

# LARCHWOOD SHORT BREAK UNIT STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2015



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

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The statement of purpose is a requirement of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations, April 2015. The statement is intended to provide a guide to Larchwood Short Break Unit for professionals, the public, Elected Members and external organisations.
- 1.2 This is a key document against which the unit is inspected by Ofsted, and is formally reviewed and approved by the Executive Member and the Director for Children, Young People and Learning on an annual basis

## 2 QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE

### Statement of the range of needs

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

### Ethos of the home

- 2.2 Our ethos within Larchwood is to make a positive difference to the personal, social and learning lives of the children and young people who attend. We strive to create a positive environment where children and young people are offered experiences and opportunities to assist them with achieving their aspirations and goals in life.
- 2.3 Children and young people are supported through a multi-agency approach to aspire to the continuous development of knowledge, understanding and skills, whilst being safe, socialising with friends and having fun. Larchwood adopts a holistic, person centred approach to the care and development of children and young people and endeavours to ensure that they are enabled to overcome barriers, whatever and wherever these may be.

### Accommodation offered

- 2.4 Larchwood is a purpose built resource that has been in existence since 1977 and has evolved over the years to meet the changing needs of children with disabilities and their families. The accommodation is all on the ground floor and there is appropriate access to all areas.
- 2.5 Facilities within 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.
- 2.6 Larchwood provides weekend overnights, weekday overnights, school holiday day care, after-school care, and social community based activities for children and young people. Larchwood is registered for children of both genders aged 5 and over, up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

- 2.7 Larchwood is registered with Ofsted for a maximum of five children or young people overnight (5 bedded unit) and in addition can offer additional services to other children and young people for after school visits, day care or community based activities.

#### Location of the home

- 2.8 The unit is based in Bracknell, Berkshire and is situated in a quiet residential area close to the town centre, local leisure resources and facilities. 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 child protection suite, a number of private residential homes, and 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.

#### Arrangement for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children

- 2.9 We strive to be inclusive and sensitive 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.
- 2.10 The values deriving from different backgrounds are recognised and respected at all times. Within the care planning process the team recognise different need in relation to ethnicity, culture, religion, diet and sexual orientation where they may exist.
- 2.11 Within the unit there are 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, toys, games, multi cultural music and cultural evenings. Support workers encourage children/young people to question and celebrate differences, through activities, role modelling and discussions.
- 2.12 Being part of Bracknell Forest Council, Larchwood have access to services that can provide translation of documents in other languages, braille and audio, and interpreters to attend reviews or meetings where necessary.
- 2.13 Special dietary needs and individual preferences are recognised, and are included in the menu planning process.

#### Complaints

- 2.14 Complaints are dealt with 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 the unit, or on the Bracknell Forest Council website.
- 2.15 Within Larchwood we have developed various ways in which our 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 posting 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.

2.16 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 visits each month and the Complaints Manager.

2.17 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.

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 15) at:  
Office of the Children's Commissioner  
0800 528 0731  
[advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

Or

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

0300 1231231  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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

2.18 Larchwood is subject to the Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures, is a 'live' online document <http://proceduresonline.com/berks/> Larchwood have recently completed their own internal Section 11, Children Act 2014 audit .

2.19 Alongside this Larchwood also has an approved bespoke safeguarding policy, which includes an easy to follow flow chart. This policy is available to staff 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.

2.20 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 where appropriate.
- 3.2 Consultation is part of our everyday work however the below illustrates some of the other methods we use. :
- The 'Titans,' This is Larchwood's participation group, providing feedback to the management team about the unit on a regular basis.
  - Post box system, user friendly informal way to ascertain views
  - Choices in the meals provided
  - Children's consultation booklet
  - Direct observations from staff
  - Analysis of behavioural incidents
  - Annual children's consultation forms
  - Feedback from parents/carers and other involved professionals

#### The home's policy and approach to anti discriminatory practice and children's rights

- 3.3 Larchwood works within the Equality Act 2010. This act protects people in the workplace and in wider society from discrimination. Discrimination can come in any of the following forms:
- Direct discrimination- treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
  - Indirect discrimination – putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage
  - Harassment – unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates some ones dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.
  - Victimisation – treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.

