



*"Dedicated In, Ensuring that all Individuals Can Achieve Their Full Potential"*

## **THE HOLLIES**



### **Statement of Purpose Version 7**

### **Schedule 1 – Regulation 16**

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# Our Ethos

We are passionate in delivering an excellent residential care service that offers a safe, warm, caring environment for children and young people aged 08 -18 with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties EDB. We strive in enabling and empowering children and young people to express their cultural, ethnic, religious, sexual or social diversity, informing and promoting their rights as children and young people.

The home caters for children that also have complex issues and who are experiencing developmental difficulties and problematic early life experiences, including attachment disorder, emotional behaviours and moderate to low learning difficulties.

“We never truly achieve until our young people achieve and progress in all aspects of their lives. We aim to do our very best to make sure that all young people who stay with us are given the right guidance and support to be able to make the most of all the opportunities available to them”.

“We sincerely believe that by helping young people build a hopeful, realistic future, that they become able and equipped to deal with challenges in the here and now”.

“All young people deserve a chance of happiness and fulfilment and it is our responsibility to provide those chances. Therefore we will use a variety of theory based approaches to achieve our aim, but will always have in mind, the uniqueness and individuality of each young person in our care”.

# Our Aims

- To work in partnership with children young people and all those with parental responsibility to achieve the best outcomes and ensure all are involved in the process.
- Wherever possible we aim to help and support young people to return to live with their families on either a full time or on a shared care basis.
- If the aim is not for the young person to return home, we will provide longer term care for the young people until they are ready to move on to live with another family or to live independently providing support to the individual during the transition.
- In accordance with the Children Act 1989/2004, and the Quality Standards and Regulations 2015, wherever possible contact with families and carer's will be encouraged and maintained. We will also aim to maintain and strengthen any links the young person may have with the community.
- We provide a structured, stimulating, caring and safe environment that is free from any prejudices and which offers young people the opportunity to be listened to and express their wishes, feelings and needs. We will use an open person centred approach in all settings.
- We aim to encourage a positive sense of self-image through responding to young people's individuality by treating them with dignity and focusing on reinforcing positive behaviour.
- We will continually improve the quality of care we provide to children and young people through rigorous monitoring of, and evaluation of, our practices and procedures.
- We will actively listen to and take account of, the views, wishes and feelings of the children and young people we care for as well as significant others in the young person's life.
- We will recognise the uniqueness in each young person and respect their rights, wishes, feelings and needs and work to enhance the skills of young people to better cope later in life.
- We will work with and advocate for access to education, health and needs of the individual child are identified and met through well thought out and detailed placement plans and involving all significant professionals to support the placement plan and identified needs, taking into account the young person's wishes and feelings.
- Provide opportunities for activities and participation in experiences, which will enhance the quality of life of the young person, to enable them to build stronger social networks and reduce social isolation. We will want to use local provisions and bring in the skills of others groups to help young people gain the confidence by way of sport and music and team days so they gain the abilities to enhance their chances of overcoming life's obstacles.
- We will identify a key worker for the young person within 24 hours of being placed at the home. The keyworker will be supported by the Manager and all members of the team will share their own skills to ensure all young people have the opportunity to gain the most from key working and be supported in the whole process.
- We will regularly monitor and review the young person's progress and success within the placement. By use of checks by the RI and registered provider to ensure the home is aiming high for each young person's care to help them excel in care.
- Promote the welfare and safety of children and young people by ensuring our policies reflect how we will address and enforce anti - bullying, equal opportunities, safeguarding and complaints. Each young person will have a welcome pack given and will be taken through the homes guide for each young person to be aware of what they can aim for and strive for while in The Hollies.
- We will provide individual tailored person centred support to young people to effectively and sensitively manage any complex behaviours where a multi -agency approach is supportive and included in the plan to provide care and support.

