the awareness of staff concerning the importance of recording and reporting, monitoring and evaluating, all incidents involving positive handling.

- To provide a process of repair and reflection for both staff and children.
- 8.8 Policy and practice is about diverting the children/young people from behaviour that is unacceptable, using methods agreed in individual care plans and risk profiles, focusing on positive reinforcement, modelling appropriate behaviour and redirection/distraction strategies.
- 8.9 At all times workers are mindful of the need to ensure that the behaviour of one child does not harm another. A distressed young person may be supported by withdrawing them from the group to enable a time for calming down.
- 8.10 Should any child or young person need any type of physical support / intervention it is recorded in the physical interventions book, and on their electronic file which alerts their social worker. Parents/carers are notified as soon as practicable and appropriate. Support workers are required to record the young person's response / views in the physical intervention log, and any impact explored.
- 8.11 Distraction and prevention is a successful skill of the team. The use of restraint at Larchwood is very rare and detailed records are monitored by the Unit Manager at Larchwood, and through the monthly Regulation 44 visits and by the Registered Responsible Individual (Head of Service).
- 8.12 We promote positive behaviour and our aim is to assist children and young people in restorative conciliatory responses when undesirable behaviours occur. Again rarely, it may be appropriate to use a sanction. A child/ young person should be given a warning of an impending sanction and opportunity to alter their behaviour. Sanctions will only be used where it has been clearly identified and agreed in an individual's care plan and risk profile agreeing that the child/young person has the capacity to understand consequences. The sanctions record book should be completed in full. This also contains a list of prohibited sanctions.
- 8.13 A copy of the Bracknell Forest Council's Behaviour Management Policy Statement and Guidance is available upon request from Larchwood.

9 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Names and work addresses of managers

Registered Provider

Bracknell Forest Council
 Department of Children, Young People and Learning
 C/O Time Square Market Street
 Bracknell
 RG12 1JD

Responsible Individual

Lou Richer, Interim Head of Service - Specialist Support
 Time Square
 Market Street
 Bracknell
 RG12 1JD

Telephone 01344 353112
Lou.richer@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Registered Manager

Samantha Whitehouse
Larchwood
10 Portman Close
Bracknell
RG42 1NE
Telephone 01344 452315
Samantha.Whitehouse@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

10 SUPPORT WORKERS EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- 10.1 **The Registered Responsible Individual** - is responsible for the supervision of the Registered Manager and the quality and delivery of a safe service. The Registered responsible Individual is a Qualified Social Worker with over 20 years' experience in Social care.

The Registered Responsible Individual's Qualifications are:

- Diploma in Social Work
- Diploma in Learning Disability Nursing
- BA (hons) Health & Social Care Studies

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

The Registered Manager's Qualifications are:

- Level 5 Certificate in Leadership Management
- Level 4 Managers in Residential Childcare
- NVQ 4 in Management
- NVQ 3 in Caring for Children and Young People
- BTEC National Diploma in Nursery Nursing

Experience: Extensive experience of managing a respite setting and the team with many years of working with disabled children and children's social care.

- 10.3 **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.V,Q.4 in Management.

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

The three roles above have worked together as a leadership and management group since early 2014 providing the home with stable leadership and a shared ethos of continuous improvement.

10.4 Qualifications within the Larchwood team include:

- N.V.Q. Level 3 Social Care
- Team Teach qualifications
- Qualification for driving the mini bus
- Makaton
- Epilepsy

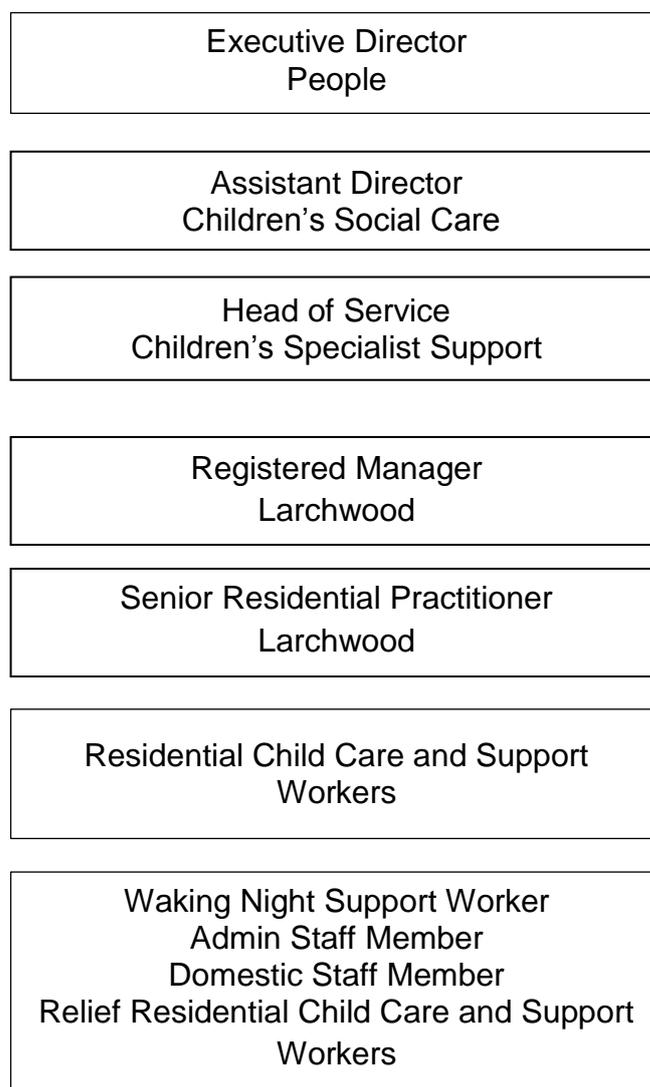
10.5 Experience within the Larchwood team includes:

