



Oakley House Childrens Home, Thurrock



Statement of Purpose

2023

Date of Last Review: August 2023

Changes Made:

Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE..... | 2 |
| VIEWS, WISHES AND FEELINGS | 8 |
| EDUCATION AND TRAINING..... | 11 |
| ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING | 13 |
| HEALTH AND HEALTH PROMOTION | 14 |
| POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS..... | 15 |
| PROTECTION OF CHILDREN..... | 20 |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 23 |
| STAFFING STRUCTURE..... | 25 |
| CARE PLANNING | 27 |
| APPENDIX 1 – TEAM STRUCTURE..... | 30 |

Quality and Purpose of Care

Oakley House Children’s Home, Thurrock is a residential Children’s Home that can accommodate up to three (3) looked after children from the ages of 12 – 18 years old, of either gender.

Our Commitment

Oakley House Children’s Home (OHCH), Thurrock, will make every endeavour to plan and deliver services to children and young people (C&YP) in full compliance with the governments agenda for children’s social care, as set out within context of the ‘Children Homes Regulation 2015, including Quality Standards.

To this end OHCH key priorities will be to work in a way that:

- Children & young peoples’ emotional wellbeing and mental health is well supported.
- Ensures stable, secure, safe and effective care for children and young people.
- Ensures better life chances for children in need and those in care (e.g. good education, health from a holistic perspective, and social care).
- Actively involves clients and carers in decisions pertaining to planning and service delivery.
- Promotes effective partnership working to protect and promote the welfare of Children & Young People within context of current legislation and guidance.
- Support children & young people to manage the effects from exploitation inc. CSE and CCE.
- Ensure young people progress from residential to specified next step such as semi-independence.

The values of the home

We believe that:

- Residential care should provide children and young people with skilled support from committed staff in a safe, caring and ordered environment.
- OHCH has a responsibility to ensure that children and young people in residential care are protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Care should form part of a range of services, which combine to meet children and young people's needs and support their families and carers.
- We should recruit support staff that are carefully selected and have opportunities to develop skills and professional practice through training and supervision.

The range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, provides residential care for young people aged between 12 and 18 years old, in the care of the Local Authority. Due to the nature of the home, we accommodate young people who have complex needs arising from past experiences and who now display behavioural and emotional difficulties including;

- victims of trauma
- suffering with low self-esteem or lack confidence
- emotionally or behaviourally challenged
- considered more difficult to place (Gangs; CSE, CCE and Missing)
- Sibling groups
- Where mental issues will be secondary to the needs of the child.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, cannot accommodate children & young people:

- with a physical disability
- where drug or alcohol is the primary reason for the referral
- who have a history of arson
- who have serious criminal convictions (rape, arson, murder)

Where possible, prior to the commencement of the placement, we would require as much relevant information and statutory documents as possible that describe the historical experiences of the young person, the family dynamics and current relationships. All the current concerns must be highlighted and the risk posed to the young person from themselves and/or the risks they may pose to others.

A referral assessment and an impact risk assessment is undertaken regarding the new placement and the young people already in residence. The manager and the relevant members of the team will discuss the placement and determine whether or not the placement is suitable.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock plans to work towards the following for each young person: (depending on their identified individual needs)

- a) To return to live with their family
- b) To live with foster carers

- c) To move into supported semi-independent living accommodation
- d) To move into fully independent living accommodation
- e) To move into another form of residential placement that may be more specialised for their needs

The full plan for the child will be discussed and planned during admission with the Placing Authority and Family so that clear objectives and goals can be formed. This will allow us to develop an outcome planned response in working with the young person to allow them to reach their best potential and enable a smooth transition to their next step.

We understand that any move for a young person is a traumatic experience and therefore, whenever possible, should be managed in a planned way. However, this does not preclude emergency referrals in some instances.

All enquiries about the service in general can be made to our offices, where information can be sent and discussions held with the manager. We would usually like the young person to visit or be visited to begin our own assessment and to talk through with them their hopes and fears about the prospective placement.

The appropriate Looked After Children forms will be expected to accompany the young person on admission so that key information is available and appropriately recorded.

On admission, the young person will discuss with their keyworker the plans for their placement and expectations of them at the home. In order to build upon the positive relationship with their Keyworker, we aim to offer the child the opportunity to have a short break with them, to allow for time to get a better understanding of each other and to help to ease the transition period. We believe that allowing the child the chance to get to know their Key worker is important as a means of working in partnership. The staff team and residents will meet the young person as a form of introduction.

All efforts will be made to ensure that the young people admitted to Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, have an education provision in place prior to their arrival or as soon as practical following admission; this is the responsibility of the placing authority as directed by the Department of Health. Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock is committed to ensuring that all children and young people in placement have their educational needs met by a clear education plan, which is incorporated into their care plan.

EMERGENCY ADMISSIONS

In the event of an emergency placement which could be within 24 hours, Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will require as much detailed information as possible before or at least within 24 hours of placement; this will include details of the requirement for the placement, historical experiences of the young person, the family dynamics and current relationships. All the current concerns must be highlighted, and the risk posed to the young person from themselves and/or the risks they may pose to others. This information may be taken over the telephone but will be confirmed with documented referral information. The placement may be refused at this point but if the placement is accepted, this will be for an initial period only.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will undertake a risk assessment prior to or as soon as practically possible of the placement being offered. The placing authority will be required to provide all relevant completed LAC (Looked After Children) documentation, a face-to-face or telephone discussion with the manager. Within two weeks of this date, the relevant Local Authority worker will be asked to visit the young person twice a week or until such time as a case conference is convened.

Upon arrival, young people will be welcomed and reassured, and we will ensure the following:

- a) That the young person is welcomed and introduced by the Manager or the Shift Leader for that day and other young people in the house.
- b) That the young person's bedroom has been prepared for their arrival.
- c) That their immediate physical needs will be met.
- d) That they are shown around the building.
- e) That time is taken to explain what will happen next.
- f) That the young person has received a copy of the Children's Guide and a member of staff spends time explaining it.
- g) That particular attention is paid to the building evacuation section of the fire warning policy.
- h) That the young person has received a copy of the Complaints Procedure and understand their rights. Also, their own local authority's Complaints Procedure will be explained.

Care is taken that this process is both informal and young person centred. It is designed to offer reassurance and to minimise the anxieties and worries that young people experience when arriving at a new place.

The home's ethos, the outcomes that the home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.

Any good parent wants to make sure their children enjoy good emotional and physical health, an excellent education and a wide range of opportunities to enjoy their childhood so that they have every chance to grow up into successful, well rounded and mature adults, Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, in collaboration with the responsible/placing authority will endeavour to ensure children placed with us are given these same opportunities regardless of sex, age, culture, disability, ethnicity or religious persuasion.

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, we fully recognize that the period of adolescence can be a very turbulent time, and that often it can present numerous challenges and anxieties for young people, to the extent that established routines and bonds can be pushed to breaking point.

Notwithstanding this, it is our belief that, stability and access to support and nurturing are critical in order to help build resilience and a solid and sustainable platform for adulthood and independence. To this end, we aim to offer a home that values children and young people regardless of their differences and diversity.

We also believe that children & young people grow and flourish as a direct result of good parenting, by being included in the daily decisions of their family group. To this end, it is our aim that our Home will offer both quality individual time, (the development of meaningful relationships with key workers), and as importantly, instilling tolerance and acceptance of others by living as part of a group.