# Our Values

The staff team will work hard to ensure that the following ethos and values are an integral part of life at **Harmony Childcare**:

The staff will use a person-centred approach and will concentrate on the individual viewing problems. The problems will not be seen as defining the young person and will not be the absolute focus of all our attention. Emphasis will be on:

✓	Encouragement of life skills to help move forward in life
✓	Ensure young people have every right to the access of education and support in learning more and to progress into mainstream education if possible
✓	Be shown and mentored by staff good healthy options, sport, right use of the local provisions to help them gain skills or access courses and other wellbeing opportunities
✓	Ensure the care plans are done but ensure they are able to show the progress to the young person while in care has made and the other areas they need to focus on if need being
✓	Positive role models within the team so young people are shown positive actions

Helping young people, their families and carers to address issues and to be solution focused can lead to residential care being a positive experience at an important stage of the young person's life.

We believe that children and young people respond better to a calm environment and respond to staff that are genuine and care about their welfare. We will provide a skilled service from committed staff in a safe, appropriately structured and caring environment. Staff will be carefully selected and recruited to address gender, age and ethnic balance in order to reflect diversity and positive role models.

With a strong staff value base, positive role models and strong work ethics we will ensure a clear care approach that will help to bring the staff team together in terms of encouraging consistency in relation to behaviour and responses. Providing coherent and reassuring experiences for the children and young people and creating opportunities for positive experiences.

We believe that looked after children and young people have the same rights, privileges and opportunities as other children and young people. They have the right to receive the same level of support that will enable them to reach their full potential and achieve their goals.

The views of all children and young people within the home will be sought and they will be a part of the decision-making process in relation to the running of the home. They also receive clear guidance on their rights, especially about their experience of being 'looked after' advising them on their right to comment or complain, identifying an advocate that will ensure that their concerns are heard and addressed.

Children and young people are encouraged and supported to develop healthy and positive relationships with people who care for them, other children and young people who they live with as well as others whom they may come into contact with within the local community. We actively promote contact with significant other family members (subject to their care plan). This is important for the young person in order to develop their life story.

We work very closely with family members and other professionals involved with the child/young person in the decision-making process relating to the welfare of the child.

We believe in inclusion. It is important to promote the integration of looked after children and young people into the local community and challenge the isolation and exclusion often associated with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

Every child is entitled to safe, warm, consistent and nurturing care. We are committed to getting the best outcomes for the children we care for and will work hard with them and others to achieve this.

## Our Purpose

The service provides medium & long term care for children and young people aged between 08 – 18 years who have experienced behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and placement breakdowns; this includes family, foster and residential placements.

The home will accommodate up to 3 children and young people of both genders. To ensure that their needs are met we will:

✓	Ensure, when planning admissions to The Hollies, clear consideration is given to the mixes of children and young people. Given the wide age range of children and young people to be looked after within the service and the complexity of their needs, we would always take into account their ages to ensure that they are compatible.
✓	All Children who are placed at The Hollies must have a placement plan that is in full agreement of providing a minimum of 25 hour's education per week, and denoting who is responsible for this requirement.
✓	Use the rota's creatively to reflect a balance of gender and experience as well as providing adequate numbers.
✓	Provide adequate staffing to work closely with smaller groups or individual young people in order to promote their welfare and to enable outside activities to take place.
✓	Identify a key worker for each young person who works with them directly to ensure the identified objectives in their care plan are fully realised.
✓	Meet the needs of each young person in placement through the provision of firm boundaries, structured care and to promote and effect positive changes for the children and young people equipping them with the tools that will enable them to move forward into future placements or in preparation for independence.

# The Home – The Hollies

The home is a Beautiful detached 4-bedroom property which is set over two floors. Children will have access to communal lounge areas where they can watch TV, play games and read books provided.

The Hollies has been furnished to a good standard. It is well decorated throughout with comfortable and modern furnishings. The home contains all the amenities associated with modern life – central heating; fitted Kitchen with fridge freezer, washer and dryer; adequate bathing / shower facilities. The Hollies has a comfortable communal lounge equipped with TV and music system.

The home accommodates up to 3 children and young people and we work hard to refrain from looking institutionalised. Each young person will have their own spacious bedroom, furnished to a high standard with adequate storage space.