- Mental health awareness
- Knowledge of the Webster Stratton Incredible Years Parenting Course and how to support families to implement the strategies.
- Supporting adults with learning disabilities in their own and group homes to live more independently.
- Extensive experience of working with adults with disabilities in a residential setting.
- Youth work
- Experience in managing challenging behaviours within residential home/school settings

10.6 The Larchwood team is an experienced and committed team with extensive experience in working with children with disabilities. As a service Larchwood has a proven track record evidenced through Ofsted Inspection of providing services that are of significant value to children / young people in respect of positive outcomes.

10.7 The Leadership Team recognise that supervision is an essential component of good quality services. All support workers receive supervision in accordance with the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and within Bracknell Forest Council's Supervision Policy. We use a variety of formats, including team supervision, team meetings and where appropriate, learning events. Employees are provided with individual, direct 1:1 supervision which incorporates reflective practice from the Registered Manager or the Senior Practitioner on a monthly basis. There is an annual appraisal system in place to ensure personal and professional development. Relief support workers are supervised regularly by a full time employed Residential Child Care and Support Worker. Alongside this complex case discussion sessions are offered and reflective group sessions.

10.8 Staffing structure



Promoting appropriate role models within the home

- 10.9 Larchwood has a staff team of six female staff and one male staff member. The current team are of a mixed age, religion and sexuality which provide diversity and difference.
- 10.10 Larchwood has a team of experienced and reliable relief support workers that are employed by Bracknell Forest Council. The relief support workers are used to support the team with annual leave, sickness and gaps within the rota. We also positively engage some regular agency staff when required to provide a balance of age, ethnicity and experience to our own team.

11 CARE PLANNING

Admissions to the home

- 11.1 Bracknell Forest Council are the Registered providers of Larchwood therefore a significant number of child referrals are from Bracknell Forest Children's Social Care. However, the unit has capacity to provide services to a larger population and encourages referrals from other local authorities. We currently deliver services to a number of young people from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Slough Children's Trust.
- 11.2 All children eligible to attend Larchwood will have this identified as a need from 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, 'On the Move' or day services from Larchwood.
- 11.3 All referrals are discussed with the Registered Manager, Children's Specialist Support Team Manager and Registered Responsible Individual (Head of Service) as part of the multi professional Resource Allocation System (RAS) Panel. All admissions to Larchwood must be agreed with the Registered Manager and approved by the Registered Responsible Individual. Alongside this the Registered Manager will assess the suitability of the referral and create a pre-admission plan to aid decision making. Once a decision has been made that the child or young person's needs can be met at Larchwood, a bespoke introduction to Larchwood will commence. The level of service will depend upon assessed need (agreed at RAS). If the number of visits is under 75 nights per year and no more than 17 consecutive nights, Regulation 48 and either a section 17 or section 20 (4) Children's Act 1989 will apply. If it exceeds 75 night per year or more than 17 consecutive nights, full Child Looked After requirements will need to be observed. A social worker will review individual children's needs regularly.
- 11.4 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 and school visit to gather the information necessary to write a care plan, risk assessment and a group impact risk assessment. Following this, a formal multi professional planning meeting will be held. The care plan, risk profile and other relevant documents are finalised at this meeting and introductory visits arranged.
- 11.5 A social worker will review individual children's needs regularly. Packages will be reviewed within the Child Looked After (for children who stay more than 75 nights a year or have multiple placements) or Child in Need review system on a (minimum) six monthly basis.
- 11.6 Larchwood is part of the Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST) and shares a commitment with others in supporting children and families known to the team who are in crisis, and require short notice stays. Providing they meet Larchwood's criteria for admission it may be possible in some circumstances to offer a service at short notice.
- 11.7 To enable Larchwood to consider this, the social worker must have assessed the situation and identified the need and Larchwood must be considered the most