We adopt a realistic attitude in that, living in a home with others, can present with difficulties of its own. However, we also believe that it is by being mindful of this that we continue to review on-going care practices to ensure our young people receive the individual input dictated by their unique needs.

Our physical environment, the activities and social inclusion opportunities we offer along with the staffing arrangement will actively counteract any adverse effects that may otherwise present owing to the size of the home.

Although every attempt is made to create a warm, family like environment, we remain committed to the belief that a child or young person's own natural family has its own unique qualities. Therefore, as

a residential home we work towards maintaining good communication links with the families and other agencies that work with the children or young people placed.

We give our expressed commitment to provide children and young people with structures, care and support in ways that aids and promotes growth, personal and social development in order that they are empowered to make informed choices, aspire, compete, achieve, thereby being well positioned to make valued contributions as good citizens wherever they choose to reside. To this end, children and young people accommodated at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will receive the full benefits of a planning and service delivery model that is child-centred in all respects.

Consequently, our organisational ethos emphasises and endorses the following principles:

Confidentiality/ Privacy:

We will treat all personal information in confidence. The team is committed to only share personal information with other professionals about a young person on a 'need to know basis', balancing the need to protect with being able to provide a good service. Staff will ensure that each child or young person is treated as a respected individual who can exercise privacy in as many areas of their life as possible. Staff will take into account the need to safeguard their welfare and act in strict accordance with their placement plan.

Dignity & Respect:

We recognise the intrinsic value of each individual child or young person. Children and young people are respected as individuals, we respect their uniqueness and their individual needs. This encourages children to keep their sense of personal heritage, identity and community.

Choice/Fulfilment:

In recognition that young people are children first; the children and young people accommodated with us will be encouraged and supported to realise personal achievement in all aspects of life. Our staff will ensure that opportunities exist for each child or young person to exercise choice in as many aspects of their daily lives as possible. This need for choice will be balanced with the need to safeguard and maintain welfare.

Rights:

Children and young people will be given the same rights as individuals living in the community. Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock supports Articles 42 of the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights (and Responsibilities) of the Child' see: www.unicef.org.uk. The children and young people who stay with us will be given information about this.

Equality:

We will ensure that the services and facilities of the home are accessible and available to all. The service provided by our staff should not judge children and young people's circumstances, backgrounds and lifestyles. It should not discriminate on the grounds of race, culture, language, religious beliefs, gender, sexuality or disability. Individuality will be valued; A commitment to treat Children and young people fairly.

Spirituality:

Where a child or young person expresses an interest, staff will discuss and support them in meeting their spiritual beliefs/requirements. Where appropriate, members of staff will refer the child or young person to those who are better placed to offer this support. We have respect for all religions and belief systems.

Quality:

promoting quality services which are based on agreed standards and meet legal and good practice requirements. A commitment to ensure that staff working with children and young people will do what they say they do.

These principles we believe are consistent and compatible with those outlined within the 'Every Child Matters' framework and the resulting five outcomes for children and young people, namely: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Wellbeing, all of which informs our work. As such we will make every endeavour to provide an environment that offers access to positive role models, that promotes acceptance, healing and stability, whilst ensuring due consideration is given to the safety of children & young people, those working within the home and visitors. Accordingly, care, support, education, key working, therapy and other services will be structured to meet individual needs and further will be subject to regular reviews.

This will be complimented by positive reinforcement facilitated via the giving of praise and recognition and constructive use of reward and sanctions, to support learning.

In order to ensure consistency and maximize benefit for our children and young people, Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, operates the principles of transparency and therefore will fully commit to forging open, supportive relationships with children, young people, families/carers, partner agencies and stakeholders. As such during consultative forums and in the event of an unplanned placement breakdown, feedback will be regularly sought and acted upon in order to improve future planning and service delivery.

Essentially, Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, is fully committed to creating a sustainable living, working and learning environment that affords opportunities for delivering specialised and person centred packages of care and support to children and young people, at the heart of which is an ongoing endeavour to promote growth and development within context of an effective and efficient partnership network.

A description of the accommodation offered by the Home

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, is a 4 bedroom semi detached house, in Thurrock, Essex which is able to accommodate up to three (3) young people. The Home comprises of the following:

- An Entrance Hall
- A Kitchen with an open plan separate lounge area
- An open plan dining room and lounge.
- A Staff Office/ bedroom
- 3 bedrooms for young people
- Bathroom with bath and shower facilities
- Separate downstairs toilet
- Garden
- Paved Driveway

The home is a regular House which is a part of a small housing development and does not stand out from the other homes in the area. It is felt that this allows the young people to feel like more of the local community and reduces the risk of becoming institutionalized. As the home does not appear different to the outside world, the young people are often better able to adapt and settle in.

The home is located in Stanford-le-Hope, Thurrock which is a small town with a town centre with a village feel.

It has accessible links to London and other nearby towns such as Basildon, Grays and Tilbury. It is close to the M25, A13 and A128 as well as having good public transport links. As Stanford-le-Hope grows in size, it has started to incorporate neighbouring settlements such as Corringham, Mucking and Fobbing,

The River Hope, a tributary of the Thames, runs through the town

Until 1999 the town was home to two refineries located on the nearby Thames, Shell Haven and Coryton. The Shell site ceased operating in 1999 and has since been redeveloped as the London Gateway deepwater container port, with attendant logistics and commercial development.

[ADD PHOTOS]

Views, Wishes and Feelings

The Home's approach to consulting children about the quality of their care.

We will endeavour to consult our young people about all aspects of their daily life on a regular basis. This will include informal consultation e.g. in general conversation, or more formally during 1:1 key work sessions or House Meetings. Formal consultation will also be conducted as part of the monthly Independent Regulation 44 visits in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home from the children and young peoples' perspective. Children & young people accommodated with us will have the opportunity to talk to people outside of the staff team such as independent advocates. We will also carry out survey regularly to get children and stakeholders' views of the services provided at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock. These surveys will help to feed the regular monitoring done by Management and will be part of the basis for the Regulation 45 Reports which will help to continuously work to improve the service the home provides.

By encouraging our children & young people to contribute their views on different aspects of the running of the home, the management team at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock will develop and support a culture of dialogue that ensures trust and allows our children & young people to see that the adults at the Home welcome and value their views.

Whilst each child will have a dedicated Key Worker, it is crucially important that children are aware that they can approach any member of staff at any time and indeed there are times when a child might deliberately seek out someone in particular who they feel comfortable in speaking about a particular delicate personal matter.

For children to be able to discuss their quality of care, it is important that, where appropriate, they have as much access as possible to information about themselves and especially their care plans on which they are invited to write their comments, with a signature, for discussion by the home or between the home and the social worker or others responsible for the plan.

The Homes Manager will also seek to meet with the young people frequently to get to know them and be there to listen to and respond to any wishes, views and feelings they might have.

A Post Box is located outside of the office which young people can use to communicate any thoughts or questions they want the Manager to know about – this way they can still feel they are being heard, even when the Manager is not in the home. Staff will support them to do this if they find written formats difficult.

Anti-discriminatory practice

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, is part of Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock which is an organisation committed to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice both in terms of the staff it employs and the children and young people it looks after.