Children and young people are encouraged to take ownership of their bedroom through their choice of bedding, posters, pictures, books and personal items.

The home has good links to bus routes into and around the Staffordshire area. There are a number of recreational activities that can be accessed as well as clubs that can promote positive social inclusion.

## Model of Care

We believe that looked after children should be offered the same choices, chances and opportunities as other children and that we should work together with them and others involved in their care and welfare to diminish as far as possible the impact of their past experiences of abuse, neglect, exploitation and exclusion. To enable us to achieve this we will deliver a clear care approach from staff teams that will be consistent with their approaches and responses, providing coherent and reassuring experiences for the children and young people, and creating opportunities for positive interactions.

Workers are more likely to understand their part in constructing and maintaining a caring environment conducive to progress and positive development.

## Personal Care Support

We believe that all Children and young people should be able to maintain high levels of hygiene, which could require some staff support. If any young people do require low level personal care support from the staff team will ensure that this is agreed with the placing authority and consent of person's having parental responsible. Risk assessments will be completed alongside one to one discussions held with young people. The staff team play high priority on maintaining personal dignity.

## Critical Service Components

A clear care approach helps to bring staff teams together in terms of encouraging consistent staff behaviour and responses, providing coherent and reassuring experiences for the young people, and creating opportunities for positive interactions.

Workers are more likely to understand their part in the young person's recovery and crucially play their part in constructing and maintaining a caring environment conducive to progress and positive development.

A comprehensive assessment and review process for every young person when they arrive at The Hollies to ensure they have the right support package put in place centred on their needs and how we can help them grow from within as a young person in care. The reviews will help the young person and key worker develop plans which will meet their needs and also look at the areas they need more support if needed.

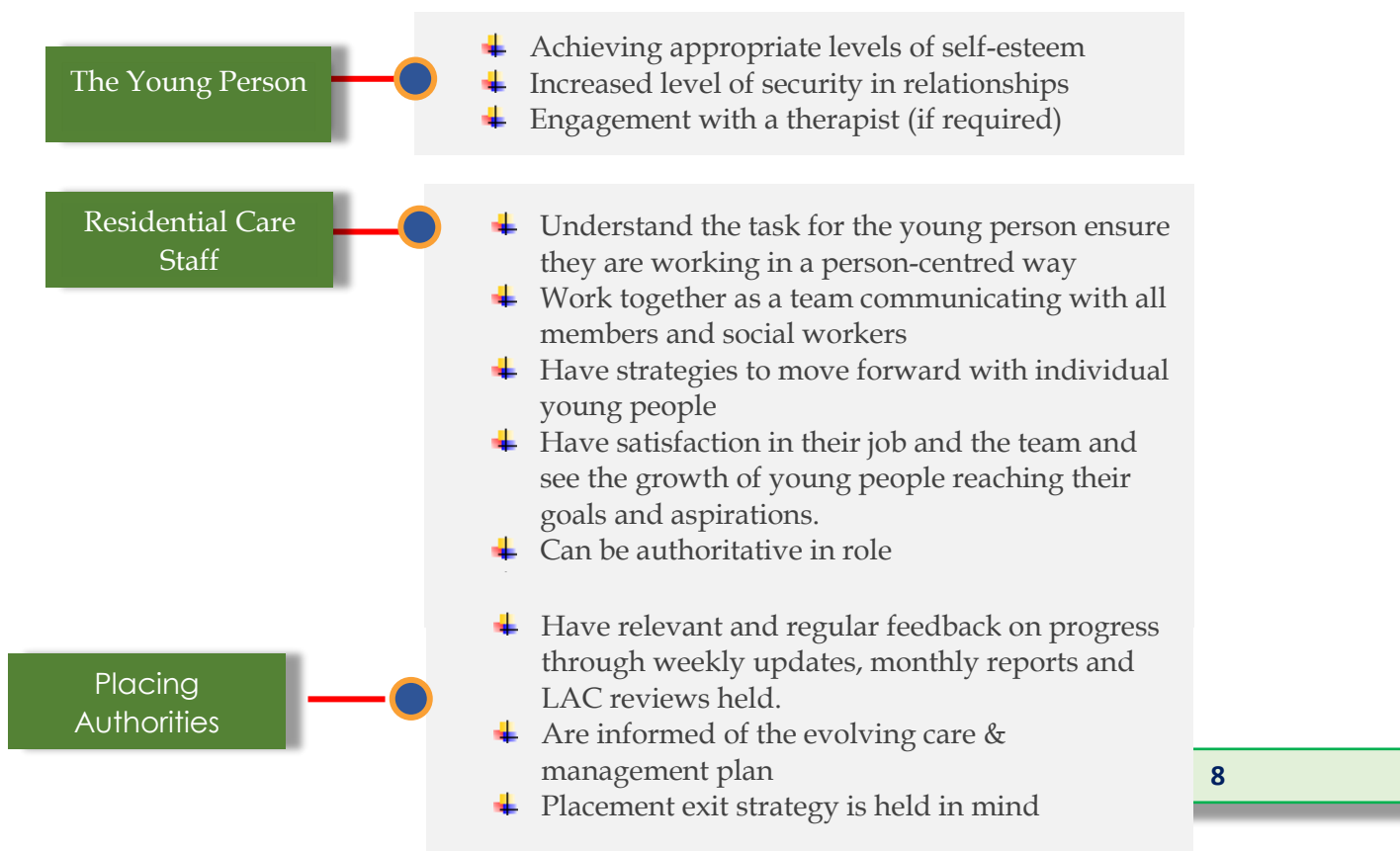
Meeting the mental health needs of young people in the care system continues to be a prominent driver of government policy and practice guidance. Harmony Childcare will work collaboratively with local CAMHS services and other specialist teams to help those young people who are struggling with mental health issues. This will be written into the care plans for them and they will have full encouragement from staff to gain the help needed to gain recovery for their mental health, we will be promoting at all times a range of treatment options for them which they have the right to access while at The Hollies.