appropriate option in meeting the child's needs. This means that options such as the child staying with other family/friends, placement with a foster carer, short break carer, or support workers working within the child's home have been explored and ruled out or are not considered to be appropriate. Such decisions will also take account of the impact on other children/young people using the service at Larchwood and consider their needs as well, ensuring that Larchwood can continue to deliver high quality care to all those resident on any particular day /night. (This may include a decision to rearrange or, if unavoidable, to cancel other children's/young people's visits to help with capacity issues or group impact risk assessment). Decisions around short notice stays will be the responsibility of the Larchwood Management Team in conjunction with the social worker and their manager. Larchwood must not be considered the first port of call when a family is in crisis, but may in some circumstances offer an appropriate best interest solution if other options are not available to meet need.

- 11.8 Prior to any agreement to a child staying at Larchwood (admission) relevant paperwork (Care Plan including all medical information, Risk Profile and Group Impact Risk Assessments) and introductions will need to be completed/reviewed.
- 11.9 Depending on the nature of the crisis being experienced by the child or their family, introductions to the unit may be over more than one visit and will ideally be conducted at the child's pace unless there is good reason not to. Rapid planning for these types of short notice visits will identify and outline a plan.
- 11.10 It must be noted that Larchwood although registered as a Children's Home is a Short Breaks provision. Although we try to be a 'home away from home' we are geared towards children and young people regularly coming and going. As such Larchwood should not be considered an appropriate resource for stays that could not be considered a Short Break (i.e. no longer than 17 consecutive days).
- 11.11 Where a short notice visit cannot be considered a Short Break by definition of the anticipated length of time or there being no clear plan in place a Placement Planning Meeting will take place within 5 days of admission to consider the young person's best interests. Any stay planned for or exceeding 17 days will be notified to Ofsted, alongside robust planning to move a child to a permanent placement as soon as is practicable.

**NOTE: A FAMILIES LEVEL OF NEED CAN INCREASE OR DECREASE
DEPENDING ON AN ASSESSED NEED AT THAT TIME**

Samantha Whitehouse, Registered Manager
Lou Richer, Registered Responsible Individual
April 2020

SUMMARY OF THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Larchwood's Children's Guide

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/childrens-guide-to-larchwood.pdf>

<https://youtu.be/IZvAucu2UJU>

A paper format will also be contained within this document

ADDENDUM IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 PANDEMIC 23/03/20

From Monday 23/03/20, in response to the Coronavirus Covid-19 outbreak, the way that Larchwood delivers services may change, to balance the health and wellbeing of people with our duty of care to meet the needs of local children and their families.

We are working closely with the CSST and education, to continue to provide a service. With the ever-changing landscape, we are reviewing the situation on a day by day basis.

The amendments to individual standards are;

1. QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE

We are currently providing a service, subject to change, based on government and local authority advice. The priority is to remain open and provide a service to children and families prioritised as a result of identified need, while maintaining safety for all.

2. VIEW'S WISHES AND FEELINGS

Although the service may be subject to change, the views, wishes and feelings of the children remain the same. We will still consider the Group Impact Risk Assessment, when looking at temporarily ceasing, introducing, or changing packages and subsequently changing groups.

3. EDUCATION

We will continue to work closely with the local special school, to ensure the holistic needs of our service users are met across settings.

4. ENJOYMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

The activities that the children can access will be impacted by social distancing recommendations and venue closures. We will continue to make use of our indoor facilities and garden and when restrictions are lifted and venues reopen, we will revert to our usual practice of making full use of them if it assessed as safe to do so.

5. HEALTH

Staff continue to follow infection control guidelines and deep cleaning has been increased. The unit has signage and guidelines for hand washing and infection control and we have restricted all visitors to only those who are required to enable the service to run.

6. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

We will continue to refer to Group Impact Risk Assessment, when changes are needed. Where it has been assessed that it is safer for children to remain at home rather than attend Larchwood we will regularly check in with them, and their families, to ensure the maintenance of their relationships with staff, and to contribute to ongoing work with their social workers to address changes in circumstances.

7. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Safeguarding policies and procedures remain the same during this period. We will, at all times, follow government guidance in relation to stopping the spread of Covid-19.

8. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Our current model provides daily management cover, mainly onsite with phone and email contact outside of office hours. We are working closely with BFC Children's Social Care to provide the services needed. Staff risk assessments have been undertaken and where possible staff have been asked to work from home. Supervisions that can be completed from home will be done via Microsoft Teams and staff will be able to access online training, although all classroom-based courses have been suspended.

9. CARE PLANNING

Any changes to Care Plans generated through changes in support need will be undertaken as required.