

LARCHWOOD SHORT BREAK UNIT ANNUAL REPORT



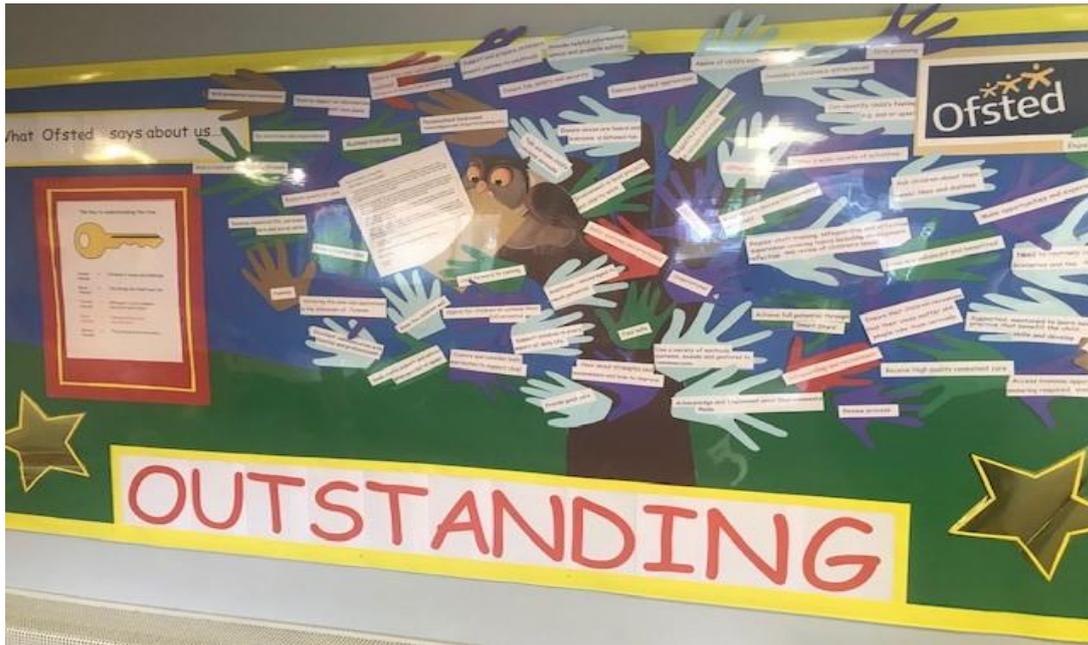
April 2019 – March 2020

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

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

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

The outcome of the unit's most recent full Ofsted inspection on the 30th September and 1st October 2019 was overall 'Outstanding' with the overall experiences and progress of children and young people as 'Outstanding', how well children and young people are helped and protected as 'Good' and the effectiveness of leaders and managers as 'Outstanding'. Only two recommendations were given, ensure that all safeguarding opportunities are utilised and record gaps in employment when recruiting.



1 Context and Finance

- 1.1** This annual report provides evidence that Larchwood delivers services in line with the Council's narrative of value for money, opportunities to thrive and contributing to safe and self-reliant communities. Furthermore, it provides details of activity over the financial year April 2019 – March 2020 and sets out the plans for continuous improvement for the year ahead.
- 1.2** The report should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Purpose revised in April 2019. Services are delivered under the Children's Homes (England) Regulations (2015), associated Quality Standards (2015) and the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (2017). The Statement of Purpose provides more service delivery detail and sets out the legislative and regulatory context in which Larchwood Short Break Unit operates.
- 1.3** The annual budget for Larchwood staffing and running costs for this period was £470,710 and the total spend was £439,065. This was offset by an income target of £109,410 and the actual income generated was £90,520. Therefore, the actual cost to the Council was £348,545.
- 1.4** We continue to provide an extremely high package of care to one individual who, and a high package of care to another, both with whom without this level of support, would most certainly require a full-time care placement. Currently we provide short breaks to three young people who are 'Children Looked After'. Additionally, all the children attending Larchwood have complex needs and the provision provides services to prevent escalation of need.
- 1.5** The number of children receiving a service at Larchwood as at the end of March 2020 is 22 (compared with last year's figure of 20).

1.6 Eight children have left over the course of the year. Seven new children have joined Larchwood in this time.

- The number of overnights during 2019/20: 455 (471 in 18/19)
- The number of tea visits (under 4 hours): 153 (144 in 18/19)
- The number of day care (over 4 hours): 284 (282 in 18/19)

1.7 The total number of children currently receiving an overnight provision as of March 2020 is 8 of these young people are 'Children Looked After'. The remaining provision is a combination of overnights, tea visits, day care, Teenage Group, and 'On the Move' activities (Child In Need).