At **Harmony Childcare**, we believe it is essential to undertake an assessment at referral, intake and at strategic points during the placement. The initial assessment will incorporate key domains of the young person's function and development needs including educational, emotional/behavioural, social and learning skills.

The initial assessment period's findings will inform the placement plan, treatment goals and educational needs and crucially, will begin to define parameters for outcome.

Childhood & adolescence is characterised by development and change; placement plans must reflect and accommodate these changes in the light all information available and with access and support from staff from external agencies like CAMHS to support Children on a 1-1 basis when needed. Young People will be supported to attend any appointments with these professional services.

We are always going to be working towards positive outcomes for all parties involved in the home when a young person is struggling to adjust to the new environment this will be monitored and the team will help them adjust to the new home. Our ethos is to build on the relationship of the young person so they are able to see the growth of their time at The Hollies and progress into life as equipped confident young people. Over time the young person's view of life might change and they need other objectives set for them by their key workers, this will then give them the direction they need to move forward.





# The Hollies Code for Living

The young people who live at The Hollies are expected to behave in an appropriate and considerate manner towards others. Everyone is expected to participate in domestic chores, deciding what food to buy and menu preparation and actively learning about becoming independent so they will learn new skills.

✓	The Hollies provides safe, positive daily living experiences where young people can come to terms with the traumas of separation, and to work at their own pace on building a brighter future.
✓	We believe that to create a friendly, relaxed and supportive environment, which values the ethos of mutual respect and responsibility, equipped with adequate communal and private living space, is the foundation upon which our quality service is built.
✓	Young people are actively encouraged to personalise their home and are particularly supported in individualising their own bedrooms.
✓	We offer a flexible response to needs, developing and building upon individually focused plans to help young people achieve their aims.
✓	Identify a key worker for each young person who works with them directly to ensure the identified objectives in their care plan are fully realised.
✓	Families are welcome at any time (there must be an agreement with the Social Worker). However, it is best that mutually convenient times are negotiated. To compliment this, contact is also encouraged through emails, telephone calls, letters and home visits.
✓	Families and Social Workers are given a verbal update at least weekly and progress reports are provided for all review meetings and as and when required by external agencies.