Protected characteristics are described as:

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief

- Sex
  - Sexual orientation
- 3.4 Larchwood has a policy on anti-discriminatory practice that all staff adheres to. No child or groups of children or their families will be discriminated against. Our staff team will not judge or treat children at Larchwood or their family unfairly or unequally.
- 3.5 Should staff become aware that an individual or a family is experiencing discriminatory practice they will offer immediate support and promptly address the needs of all concerned. This will then be passed on to the Unit Manger to investigate or raise further 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
  - Have an understanding of the families needs
  - Being aware of the signs and symptoms
  - Raising concerns with others
- 3.7 Bracknell Forest Council and Larchwood are committed to the principles of The Human Rights Act 1998. Children with a disability 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 staff who actively promote the above rights
- 3.9 The concept of the 'best interests' of the child is paramount in the values of Larchwood. The unit is committed to promoting the rights of children with disabilities and ensuring they are able to make a meaningful contribution and achieve their aspirations. Children and young people are involved in decision making and planning about their care and wider service developments. Inclusion is achieved by accessing mainstream activities such as going to the cinema, meals out in restaurants, and youth clubs in the community.

## 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 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 fluent to staff.
- 4.2 Schools attended in the local area include:-
- Kennel Lane School (Bracknell)
  - Manor Green (Maidenhead)
  - Addington School (Lower Earley)
  - Heathermount (Ascot)
- 4.3 Some families of Children and Young People have a home/ school/ Larchwood diary to help ensure a consistency of care between all carers and to enable information sharing. This enables support workers to gain an insight into the child or young person's day and help to reinforce and praise events and achievements that day/week. There is always close liaison between Larchwood, families and school.
- 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 for shopping and cooking amongst many other opportunities

#### Supporting education and educational achievements

- 4.5 Larchwood staff 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 goal ladders 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 when they have reached or made good progress in working towards their goal ladders.
- 4.6 The Unit Manager meets termly with a 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.

## 5 ENJOYMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

#### Activities within the home include:-

- 5.1 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 wheel chair 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 teenage group, that meets fortnightly to have an independent cooking session. This involves decision making, team work, shopping for ingredients, preparing and cooking the main meal for the evening.
- 5.6 Early this year Larchwood hosted a very successful Chinese New Year party for all the past and present service users and their families. We take a positive approach in supporting friendships to continue after Larchwood.
- 5.7 Overall the unit works to ensure continuity of care delivery and consistency within the peer group settings to promote social interaction and friendships.

## 6 HEALTH

### Health care provided within the home

- 6.1 The unit is able to provide services for, and assist children/young people who have a range of additional health problems. These include epilepsy, asthma, eczema and heart conditions. Supporting individual children's health is covered within the child/young person's care plan, and emergency procedures are in place if necessary.
- 6.2 For those children and young people with epilepsy who require emergency medication support workers are trained by our local community nursing team in the administration. Each individual will have a specific health care plan which identifies the procedures to follow in the event of a seizure. The nurses delivering this training are usually the named specialist nurse for the young people. The health care plans and staff training sheets are located in individual care plans.
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 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. Currently there are no children at Larchwood needing this service. Staff 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.

## **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 short breaks whilst also giving their families a break – this in itself assist with family relationships and resilience.
- 7.2 Parents are welcome to contact Larchwood at any time during their child's visit. No child or young person can be collected by a person not known to Larchwood staff without prior authorisation from the family and evidence of identity.
- 7.3 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. As 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.
- 7.4 Children and young people are able to call their families at any time and staff will support this if necessary.
- 7.5 Larchwood host a regular coffee morning for parents of children or young people who attend.

## **8 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

### **Homes approach to monitoring and surveillance**

- 8.1 Occasionally, Larchwood has children with health needs that require observation and are monitored during the night using an audio monitor. When this is identified as an assessed need agreement is sought from parents, wherever possible the child/young person, the placing authority 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 for them.
- 8.2 The children and young people at Larchwood are provided with support including that of supervision based on their assessed individual needs and as identified in their needs profiles on ratios such as group based , 1:1 or 1:2. The unit 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 The unit has an electronic door alarm on all external doors and key pad exit systems on all 3 external doors that lead to the car park and busy main road. There is unrestricted access to a large garden / play area.
- 8.4 Young people are free to leave / go out at anytime and they 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.
- 8.5 These measures are designed to enhance the children/young person's safety, whilst taking into account issues surrounding deprivation of liberty, enabling free access

within the home and its communal areas. These identified risks are reflected in the building risk assessment.

- 8.6 Larchwood staff 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 exploitation. A location risk assessment has been undertaken and there are no known risk associated with the location of the unit.