2 Referrals

2.1 Larchwood is a specialist service for children and young people who meet the criteria for services from the Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST). To ensure fair access and the right offer to meet need, referrals from the CSST are discussed by a multi-agency group at the monthly Resource Allocation System (RAS) Panel. This also offers an opportunity to look at joint arrangements with representatives from Heath, community Short Breaks (Kids) and the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team attending this panel.

2.2 Children with additional needs who do not meet the criteria for Larchwood are signposted to the community Short Break Services, also run by the CSST.

3 Impact and outcomes

3.1 Impact and outcomes are reviewed under the nine Quality Standards (Children's Homes Regulations, April 2015) as follows:

3.1.1 Quality and purpose of care

3.1.1.1 The Unit Manager is required to undertake evaluations of the unit at least every six months under the regulation 45. These reports focus on the Children's Homes Quality Standards. The reports are comprehensive and are used to set targets in improving service delivery. Each report has a detailed action plan for improvements with SMART targets.

3.1.2 Children's views, wishes and feelings

3.1.2.1 The children and young people are actively involved in and encouraged to make decisions and choices in relation to matters within the home. This year there has been a consultation on 'helping hands', 'activities in the community' and 'after school clubs'. Our annual Larchwood party was a healthy living event with a D.J, Zumba class, boxing arena and team games and activities. The food was displayed on red and green tables to encourage young people to make healthy choices. This event was attended by parents, sibling's, past and present users of Larchwood and great fun was had.



3.1.2.2 The Ofsted inspector reported in 2019 that *'Children really enjoy their time at the home and look forward to their short break visits. They describe it as being 'home from home'. Staff provide exceptionally high-quality consistent care for children. This enables children to take part in activities and experiences, some of which they may not normally be able to do. Children's lives are enhanced, and they benefit from having short breaks at the home'*.

3.1.3 Education

3.1.3.1 Termly meetings continue to take place consistently throughout the school year between the Unit Manager, Kennel Lane School and Manor Green School. They continue to afford informal opportunities to facilitate information sharing between Larchwood link workers and school staff. Larchwood staff, where possible, also attend children's SEN annual reviews and their key school targets inform our practice with regards to their individual smart stars. We continue to provide educational materials, topics and toys for the children and young people to access. The home is decorated with educational displays and easy access to all items. Management have attended the local school Christmas production and the leavers assembly.

3.1.3.2 Ofsted report 2019 *'Children make outstanding progress during their time in the home. They develop essential life. Personal care and social skills that promote their future life opportunities as they move into adulthood. Children become more resilient and independent through their time at the home.'*

3.1.4 Enjoyment and Achievement

3.1.4.1 Children and young people have helped and taken part in the hugely successful Larchwood Healthy living event in 2019. They have also celebrated the Buddhist culture, undertaken volunteer work in a local church, litter picking and projects on politics and the environment.

3.1.4.2 Larchwood have also undertaken outings to Windsor, Tri-lakes, Crazy Golf, Pottery Painting, restaurants, coffee shops, cinema, bowling, and local parks.

3.1.4.3 The independent shopping / cooking sessions have made meals from scratch such as a roast dinner, curry and onion bhajis, pizza's and spaghetti bolognaise. These sessions are always received positively by the children and young people.

3.1.4.4 Larchwood continues to have cultural and diversity evenings which have included a Buddhist week, this was enjoyed by all children and young people and entailed themed meals, dress up clothes, and educational materials. This event engaged everyone through visual, practical and sensory/tasting opportunities.

3.1.5 Health and well-being

3.1.5.1 Staff continue to receive training and updates in individual health care plans which include gastrostomy feeding, administration of rectal paraldehyde, buccal midazolam and growth hormone injections. Staff continue to support children and young people with making healthy food and lifestyle choices.

3.1.5.2 We continue to offer a Sleep Clinic service and travel training service and have successfully supported 3 young people to travel to school/college independently over this past year.

3.1.6 Positive relationships

3.1.6.1 We continue to work closely with parents/carers and professionals. Larchwood promotes a 'friendship matters' culture where children with disabilities are encouraged to make friends and interact with peers. The 'Ready Steady Go' leaflets are now embedded into our practice and together with parents/professionals they support in identifying current skills areas in self and personal care and areas to continue working towards to achieving independence.

3.1.7 Protection of children

3.1.7.1 Larchwood's safeguarding policy was reviewed and updated in September 2019. It contains specific details on the use of the varying forms of communication, guidance on non-mobile bruising and management/ on call arrangements. The Unit Manager attends relevant child protection, core groups and conferences, ensuring care plans are kept relevant. Our complaints guidance details how we strive to recognise and respond to complaints from non-verbal children and young people.

3.1.8 Leadership and Management

3.1.8.1 Larchwood is part of the Children's Specialist Support Team (CSST) and we meet as a management team regularly alongside quarterly CSST joint team meetings.