## Looked After Reviews

There will be a review held within 72 hours of the child being placed. (Placement Review) Within 28 days of admission the first statutory review will be held, and then at 3 monthly intervals thereafter. Regular care plan updates by the key workers and Homes Manager, to discuss the progress of the placement, any concerns and actions to be taken.

An Independent Reviewing Officer from the placing authority chairs statutory reviews; the home will provide a comprehensive report for these reviews detailing the progress, development and issues during this period. This will be complemented by reports from other agencies such as the young person's school. Children and young people will be supported in presenting their own views in any way that is appropriate and they are comfortable with. The key worker will encourage each young person to attend and participate in their review, offering whatever help or support that is needed or advocating if necessary. Where children and young people are unwilling or unable to make a direct contribution, their key worker will advocate their wishes and feelings to the meeting.

A record of all decisions and recommendations made at each review will be kept on file and will be used to inform on-going work with the young person. The key-worker will be responsible for ensuring that the young person is informed of the decisions reached in the review in a way that is suited to their level of understanding.

## Care Planning

Care plans produced by the Local Authority are an important tool in forward planning for the young person. It is the task of the home's staff to fill in the finer detail when working towards care plan objectives. This will be done through regular consultation with children and young people and rigorous placement planning.

To enable us to develop detailed placement plans that will be used as a working tool daily within the home we will:

- ✚ Be aware of the content of the agreed care plan.
- ✚ Clarify how we will work in partnership with all parties involved with the young person.
- ✚ Ensure that everyone is clear about the plan and that the young person has been informed and understands the contents of the plan.
- ✚ Identify any significant changes and the implications these will have for the plan.
- ✚ Plan responses to specific requests or behaviours in line with the plan, anticipating any changes.
- ✚ Involve children and young people in all aspects of care planning.
- ✚ Be able to bring into action a contingency plan when things go wrong.

All children/young people will have a regularly reviewed and up to date care plan reflecting their own individual needs, wishes and aspirations. The care plan will outline areas of assessed need and clearly and unambiguously outline methods needed to achieve these important issues. The recording of these plans should be in formats easily understandable for the child/young person and they should have regular opportunities to discuss the progress and focus of the ongoing plan. The registered manager will oversee the management of all care plans and will monitor their progress with key workers through the supervision process and the six-monthly Regulation 45 inspections.

## Planning for independence

In line with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and the Quality standards 2015, as part of **Harmony Childcare** is 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 a full independence training programme. (Subject to assessment and progression)

A copy of this completed plan will be held on file, a copy given to the young person for future reference and a copy provided to the Social Worker and/or aftercare worker. The children and young people are involved in the planning of the weekly menus, taking into account any special dietary needs e.g. allergies, their particular likes and dislikes and also their cultural needs.

The home has the facilities to allow young people to have their own kitchen area for independent living. The children and young people will also be involved in completing the weekly shopping list with the staff and involved in doing the shopping. Staff ensure that the menus provided are healthy and nutritionally balanced i.e. awareness of additives and 'E' numbers etc.

# Staff Supervision, Training and Development

The team has been drawn together from a variety of backgrounds and have all been selected for their own individual skills and knowledge bases.

A rigorous and carefully planned recruitment process has been developed to ensure as far as possible that the team is able to support in a positive and proactive manner. All new employees will be subject to a six-monthly probationary period. This will allow them to gain a greater understanding of the expectations within the home and the wider organisation as a whole. A clear set of benchmarks are in place to monitor and ensure that levels of expertise have been met and only then will a permanent working contract be gained.

On-going training and personal development is encouraged and clear career development pathways are designed to enable all staff members to continuously learn new skills and thus be able to offer a greater level of expertise to the children/young people in their care. The development of staff will be monitored through in house reflection & development plans that fall in line with supervision, commencing post probation. A robust training plan designed for staff to meet the needs of the young people is on offer to all staff, and further training of a more specific and specialised nature will be available in line with personal identified needs for each individual staff member and the needs of the project as a whole. An induction plan is provided to new and or less experienced staff, and our Training programmes does include a scheduled annual training plan, such as Basic Food Hygiene, First Aid, Physical Intervention, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Fire Safety.