### Behavioural support

- 8.7 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 (Team Teach) every two years. The children/young people's care plans are updated every six months and agreed and signed off by parents/carers. Their needs profiles are also reviewed and updated every six months, and more frequently if required, and involve wider multi professional input and agreement. These risk profiles are carried out in conjunction with parents/carers, education, placing social worker and other identified professionals such as occupational therapist where necessary.
- 8.8 The Policy has a strong emphasis on preventative strategies and partnership and the unit liaises closely with the families, the Short Breaks Behaviour Support Specialist and other relevant professionals to look at specific behaviours, and identify the most appropriate way to support children and young people with a range of emotions and behaviours.

#### 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.
- 8.9 Support workers at Larchwood will always try to divert the children/young people from behaviour that is unacceptable, using methods agreed in individual care plans and risk profiles. They focus on positive reinforcement, modelling appropriate behaviour and redirection/distraction strategies.
- 8.10 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.
- 8.11 The refresher training at a minimum of every two years (as recognised by Team Teach standards) by an external trainer in "Team Teach" re-assesses each

individual's competencies whilst providing opportunities for individual case discussion and a refresher in techniques.

- 8.12 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. Parents/carers are notified as soon as practicable and appropriate. Support workers also record the young person's response / views on the incident where possible, and any impact.
- 8.13 The use of restraint at Larchwood is very rare and detailed records are monitored by the managers at Larchwood, and through the monthly Regulation 44 visits and by the responsible individual (Head of Service).
- 8.14 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

Sonia Johnson, Head of Specialist Support  
Time Square  
Market Street  
Bracknell  
RG12 1JD  
Telephone 01344 353132  
[sonia.johnson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:sonia.johnson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

#### Registered Manager

Samantha Whitehouse  
Larchwood  
10 Portman Close  
Bracknell  
RG42 1NE  
Telephone 01344 452315  
[samantha.whitehouse@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:samantha.whitehouse@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

## 10 Staff experience and qualifications

- 10.1 **The Responsible Individual** - The quality and delivery of safe service is overseen by the Responsible Individual, who is a Qualified Social Worker with over 20 years experience in Social care. This includes holding a number of Registered Manager positions and extensive experience in child Protection field work.

**10.2 The Team Manager**, Children's Specialist Support, 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:**

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

**Experience:** Extensive experience of team management.

**10.3 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 within many years of working with disabled children and children's social care.