All staff will have equal access to training, supervision, support and promotional opportunities. Stereotypical thinking in relation to age, gender, sexual orientation etc. will be challenged and discussed within the home. None of these issues of difference will affect an individual's position within the home or their access to achievement.

All children regardless of their race, religion, culture, disability or sexual orientation will have their individual needs met and staff will endeavour to ensure that needs are met at all levels, either internally or external provision being provided if the need arises.

In Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, there will be regularly planned 1:1 keyworker sessions to address any area of need around this and a programme of work would be identified to support this if needed.

All young people looked after in Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will have equal access to the benefits and opportunities available. It is recognised that on occasion, young people will behave in a way that attracts consequences and sanctions. If so, these will be applied consistently and fairly and in line with the guidelines provided by the Department of Health. Staff are clear that the purpose of the use of sanctions with young people is to promote change not to punish.

In Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, all young people are consulted in this process which is evidenced within debriefs. Young people are given an opportunity to have their say in what consequences they think they should be given. A discussion is held between the young person involved and the staff member and an agreement is made which the young person will sign and agree to.

We believe that all young people are equally entitled to have their needs met and to be free from abuse and exploitation. Each young person will have a Keyworker who will explain to them their rights as a looked after child and consistently ensure that these are being met. There will be regular meetings between staff and young people where the issue of children's rights will be addressed to ensure that young people feel that they are being consulted, listened to and treated equally and fairly.

Children's rights.

Members of staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, are committed to the welfare of all children and young people in their care; we will ensure that our residents, staff and visitors to Oakley House, are treated equally regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, nationality, social background, sexual orientation or religious affiliation.

Staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will take positive measures to counter discrimination. It is the clear objective and policy to embrace the principles of "equality". All members of the staff team will operate within the framework of this policy. Any conduct which is contrary to

this will be investigated in line with our equality & diversity and disciplinary policies and procedures. Disciplinary action, which could include dismissal,

All instances of discrimination will be acknowledged as abusive and will be addressed seriously and consistently by managers and staff members. Children and young people who feel that they have suffered discrimination should bring this to the attention of the staff using the complaints procedure that have been set out in the children and young people's guide.

Staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will help children and young people to observe and preserve their religious, ethnic, cultural, social or sexual identity. The children and young people accommodated with us will be encouraged to express themselves with dress, art, music, food, customs and celebrations in ways that are satisfying to their backgrounds and needs. Positive attitudes from our staff will facilitate this expression.

The Management team will ensure that staff selection, recruitment, training, promotion and treatment is informed by anti-discriminatory practice; no-one will be disadvantaged in these matters.

The Management team will seek to ensure that harassment will not take place in the workplace and will intervene to resolve any potential areas of difficulty in accordance with our bullying and harassment policy. Harassment (may be defined as "behaviour which is unwanted and unreciprocated and which is demeaning or intimidating to an individual"). Harassment can take forms of jokes, inappropriate remarks, less favourable treatment or bullying.

The management team at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will support training that staff may require to work in a competent way with issues around diversity and difference. Organisational policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated in the light of any changes in legislation and good practice.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock is committed to providing support and reasonable adjustments in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to those staff members who require this in order to enable them to perform their job functions with minimum discomfort and risk to their health and wellbeing.

http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_summary.pdf



Education and Training

We acknowledge that some children will not have a school placement and we will work with the Placing Authority and the Virtual Schools of both the PA and LA, to ensure education is provided and is able to be supported by the team.

We will not be focussing only on academic but on social skills, using outings to museums, art galleries, historical trips and using other community / social events to widen the knowledge and give a different perspective and opportunities that are available to young people.

We acknowledge the importance of education in young people's lives and will work in ways that facilitate and support young people in attending, attaining and achieving. As part of our on-going commitment to respond to the educational needs of children and young people in our care, the staff team at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will be proactive in forging and sustaining positive links with teaching staff within mainstream and support services and family members as appropriate, in order to aid effective collaboration in terms of delivering educational programs and assessing progress and recognizing achievements. As part of these efforts, staff of Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will attend school consultation meetings and any other extra-curricular events that are normally attended by parents.

The arrangement for the educational needs of each child or young person including their Personal Education Plan (PEP) are clearly identified, as part of the planning and agreement process and accordingly incorporated into their individual placement plan at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock. A representative from their educational provision will always be invited to attend a young person's statutory review, or any other meetings that support the young person's education in order to ensure we are working in partnership to ensure good outcomes in relation to their educational attainments.

The child or young person will always be consulted about their PEP. Staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, may enquire about matters such as any potential impact for the child or young person of changing school/provision, as any parent would do. In support of the child or young person, staff will also consider the following:

- Whether the child or young person's needs could be met by attending a particular school or provision.
- Whether there are any special educational needs and how these will be met.
- Look at any areas where the child or young person may be able, gifted or talented.
- Consider the level of monitoring a child or young person might need over school attendance.
- Encourage Parental and social worker involvement.
- Make links with any agencies that may be involved with the child or young person educationally (e.g. YOT, Mentoring schemes).
- Check and know dates of national examinations (e.g. SATs) or other assessments the child or young person may intend taking.
- Be responsible for liaising and following up with schools/ educational provisions.
- Make arrangements to ensure the young person can travel to and from school safely.
- Any fixed term or permanent exclusions a child or young person may be given.

Accurate and up to date information will be maintained on file for each child or young person in respect of school reports; copy of the child or young person's PEP, any EHCP (Educational Health Care Plans) and/or any behaviour targets from school, Special Education Needs, education history, reports

from external agencies that have worked with school(s) with clear information about the child's educational attainment, needs and aspirations. Information will also be kept to highlight any other support or additional input that the child is receiving from school such as if the child was identified as 'Gifted & Talented'.

The staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will act as educational advocates for the children & young people accommodated with us, and together with the child and other professionals, we aim to work in partnership to find the right educational provision for the child.

Types of educational provisions that could be sought for the child:

- Home Tuition
- PRU based learning
- Mainstream School
- Activity based programmes/projects i.e The Wilderness Project, Circles Farm.
- Additional Learning Courses
- Online Learning
- ETC...

Transport arrangements will be made in order to facilitate their learning. This is particularly relevant with children from an external Placing Authority who may need to maintain their current education provision whilst they are with us. Where necessary these matters will have been discussed at the 'pre-admission stage' and be incorporated into the child or young person's placement plan. We recognise that it is important for the child to maintain links that were positive and often this is within their school placement and friends and support they receive there. We aim to maintain and support them to keep these positive relationships and structures.

It is the responsibility of the young person's key worker at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, to take interest in all aspects of the child or young person's education. The key worker will ensure that there is a continuity and have high expectations for the educational attainment of the child or young person. Key workers will be aware of and monitor the child or young person's engagement with the range of extra-curricular opportunities available in school.

The key worker will maintain liaison with teachers to ensure that each party's roles are understood and how they can work together. The key worker will attend educational review meetings and contribute to these where appropriate; and provide reports where necessary. The key worker will acknowledge the child or young person's achievements at school and develop ways of celebrating these within the Home.

Where beneficial the Key worker will recommend additional resources that may help the child or young person to access education, including the use of ICT resources. The key worker may participate in any training which is aimed at addressing the educational needs of the child or young person, so that they can then support the rest of the team with providing the child with what they need.