The Hollies is 'one home' and staff are inducted and trained according to the scheduled and pre-planned training requirements. All staff will have either achieved or be working towards a Diploma Level 3 for Children and Young People.

## Staff Structure

The Hollies recognises the need for appropriate, supportive staffing levels, not only in terms of health and safety requirements but also in relation to quality, purposeful, supportive and proactive childcare practices. With this in mind we aim to have a team of 8 staff which will consist of a Registered Manager, a deputy, 2 Senior Residential Support Workers and 4 Residential Support Workers which will be provided on a 24/7 basis. The company will also aim to have a pool of bank staff who can be called upon during any shortfalls seen within the staffing rota.

As a basic guide, there will always be a minimum of two staff on duty (1-1). This level of cover will be constant from the point of the children rising in the morning until bedtime. (Staff sleep in) At all times staffing levels will be determined by individual support requirements of the young people in our care and can be increased accordingly by utilising staff from a relief pool of workers. All bank workers are subject to the same rigorous selection processes and are provided with the same levels of training as full time team members. Supervisions for bank staff will take place every 8 shifts and are recorded on a matrix. Additional supervision's may be generated where the supervisee requests one during this period or should the supervisor identify a need which requires extra sessions. Staffing cover during the night will consist of 1 residential workers providing sleep in cover per Child (up to a maximum of 2 staff). The staff will sleep in during the night and have access to an on-call system which will be either management or a senior on a rotational basis. The relief pool workers will also be available to cover holiday and sickness leave.

The Registered Manager will usually work 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

## Seniors & Residential Childcare Workers

The Hollies has a rota dependent upon the needs of the children/young people which ensures that there is a minimum of one staff per young person, excluding the registered manager, on duty at all times. There will be staff available where necessary from 7.30 in the morning for school runs. The home will operate a shift system where young people are supported on a 1-1 basis at all times. (Unless otherwise stated within any request made for 2-1 staffing form placing authorities).

Where there is a high level of risk associated with individual young people a third member of staff may be required to undertake waking night duty. Where this is required, starting and finishing times will be arranged according to the need. The Manager will ensure that the staff rota reflects the needs of the young people, and where young people need to be taken/collected from school, engage in extracurricular activities, or have family contact, there will be staff available to facilitate.

There will always be a shift leader and access to a senior member of staff for support both day and night via an on-call system.

All staff will receive support and supervision through regular consultations with their line manager. Where deemed appropriate a staff member may receive further one to one supervision (during prolonged periods of 'Targeting' or during nominated performance improvement plans etc.).

## Bank Staff

**Harmony Childcare** aims to build up our own pool of care staff to enhance the permanent team and ensure adequate arrangements for sickness and absence. This will also ensure staffing levels are able to be increased where circumstances require this in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of each individual young person. All bank staff are encouraged and required to undertake the Diploma level 3 training.

There may be circumstances where there will be lone working e.g. where staff are supporting a young person in education or attending appointments etc. In these circumstances staff, will never be solely in charge of more than one young person and a risk assessment will be in place, identifying any likely risks to the young person, staff and members of the public. This will demonstrate that there is no unacceptable level of risk in the arrangement.

## Supervision

**Harmony Childcare** as an organisation recognises the need for a structured and focussed process of supervision for all staff. All full-time workers will be expected to receive supervision on a monthly basis this will allow them to focus upon their own personal practice, the practices within the home as a whole as well as identifying training and support needs on an individual and collective basis. The process will be used by management to assess work performance and the effectiveness of the service in meeting the needs of the young people in their care. Learning objectives and effective practice objectives will be set and fed into a wider personal development process.