3.1.8.2 The Registered Manager is supervised directly by the Head of Service for Children's Specialist Support (Registered Responsible Individual); this structure affords a greater oversight for the role of the Registered Responsible Individual.

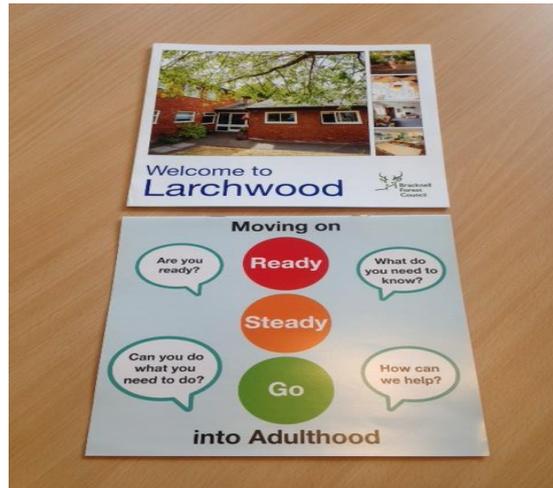
3.1.8.3 The management team work closely together to enable continuous improvement. The unit manager attends the monthly RAS panel and the assistant team manager CSST attends Larchwood team meetings every other month. This affords a close joined up working approach.

3.1.8.4 We have aligned our supervision template to reflect the council's new supervision policy and we report supervision timescales to senior management alongside other departments.

3.1.8.4 We have recruited to another full-time post and are awaiting recruitment checks with a potential start date of April. We currently have 2 staff on maternity leave, these hours are being covered with the use of relief staff and occasional agency use. This has not impacted on the level of care provided. Our newest staff member is enrolled on the mandatory qualification through the apprenticeship scheme.

3.1.9 Care Planning

3.1.9.1 The 'Children's Guide' to Larchwood captures the daily routines within the home and incorporates the photos of the newly decorated lounge and bedroom areas. It also has a link to the digital version, which captures the atmosphere of the home.
<https://youtu.be/lZvAucu2UJU>



3.1.9.2 Our inspection report 2019 states *'leaders, managers and staff work exceptionally well with families and other agencies and organisations, involving all relevant parties in care planning and review processes. This has a positive impact on the quality of information and detail in care plans. Staff embrace the approaches that have been agreed collectively and use them to provide the children with consistent support.'*

3.1.9.3 Behaviour support plans are in place for all the children and young people and a system is in place for reviewing incidents on a regular basis with the Intensive Behaviour Support Specialist (CSST).

3.1.9.4 Comprehensive risk profiles are in place for all children and young people and Larchwood staff continue to attend CIN/CLA reviews and Education reviews.

4 Ofsted Inspections

4.1 Larchwood is inspected by Ofsted at a maximum frequency of twice yearly. Following the introduction of the new Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) in February 2017, providers judged as Good or Outstanding are inspected only once a year following a risk assessment completed by Ofsted. The SCCIF has also introduced two limiting and graded judgement areas. How well children and young people are helped and protected is a limiting judgement; this means that if inspectors judge this to be inadequate, then the overall experiences and progress judgement will always be inadequate. The effectiveness of leaders and managers is a graded judgement; if inspectors judge this area to be inadequate, this is likely to lead to a judgement of inadequate, and certainly no more than requires improvement for overall experiences and progress. Inspectors will make the limiting and graded judgements first so that they can take these into account for the 'overall progress and experiences' judgement.

4.2 The full inspection held in Sep/Oct 2019 judged Larchwood as 'Outstanding' because:

- The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.
- Leaders and managers are inspirational. They aspire for all children to achieve their full potential. Managers are child focused and ensure that each child has great fun and feels safe and secure while attending the home.
- Staff access regular and effective supervision that covers a wide range of topics, including development, reflection and review of children's needs. Leaders and managers are ambitious and encourage staff to develop and achieve their very best.

5 Staffing Profile

5.1 Full time

- Responsible Individual
- Registered Unit Manager
- Senior Practitioner
- 4 Care Officers

5.2 Part time

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

5.3 The Registered Unit Manager Samantha Whitehouse is based full time at Larchwood and is line managed by Lou Richer Interim Head of Service CSST, who is the named 'Registered Responsible Individual' for Larchwood.

5.4 All employees have undertaken the required statutory training, and additional training is provided in accordance with need. We have four joint team meetings with the Children's Specialist Support Team per year.

5.5 The overall training experiences include -

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

6 Developments/plans for the year ahead

- 6.1** In addition Larchwood will contribute to and embrace the recommendations and opportunities that arise from the People Directorate's Transformation programme.

Samantha Whitehouse
Registered Unit Manager

Lou Richer
Registered Responsible Individual

April 2020