**10.4 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

**10.5 Qualifications among our staff team include:**

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

**10.6 Experience among our staff team include:**

- Mental Health awareness

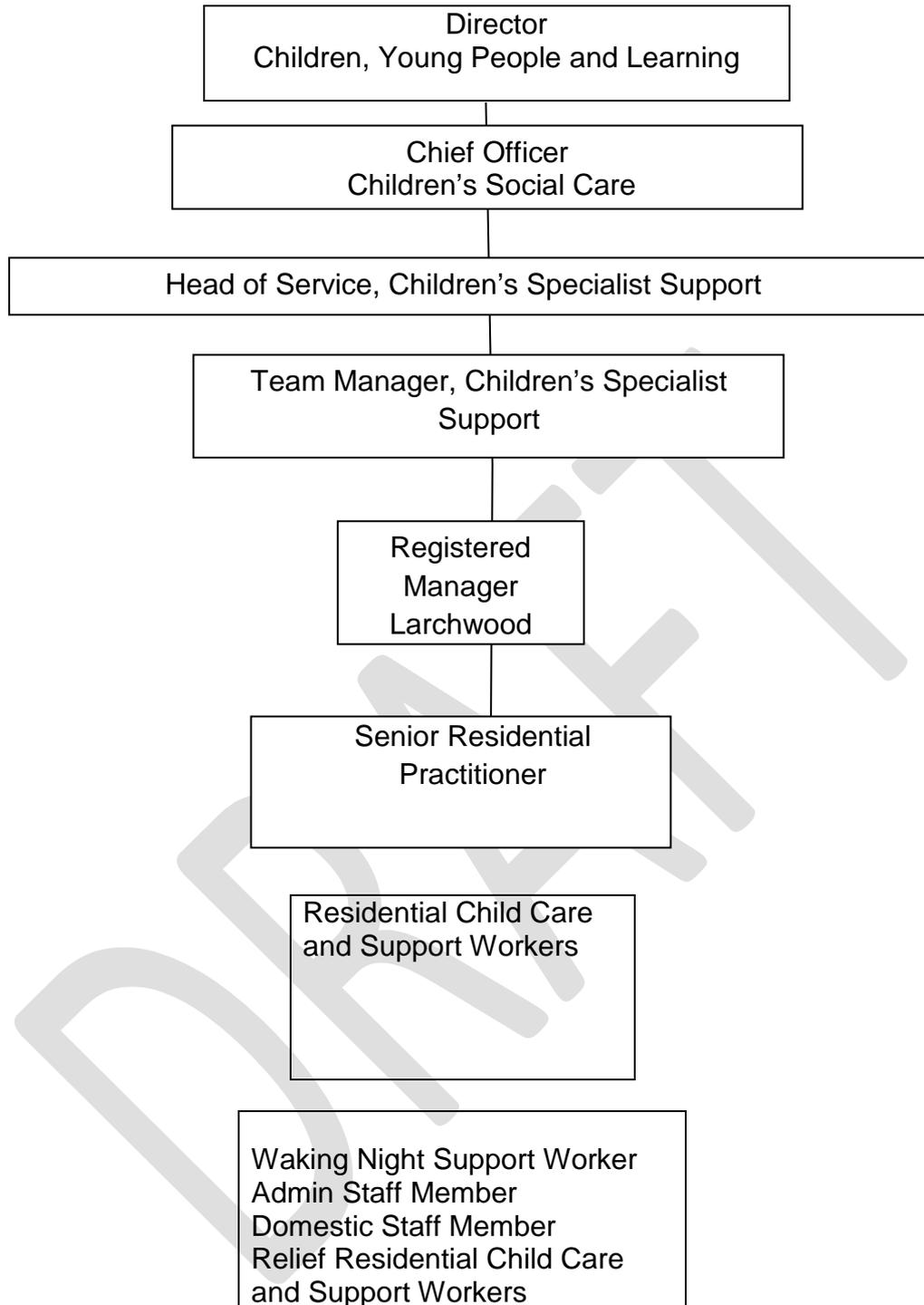
- Knowledge of the Webster Stratton Parenting Course and how to support families with this strategy.
- Nursing experience of adults and children including discharge care planning
- Supporting adults with learning disabilities in their own and group homes to live more independently.
- Post qualifying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

10.7 The Larchwood team is rich with experience of working with children with disabilities and has a proven track record evidenced through Ofsted Inspection of providing services that are of significant value to children / young people and their families.

10.8 Currently there is no requirement for commissioned staff to provide education or health services to the young people.

### Staffing structure

10.9 The Leadership Team recognise that staff supervision is an essential component of good quality services. All staff 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. Staff are provided with individual, direct 1:1 supervision which incorporates reflective practice from the Unit Manager or the Senior Practitioner on a monthly basis. There is an annual appraisal system in place to ensure personal and professional development. Relief staff are supervised regularly by a full time employed Residential Child Care and Support Worker. The Team have access to three monthly sessions from a Psychologist who provides reflective sessions either to individuals or groups.



### Promoting appropriate role models within the home

- 10.10 Larchwood has a mixed gender staff group of male and female staff who are carefully matched as Link Workers to children. Part of the link working role is to be a good role model to the link child. At present, eight of the staff team are female and two are male, thus affording us the opportunity to provide appropriate gender role models for the children and young people. The Unit has specifically sought to increase males on the relief register to increase the pool of male role models for young people.
- 10.11 Larchwood has a team of experienced and reliable bank staff that are employed by Bracknell Forest Council. The bank staff are used to support the team with annual leave, sickness and gaps within the rota. We also positively engage some regular agency staff to provide a balance of age, ethnicity and experience to our own team.

## 11 CARE PLANNING

### Admissions to the home

- 11.1 Larchwood is a Bracknell Forest provided unit and therefore a significant number of referrals are from Bracknell Forest 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.
- 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 Unit Manager, Children's Specialist Support Team Manager and Head of Service as part of the multi professional resource allocation panel. Admission to Larchwood must be approved by the Responsible Individual.
- 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 and formulate an initial risk profile. 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 The unit does not specifically hold an emergency bed. However children and young people who already access Larchwood that may require care in an emergency would be considered through the appropriate social care team.

Samantha Whitehouse, Registered Manager  
Lou Richer, Team Manager  
Sonia Johnson, Responsible Individual  
Children's Specialist Support Team, Bracknell Forest Council

April 2015