## Staff meetings

This forum will take place as a minimum on a monthly basis. This will give the team an opportunity to discuss and reflect on all aspects of their work and daily activities within the home. Consultation with the MDT where possible along with updates and feedback from key workers in relation to the young people they hold responsibility for, enables the team as a whole to be comprehensively informed in relation to on-

going individual work and supports developments in relation to all young people. Contracted clinical therapists may also attend team meetings and provide clinical staff supervision should young people require their intervention to offer a clinical overview of young people.

This consultation with all residential staff ensures collaborative working to support the individual placement plan goals identified for each young person. This process will support the links and information systems already in place within the home i.e. recording systems, handovers etc.

## Personal Development and Appraisal

The need for a well-trained, well-motivated staff team is extremely important in the relation to positive outcomes for children and young people. The development of a clear, and focussed process, which aims to promote staff development and ensure that the aims and objectives of the home, and organisation as a whole are achieved, is imperative.

Through the process of supervision, it is possible to begin to develop a personal development strategy for each individual. This process which is included within staff supervisions will be on going and allow the team to continuously develop a range of skills and abilities that enhances their practice and help them to work with and support children and young people more effectively, whilst also helping themselves to develop a career path that will allow them to experience a range of roles and situations that lead to progression should they wish to do so. This overall process will then allow for a situation where an appraisal system becomes part of the annual evaluation of the individual and the service as a whole.

Jointly agreed aims and objectives become useful tools and make the service more responsive to the support needs of children and young people, through continuous development of staff and service.

## Positive outcomes of The Hollies

At The Hollies, we have a very clear vision for the young people we care for. Using long established systems of support for young people along with a continuing skills development programme for our entire team, our target for each and every young person is to enrich their lives with new life skills, provide a renewed sense of wellbeing, to achieve a good level of education and to improve their prospects for the future. Where we have younger children with more complex behaviours we aim to reach a point where they are able to re-integrate into family life (e.g. long term stable foster placement).

## We deliver these outcomes by promoting:

Health: Physical well-being, healthy choices

Learning & Education: Educational achievement, skills, interests, hobbies, SEN needs met

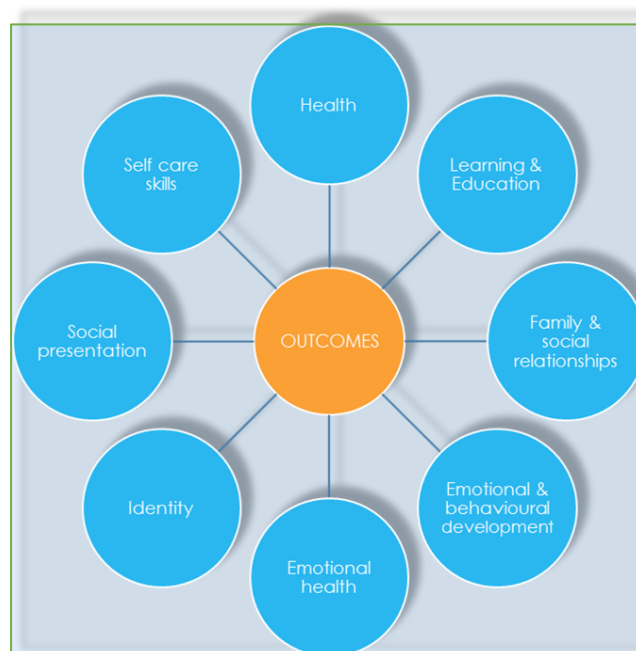
Family & Social Relationships: Safe, stable, affectionate and supportive relationships learn new approaches with family which are positive for them as a young person and also helping the family to support them

Emotional & Behavioural Development Quality attachments, resilience,

Emotional health: Identity – Self-image, self-esteem, belonging, acceptance, cultural identity

Social Presentation: Good Physical Presentation, positive interactions build strong links in the community

Self-Care Skills: Stay safe, develop life skills, employment



## Promoting good health and wellbeing

The Hollies will ensure that children and young people are supported and encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle by providing services, guidance and information that supports this. Children and young people will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. To achieve positive outcomes for children and young people we will ensure that they are:

✓	Physically healthy and understand the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet and engage in regular exercise.
✓	Mentally and emotionally healthy
✓	Sexually healthy
✓	Safe and know how to keep themselves safe
✓	Educated and receive information on leading healthy lifestyles and are aware of risks from smoking, drugs, substance / alcohol misuse, under age sexual activity and STD's.
✓	Fully aware and understand the need to maintain good standards of personal hygiene.