Enjoying and Achieving

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, we understand that as children & young people grow it is widely accepted that exercise should be part of their physical development. Participation in recreational, leisure and sporting activities by our children & young people is considered to be an important lifestyle choice. With benefit such as learning new skills and discovering new talents, improving levels of fitness, social skills, greater confidence, better health etc.

Staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will encourage and support our children & young people to participate in a range of leisure/recreational activities such as engaging with local youth clubs, national organisations such as 'The Princes Trust' or the 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' and the local Leisure Centre.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will also arrange activities planned in consultation with children and young people such as bowling, trips to cinema, theatre etc, as it is recognised that children need a rounded range of experiences and opportunities to try new things.

Some activities will be arranged for the individual child, however group activities will also be encouraged so as to continue to promote positive group dynamics and allow shared experiences to help build positive relationships.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will support activities and visits that have an educational as well as a fun focus, for example trips to educational attractions. These trips may also be linked with our children & young people's educational curriculum. Each child & young person will be encouraged and supported to pursue their particular hobbies and interests.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will conduct risk assessments to ensure that appropriate checks are made when our children & young people take part in activities/outdoor pursuits while recognising the need for positive risk taking. In planning activities, children and young people's wish to take part or not will be respected, provided there are no underlying issues to be concerned about. Any such incidents will be recorded in the Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, logs.

Activities will also be planned in line with individual child or young person's placement plan.

Children & young people will be supported to attend and engage in any religious and/or cultural interests identified in the placement plan. Staff will be proactive in assisting to maintain modes of dress, ceremony, diet and custom etc.

Thurrock has a number of leisure, recreational, and social activities available, including access to and use of youth clubs, sports centres, cinemas, arts and crafts facilities, cookery, bowling, swimming and public spaces such as parks. Young people will be encouraged to take part in activities that they themselves are interested in taking part in.

Each child/young person in our home will be involved in completing a weekly activity planner that sets out the structure of the week ahead. This ensures that both children and staff are able to form a picture of the week ahead ensuring balance and variety. This system also serves review and monitoring activity.

Health and Health Promotion

All Staff are trained in the administration of Emergency First Aid and have regular in house refreshers and formal renewal training sessions. Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock's, procedure is that all health problems no matter how small should be checked out by a professional and staff should support young people to access regular health services. Every health concern is recorded in the young people's health record and where appropriate in incident, accident forms and placement plan sessions. Where a young person refuses to seek medical attention this is also clearly logged. Social workers are updated and if appropriate parents are also.

On admission we will seek for young people to be registered with local health professionals. The home will always refer young people to the same doctor's, dentist and opticians; this means that staff can be confident in the quality of health care provided. In addition to this it helps staff to build up a rapport with local health professionals irrespective of the length of the young people's placements.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will ensure all young people receive an annual LAC Health Assessment (when appropriate) and will ensure that all issues raised cross reference with the young person's placement plan. As this may be the first time being Looked After for some children - we will also ensure that we support them in receiving an Initial Health Assessment.

In terms of promoting the young people to lead a healthy lifestyle the home is highly proactive. Young people are encouraged to partake in a range of different types of exercise. Staff members ensure that young people are educated in how to lead a healthy balanced lifestyle, this is done through consultations and key working sessions, as well as Role Modelling from staff. Each young person has a record of their medical history, allergies, diet, exercise, personal hygiene and physical and emotional health.

The home holds regular activity and menu consultations with the young people where they are supported to make their own healthy choices surrounding meals and exercise related activities. This ensures that young people are learning how to manage their likes and dislikes with health benefits.

Within Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, whilst there is no therapeutic professional on site – we endeavour to support the young people to access therapy for them on an individual basis. This would be through working in partnership with the GP, LAC Nurse, the local EWMHS and the Placing Authority CAMHS if applicable.

The underlying principle in our work is that a young person's social, emotional, intellectual and psychological functioning and the behaviours they exhibit can be understood in the context of their early childhood experiences and their life history. We view mental health as more than the absence of mental illness and adopt a holistic view which privileges the social inclusion, achievement, quality of life, and developmental stage of the young person and the promotion of positive relationships with the people who care for them.

Positive Relationships

Behaviour Management:

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock we believe that behaviour management is most effective when built on good inter-personal relationships between adults and the young people. The home will be an environment where our children & young people can feel safe, cared for and where relationships are built on respect and understanding. The staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will maintain effective and clear professional boundaries. An important factor in this will be staff's understanding and ability to be sensitive to each child or young person's background and needs. Staff will maintain consistent, manageable boundaries for our children & young people with regards to behaviour management. Our staff will use approaches such as de-escalation and early intervention when dealing with behaviour management. Our staff team will receive training and accreditation to use the "Team Teach" Physical Intervention model.

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, the management team will continue to ensure that staff will have scheduled opportunities to share good practice in these matters. This will enable our staff team to de-brief, reflect, share ideas, learn from one another and discuss how things can be improved. As mentioned previously, by giving our children & young people opportunities to be involved in the home's running, the management team are seeking to promote a system of care and behaviour management that is transparent, consistently applied and effective.

The care and behaviour management in the home will be underpinned by positive environmental factors and healthy behaviours modelled by staff. Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock recognises that holds may be necessary in some circumstances as a last resort to manage challenging behaviours in the interests of our children & young people's welfare and for the protection of others. Holding techniques will only be used where a risk assessment indicates that there is no other less intrusive method available to achieve the desired positive outcome, and where there is legal defence for the use of force.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, have detailed policies with clear guidance and procedures for staff to follow about this. Any such incidents will be recorded in our 'physical intervention incident Log', which will be kept on file.

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, we will use the "Team Teach" model as our organisational framework for behaviour management.

The Team Teach Positive Behaviour Management Course aims to provide all staff with the skills in which to be able to:

- Prevent crises from occurring
- De-escalate potential crises
- Manage acute physical behaviours
- Reduce potential and actual injury to our children, young people and staff
- Teach/model to our children and young people adaptive/coping skills
- Provide a behaviour management framework.
- Enable a reflective and learning organisation.

Should boundaries be breached in the home, staff have a system for assessing incidents and making professional judgments about the correct course of action that is most appropriate. The staff's response to inappropriate behaviours will be measured, contemporaneous and fair. Following any

incidents the child or young person will be helped to understand why the behaviour was unacceptable.

All parties with a legitimate interest in the welfare of the child or young person will be informed of any Psychological Intervention used. All those involved in the situation will be offered a de-brief opportunity and the child or young person will be advised of their right to complain and to whom they can complain.

All Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, staff will be made aware of and will sign to agree with the use of the non-permissible sanctions outlined in The Children's Homes Regulations 2001, Section 17(5). Staff will not use:

- (a) any form of corporal punishment;
- (b) any punishment relating to the consumption or deprivation of food or drink;
- (c) any restriction, other than one imposed by a court or in accordance with regulation 15, on—
 - (i) a child's contact with his parents, relatives or friends;
 - (ii) visits to him by his parents, relatives or friends;
 - (iii) a child's communications with any of the persons listed in regulation 15;
 - (iv) his access to any telephone helpline providing counselling for children;
- (d) any requirement that a child wear distinctive or inappropriate clothes;
- (e) the use or withholding of medication or medical or dental treatment;
- (f) the intentional deprivation of sleep;
- (g) the imposition of any financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation;
- (h) any intimate physical examination of the child;
- (i) the withholding of any aids or equipment needed by a disabled child;
- (j) any measure which involves—
 - (i) any child in the imposition of any measure against any other child; or
 - (ii) the punishment of a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child.

Supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, our staff team understand and are committed to the principles of equality and diversity. Our staff team will respect and value 'diversity' and 'difference' as it applies to individual child or young person's religious needs.

These needs will be identified during the child or young person's Placement Planning Meeting. Where it applies to emergency placement; diversity issues will be identified during subsequent meeting within 72 hours of placement commencement. This early identification would enable the child or young person's allocated key worker to support religious observance and instruction.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will ensure that our children and young people are supported to observe their religious beliefs. Children and young people accommodated in our home will be enabled, as far as is practicable, to attend religious services at their chosen place of worship. Any dietary, dress or other requirements based on religious grounds will be respected and accommodated.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, race (which includes colour, nationality and

ethnic or national origins), religion or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.

Religion is very important to the home to have as much information about the young person being placed in our home including religion, culture and first language, and it is part of the admission process.

The Manager and all other Care Staff will actively seek to promote that young person's religion by using resources within the home and the community as a whole. For example, Religious reading matter and equipment (such as Bibles, Prayer Mats and Korans etc.) are supplied to meet the religious needs of the young person(s) placed in the home.

Each young person is also encouraged to regularly visit their designated place of worship locally and if needed, a member of staff would escort the young person(s) to facilitate this. As part of each young person's development it is also part of the home's criteria to discuss difference both individually and collectively with the group (at house meetings). This enables the young people placed to identify with and respect cultural and racial differences of others within a safe environment.

We recognise the importance that religion plays in the life of some young people and will provide support to ensure that they are able to continue to practice their religion. We will also ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place to meet a young person's cultural and religious needs (e.g. adjustments to menus, facilitating attendance at religious festivities etc.).

We believe that all religions are equal and no attempt will be made to dissuade or discourage a young person from their beliefs. Equally young people are entitled to have no belief and to be free from any compulsion to observe any religion or attend church of any sort. No matter what their personal beliefs, staff will not seek to influence the young people they care for in relation to the issue or religious observance

Contact:

In most cases it is beneficial for the young people who live at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, to maintain constructive contact with the important people in their lives, either directly or by e-mail, phone or letter. Staff members encourage young people to keep in contact with their family and friends and offer support to allow them to do so, providing there are no restrictions in place and this is at the request of the young person. All arrangements for contact will be made in consultation with their local authority and negotiated at the point of admission. This will be reviewed regularly and staff will do all they can to ensure that all contact is facilitated.

Where young people's family and friends wish to visit the home staff can arrange this provided it is safe to do so for the young person, their family member, staff and other residents. When friends or family visit the home refreshments are always provided and young people given their privacy.

Where possible family visits are organised for when the young person's key worker is on shift so they can discuss the young person's progress and ask questions.

In Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, this would take place in either the family room or the activity room depending on where the child/young person wishes to do this. There are clear boundaries in place for the use of the telephone and these are individual to each individual young person. If it is appropriate young people can make calls in private. This will all be dependent on what has been agreed with each young person's local authority and will ensure this is in the best interest of the child.

For those young people who do not have contact with their family the home will look into the young person having access to an independent visitor/advocate if this is what the child wishes. All appropriate checks will be made and agreements from the local authority gained.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, recognises the importance of attachment related issues for its young people and the difficulties that can arise in being apart from family. This can sometimes create issues prior to, during and after contact. Staff are mindful of this and ensure that where contact takes place there is good communication between parents and the home and young people and the home on how the contact went. Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, is also able to offer support in difficult situations; for example if too risky for a young person to have contact in their home area staff will support the contact to happen with the Local area or at contact centres.

Complaints about the home

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, aims to provide a high-quality service to the children and young people accommodated with us. Feedback on how we perform will be sought and will be considered as an opportunity to improve the service.

Children and young people will be given information on how to make a complaint and to whom. This information will be given to children and young people when they are placed with us, this is also included in the Children and Young Peoples' Guide. The information will include details of independent organisations to which any complaints may be made. Complaints will be taken seriously and be addressed without delay. Children and young people will be supported to make complaint both internally and externally and will be kept informed of the progress of any investigation and the outcome of the complaint.

There are written policy and procedures for the staff to follow in dealing with complaints. All staff will be trained on these policies. Staff will listen carefully to what a child or young person is saying and be alert to their concerns; particularly if they express unhappiness about any aspect of their care or treatment.

Child protection issues will be dealt with in line with Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, Safeguarding policy and procedures. There will be no form of reprisal against a child or young person who makes a complaint.

Our written guidelines about the complaints procedure identify two types of complaint:

- Informal complaint:
- Formal Complaint

There are comprehensive policies and procedures available on request.

Complaints can be addressed to:

The Registered Manager
Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock

On admission to the Home, each young person is given a copy of the "Young Person's Guide" which has details of the "Young Person's Complaints Procedure" as well as other useful information relating to Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock. The "Guide" will be discussed fully with the young person to ensure that they have a full understanding of the house rules and their rights to complain.

All young people placed at the home are encouraged to attend and take part in weekly house meetings. The intention of these meetings is to discuss problems that may arise in managing the building, the food and to resolve any issues arising from the meetings. This also gives the young people the opportunity to express their views and is an important way of consulting with the young people; and including them in the decision making process. These meetings are fully recorded so everyone can see what has been discussed / agreed and to ensure that decisions are acted upon.

If a young person has any concerns / complaints about another young person, the home and / or the staff working at the home, they are encouraged to voice their opinions individually at key-work sessions, one-to-one discussions and or collectively during house meetings. All complaints are treated seriously and sensitively in line with the complaints policy. It is also brought to the attention of the young people or their representative that they can contact Ofsted at:

| | |
|---|--|
| Ofsted Enquiries at: Ofsted national business unit Piccadilly gate Store Street Manchester M1 2wd | Or Write to: Children's Commissioner for England Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT Phone number: 020 7783 8330 Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk |
|---|--|

The young people also have access to information on how to contact the National Youth Advocacy on Free phone: **0800 61 61 01**, or the Advocacy Team for their Placing Authority.

Protection of Children

Safeguarding & Child Protection:

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will not tolerate or collude with any form of neglect or abuse. We aim to promote and safeguard the welfare of all our children and young people and will be proactive in responding to any allegation or suspicion of abuse. We also empower our children and young by ensuring they are fully aware of what constitutes abuse and how to report it.

Our Safeguarding Children Policy is based on the following principles:

- ensuring suitable and appropriate staff are recruited
- ensuring effective management of staff through regular supervision, support and training
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know
- involving parents and children appropriately
- sharing information about child safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, carers and staff
- ensuring that partner organisations (e.g. suppliers of agency staff, voluntary organisations) apply child safeguarding practice when operating from Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock premises
- ensuring action taken is sensitive to and takes account of the child's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race

At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, we believe that an important factor in protecting and safeguarding children is the need for our children and young people to feel safe and cared for. Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, have a comprehensive Safeguarding Children policy and procedures; we have established links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board; our policies are compatible with LSCB's guidance and information. Our policy include (for example):

- The assertion that safeguarding is everyone's duty and responsibility
- Definitions of abuse.
- Identifying signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse without delay
- Keeping the child & young people informed and safe.
- Who to contact and when.
- Recording incidents.
- Whistle-blowing
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Anti-radicalisation
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Our induction programme covers training on safeguarding children. Every member of staff is required to read and sign to indicate their understanding of the policy and procedure. Policies and procedures are also regularly discussed in team meetings. All staff will attend training and will be equipped with knowledge on how to respond to bullying in the home. We will regularly discuss bullying and discrimination with children during key work and house meeting.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will review its policies and practice in line with any changes in legislation. We will ensure that all our staff are trained in good 'safeguarding' practices and are able to implement their training in practice.

The management and staff at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, are aware that abuse of children and young people can potentially occur via the internet and mobile phones and that this is a growing area, hence, we will be aware and sensitive to identify when this occurs and respond appropriately to support our children & young people. We will provide the children and young people accommodated with us with information on how to keep safe on the internet.

The management at Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, have a commitment to maintain its links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board to keep abreast of developments and guidance in this area of safeguarding. They will be the Home's Safeguarding Leads and will be CSE Champions for the Local Authority.

Full safeguarding policy available upon request.

Physical Intervention:

Where a young person is not able to maintain self-control or puts themselves at risk of immediate harm they will be prevented from carrying out such actions. This may involve holding according to permitted measures.

We only use physical intervention as a last resort and when there is imminent risk of harm such as a young person becoming violent and attempts to endanger her/himself or any other person, or where the young person will cause significant damage to property which may lead to injury.

It must be remembered that young people in care have often experienced physical touch in a negative context and this is borne in mind whenever staff are dealing with them.

The guidelines already in existence relating to control and sanctions are adhered to at all times by all staff. In particular staff understand that no form of physical punishment is acceptable as a means of control. All staff will receive training in Team Teach, this training outlines the identifiable triggers to the changes in 'normal' behaviour that members of staff should recognise when a young person is about to 'act out' both verbally and physically. It also teaches safe techniques for the staff to use when a young person is 'acting out' physically.

Use of physical intervention

The home operates using restraints as a last resort, when all other interventions / attempts to control a young person have failed. During restraints, staff are mindful that they use 'minimum force' and that no harm comes to the young person being restrained.

All incidents that arise where restraint has been necessary are recorded stating:

- Why the restraint was necessary
- How the restraint was carried out
- Who restrained the young person
- How long the restraint lasted
- Who was present during the restraint?

During an incident of physical intervention the principal of minimum force necessary is used and the young person is offered the opportunity to regain self-control i.e. by releasing them gradually.

All incidents of physical intervention are recorded and the Manager, the Regulation 44 visitor and Ofsted monitor these records. In addition there is a record placed on the young person's file a copy of which is sent to the Social Worker. Young people are encouraged to read these records, make any comments and sign them off.

Both the Child and the staff involved will be given the chance to participate in a debrief after the event, so that there is the opportunity to learn and grow from the incident and to ensure that everything about the incident is recorded. If the Manager is involved in the Physical Intervention, then they will also receive a debrief from the RI or Service Manager – so that clear and identified protection for all is in place.

Prior to using physical intervention all staff must complete a two day training presentation on the management of actual and potential aggression used within the home and that competency in this area will be conducted by an approved Team Teach assessor.

Self-Harming Behaviour:

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock recognises that a young person may cause self-harm to him/herself, while placed at the home. It is vital that the staffing team are aware that this is often a 'cry for help' by the young person and in some cases can be seen as a form of attention seeking. If it is suspected that a young person is causing harm to himself or herself action must be taken in accordance with the Child Protection policy / procedure guidelines.

All staff take self-harming behaviour seriously; staff are expected to recognise changes in a young person's behaviour, which may lead to self-harm due to emotional and physical distress and identify with signs and indicators that the young person may be capable of causing harm to themselves. The young person must be given as much support and reassurance as possible to try and protect them from causing any further harm to him/herself. The welfare of the child / young person is of paramount importance.

Monitoring and surveillance of children

The home does not use any mechanical or electronic devices to monitor the young people, neither within nor directly outside of the home, unless the courts direct this. Door sensors which alarm when opened are fitted to the front door only – to alert the staff team to young people's movements during the day; this is in case a young person leaves the home without letting staff know. Staff will be able to hear the sensor no matter where they are in the home.

There is a house alarm system which has been installed as a safe guarding measure so that staff can be aware of anyone entering or leaving the building at night or when the home is empty. This alarm is only connected to the front and back door and is not there for any individual young person, but the home as a whole. Due to fire risk the front door cannot be locked as it is a fire exit – it cannot be opened from the outside but can internally. The alarm will sound if the door is opened during the night and this allows staff to react and take action in terms of why the door has been opened. This form of security is in line with what many family homes have in order to safeguard those that live in the home. The alarm system is explained in the Children's Guide and all Placing Social Workers are made aware of the alarm when they are considering placing the young people at the home.

There is an external CCTV system that covers three points of the outside premises. These point to the front and rear of the house. This has been installed to further protect and safeguard the young people and staff in terms of anyone entering or leaving the home. The system can be monitored using an online app.

This is again in line with usual safety measures that are in place in many people's homes and does not infringe on anyone's personal rights.

Leadership and Management

Registered Provider

Oakley House Children Home Ltd

Director

Geeta Ali

I've worked with children for more than 30 years. I've worked with fostering agencies for 25 years, and I presently serve in a leadership capacity for one as the responsible individual (10 years+). I have also worked alongside residential children's homes for more than 8 years.

- Qualified with an NVQ 5 in Health & Social Care (Children and Young People)
- Qualified with an NVQ 4 in Health & Social Care (Adults) and Leadership and Management for Care Services

Shareef Ali

In the field of Health and Social Care, I have more than five years of experience. I have experience working with children and adults who have complex needs.

- Bachelor of Law (LLB)
- Enrolled on MA Social Work

Responsible Individual

Noor Ali

I have over 32 year's experience of working with children. I have been a manager of children's home; learning disability home for children, Adults home for learning disability; fostering agency and drug rehabilitation centre. I am a qualified social worker and have an Executive MBA and MSC in sociology specialising in Social Policy.

- Social Work
- Masters in Sociology – social policy
- Masters in Business Administration (MBA)
- Economics BA (Hons)

Service Manager

Patrick Dean

I have experience of working with Children Families and Adults spanning over 37 years. My areas of work included working with Looked after children, Learning Care, the Criminal Justice System and Fostering. I also have experience of working in Residential Children Homes and also secure units.

- *Diploma in Social Work*

- *Bachelor of Art with honours Criminal Justice studies*
- *Post graduate Diploma in Youth Social Work*

Registered Manager

Hayley Roberts

Hayley has over 15 years' experience in residential childcare. With 4 years as an RCW, 4 years as an Assistant Manager and has been a Registered Manager since 2015.

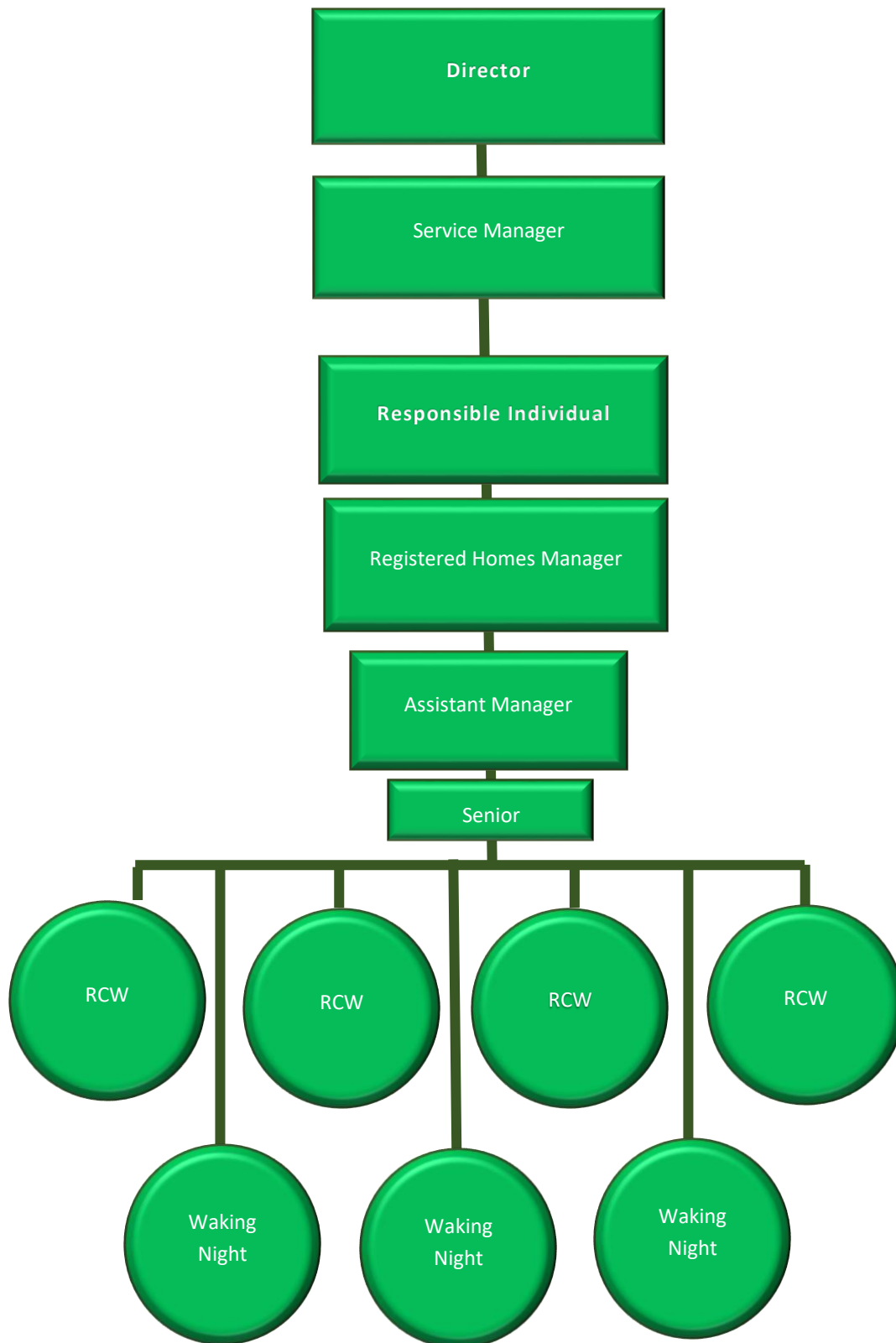
Hayley has worked with young people ranging from 8 years old to 18 years old, both for Essex County Council as well as another Private Organisation.

Hayley has:

- *QCF Level 5 in Leadership and Management (Health and Social Care)*
- *NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care*
- *BSC Psychology*
- *Accreditation in Social Pedagogy*

Assistant Manager

Staffing Structure



All staff including Management will have Professional Supervision at least every 6 weeks. Staff who are within their Probation Period will have Professional Supervision more frequently.

For full descriptions of staff in post see table at end of document

All staff are recruited using the Safer Recruitment Guidelines and undergo checking and clearance with the disclosure and barring service (DBS) with at least two appropriate references taken up before they are offered employment. The home's induction training begins as soon as they start with the organisation to ensure that they have sufficient skills and knowledge to carry out their duties within the home.

There are two staff on duty throughout the day as a minimum, at night the Shift Leader will complete a sleeping in shift. The member of staff on the PM shift will then go home and another member of staff will be on as a Waking Night.

In line with the 'Working time Regulations' all staff who work night shifts will sign an agreement stating that they agree to work the twelve-hour night shifts.

Twenty-four (24) hours a day there is a Senior Manager on-call to offer the staff support and advice as and when the need arises. The rota for who to call will be on display in the office so that all staff are aware.

The staffing team comprises of 9 full time team members who work alongside the manager.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock will try to avoid the use of agency staff, however, there is a 'bank Staff' resource available for use at the home as and when the need arises. 'Bank Staff' are employed under the same recruitment policy/procedures and receive the necessary induction and other training to ensure that they are aware of their duties and responsibilities as a care worker.

The staffing team aims to offer a mixture of male and females who have skills to cater for the complex needs of the young people. All staff will have gone through an induction process; there is also further training carried out regularly to enhance the skills and knowledge of the staff to ensure that they are equipped to work with young people who may have complex needs.

All permanent staff receive regular supervision at least every 6 weeks. Appraisals are completed annually. Training is made available to all staff including bank staff.

All staff will be appraised within the first six (6) months of their employment and annually thereafter. This is to assess with the member of staff their development during their probationary period and then each year thereafter.

Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock supports further training and development of each staff member, all staff members employed will as a minimum hold a Workforce Diploma or equivalent to level 3 in Health and Social Care, or are required to enrol on the Residential Childcare Level 3 Diploma and complete it within their first two years of employment. The company will support staff in doing so.

In addition to staff undertaking nationally recognised/professional qualifications in childcare, a rolling training programme is offered to all staff, covering childcare practices in line with legislative and health & safety guidelines, and the homes policies.

Care Planning

“We work with young people who may be having emotional and behavioural difficulties. We specialise with past trauma for those who are at risk or have suffered from Child sexual exploitation - providing a safe trusting, healing environment. We believe the building of relationships to be the corner stone for positive development”.

We will offer a placement to a young person, if, after reading referral paperwork, we believe we can provide a successful safe, caring environment with a view to moving to a supported fostering environment within a pre-determined timescale.

We will also take into consideration the fact that there may already be a young person in residence and take their needs into consideration and both young people’s risks and safety. The age and maturity of the existing resident will be taken into account. We try to match people that are well suited to help get the best possible experience for them and the best outcomes.

We believe that the best possible admission process is a planned one, where the young person and relevant people are consulted and given enough time to make the best decision for the young person. We fully support a careful transition, involving visits to the home, meeting other young people, staff and giving the young person's view, due weight in accordance with their age and stage of development.

We place great importance on the involvement of family members, as well as the individual, in choosing the home as an appropriate setting for future care. However, we understand that before approaching the young person and their family, their social worker must feel comfortable with the suitability of the home to provide the necessary care and therefore a solo visit may be more appropriate.

Within 72 hours of placement, a planning meeting will be held. The initial placement length with an emergency placement, may be agreed at 28 days in the event of an emergency if felt appropriate.

In the event of an emergency admission (where there is not time to follow standard admission procedures), we work in close partnership with the Placing Authority to ensure that the young person is received into our care with as little trauma and upset as possible, the team will be ready for the admission and the placing authority will be open and honest in the sharing of all relevant paperwork in order to aid the beginnings of the relationship.

For an emergency placement, it is important that the manager and staff are given full details regarding the young person’s present situation, so that the correct professional decision can be made. Within 72 hours of placement, a planning meeting will be held.

Post admission all endeavours will be made to collate chronology to inform immediate risk assessment and Placement Plan. The procedures for a planned placement will be followed wherever appropriate. There will be an internal review within 72 hours to assess the suitability of the young person to the placement. This will also identify a date for a placement planning meeting to be held with the Local authority within the first seven days to identify the longer term plan.

The Registered Manager will ensure that young people are appropriately matched to the skill base of the team and how their individual needs can be met. Consideration is also given to how the behaviours of the young people may impact on the other young people already living in the home.

This will be reviewed throughout the placement, in liaison with the young person's placing authority. Where a child is placed, if there is a requirement to offer additional training to staff to meet their needs, this will be identified and necessary additional training provided as a matter of urgency. Where this additional training requires external input, an introduction to the issues will be provided to the team and more in depth training planned for as soon as is practicable.

Where a young person is admitted from outside the local authority the home's manager completes a notification that is e-mailed over to the designated person at (Access to Resources Team) ART. This also occurs whenever a young person is discharged. This communication allows local authorities to keep track of what young people are in the local area meaning that young people have access to local support services early on in their stay and if deemed necessary the local authority can take steps to protect other people in the community from any risk the new admission may pose.

The written notification includes the following information:

- Child's Name and Date of Birth
- Whether the child is placed under Section 20 or 31
- Contact details of the placing authority and IRO
- Details of any statement of educational needs for the child and the LA that maintains the statement.

These are all required under revisions to Regulation 41. For emergency admissions this must be undertaken within 5 days of admission.

Emergency Departures

Although every effort will be made to contain and work through all presenting behaviour, in exceptional circumstances serious consideration will be given to seeking the necessary removal of a child/young person in the event of the following:-

- Serious sexual incident resulting in a child protection strategy discussion recommending the removal of that child/young person to protect themselves or others.
- Persistent violence resulting in serious injury to other children/young people or members of staff.
- Persistently running away or going missing from care resulting in the child/young person endangering themselves or others.
- On the recommendation of medical advice where a child/young person is at risk of serious self-harm or suicide.

This decision will be taken by the Registered Manager in consultation with the organisations Senior Management Team. In these instances, in consultation with the Local Authority, a request will be made for the child/young person to be removed and alternative accommodation sought.

Following the decision to remove a child/young person as an emergency measure a report will be written outlining the presenting health and safety concerns together with the assessment findings which will be presented at the child/young person's Review within 72 hours of their next placement. A member of staff from Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock, will make every effort to attend such a meeting.

Moving on

Leaving the 'looked after' system and moving into young adult independence is an extremely complex period of a young person's life. At Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock we recognise the need to continue to offer support at this critical time and to ensure that any move is as smooth and problem

free as is reasonably possible. Hopefully this supportive, proactive approach will increase the likelihood that future outcomes for the young person are positive and stable. In line with the Children (leaving care) Act 2000, and as part of Oakley House Children's Home, Thurrock commitment to preparing a young person for independent living, we will draw up an Independent Living Skills Plan (in line with the young person's Pathway Plan), in following this plan we will deliver Independence Training for the young people.

Discharges:

The plan for moving on needs to be clear from soon after admission even though this may be some time away, so the young person has a clear sense of planning for their future. In particular this will be so for any young people where we are considering the placement for progression through to fostering or independence.

The young person will be able to review with the staff and their keyworker the progress they have made and the steps they need to take to build on this success. This will mostly appear in the care planning system.

Team Approach:

It is recognised that it is vitally important that the team functions well together. Challenging behaviour is often too much for individuals to manage solely and that it is only through the staff group operating as an effective team that they can withstand the 'acting out' of the young people and affect positive changes in their behaviour.

This will be monitored by all staff being required to participate in regular training events and achieving the team teach certificate.

The team holds regular meetings. This provides a powerful forum to provide feedback and discuss strategies linked with care planning, reviews and general updates.

Handovers are tightly structured so that observations of group and individual dynamics are handed over as well as practical matters needing attention. Training in handovers and shift planning is given to all staff.

The concept of a team incorporates those professionals, family members, carers and others that are involved in caring for the young person, which in turn increases the strength and skill of those working directly with challenging young people.

Written by Hayley Roberts

August 2023

APPENDIX 1 – Team Structure

APPENDIX 1 Team Structure

Director: Geeta Ali & Shareef Ali.

Name of Registered Person / Responsible Individual: Noor Ali

Name of Registered Manager: Hayley Roberts

Address of the Home:

| Position | Name | Experience | Qualifications |
|------------------------|-------------|--|--|
| Director | Geeta Ali | <i>I've worked with children for more than 30 years. I've worked with fostering agencies for 25 years, and I presently serve in a leadership capacity for one as the responsible individual (10 years+). I have also worked alongside residential children's homes for more than 8 years.</i> | <i>Qualified with an NVQ 5 in Health & Social Care (Children and Young People) Qualified with an NVQ 4 in Health & Social Care (Adults) and Leadership and Management for Care Services</i> |
| Director | Shareef Ali | <i>In the field of Health and Social Care, I have more than five years of experience. I have experience working with children and adults who have complex needs.</i> | <i>Bachelor of Law (LLB) Currently enrolled on MA Social Work.</i> |
| Responsible Individual | Noor Ali | <i>I have over 32 year's experience of working with children. I have been a manager of childrens home; learning disability home for children, Adults home for learning disability; fostering agency and drug rehabilitation centre. I am a qualified social worker and have an Executive MBA and MSC in sociology specialising in Social Policy.</i> | <i>Social Work Masters in Sociology – social policy Masters in Business Administration (MBA) Economics BA (Hons)</i> |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| Service Manager | Patrick Dean | <i>I have experience of working with Children Families and Adults spanning over 37 years. My areas of work included working with Looked after children, Learning Care, the Criminal Justice System and Fostering. I also have experience of working in Residential Children Homes and also secure units.</i> | <i>Diploma in Social Work Bachelor of Art with honours Criminal Justice studies Post graduate Diploma in Youth Social Work</i> |
| Registered Manager | Hayley Roberts | <i>Over 12 years' experience in residential childcare. 4 years as an RCW and 4 years as an Assistant Manager. Hayley has worked with both Essex County Council and Era Care Ltd. Hayley has worked with young people ranging from 8 years old to 18 years old and has been a Registered Manager since 2015.</i> | <i>QCF Level 5 in Leadership and Management (Health and Social Care) NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care BSC Psychology Accreditation in Social Pedagogy A full list of training courses completed are kept within her personnel file.</i> |
| Assistant Manager | | | |
| Senior RCW | | | |
| Residential Care Worker | | | |
| Residential Care Worker | | | |
| Residential Care Worker | | | |
| Residential Care Worker | | | |
| Waking Night RCW | | | |
| Waking Night RCW | | | |
| Waking Night RCW | | | |