The health and well-being of children and young people looked after is of prime importance. We will work alongside parents, community nurses, Social Workers, behavioural therapists, teachers and other professionals involved with the health and welfare of the young person in order to ensure that children and young people live in a healthy environment, their health needs are identified and services are provided to meet them.

Each young person has a written health plan and staff are vigilant in regards to health needs and ensures that each young person receives any medical or dental assistance, which they require. In addition, they provide the comfort and support, which children and young people need when they are ill.

Wherever possible children and young people visit their own doctor and dentist; if this is not possible arrangements will be made for a new doctor or dentist in line with the young person's needs and preferences. Emergency health needs will be met by either the use of the local accident and emergency department or the on-call GP.

Prior to admission the Manager or the young person's key worker will liaise with parents, carers, Social Workers and other agencies involved in the young person's health care in order to establish a clear written health plan (within their Placement Plan) covering:

- ✚ Medical history.
- ✚ Any specific medical or other health interventions, which may be required.
- ✚ Any necessary preventative measures.
- ✚ Allergies or known adverse reactions to medication.
- ✚ Dental, hearing or optical needs.
- ✚ Specific treatments, therapies or remedial programmes needed in relation to physical, emotional or mental health.
- ✚ Health monitoring required of staff.

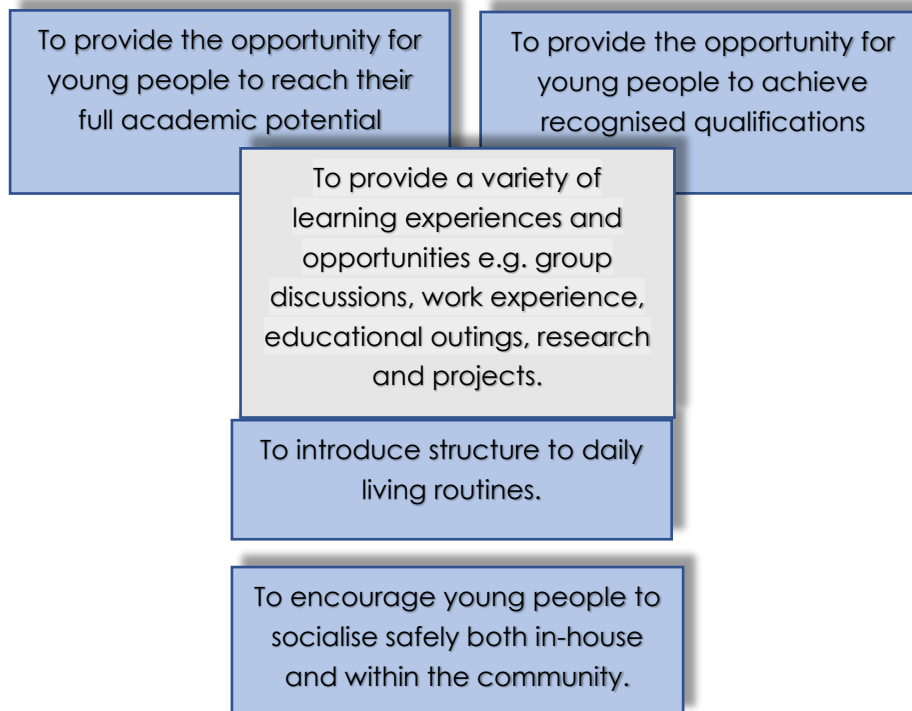
Staff receive training in first aid, the administration of medication and the treatment of minor accidents or illnesses. All treatment and administration of medication will be given in line with our written policy and guidelines to staff which includes instructions on statutory notifications to OFSTED, written records kept within the home and the safe storage and disposal of medications.

In addition to attending to current health needs, staff ensure that children and young people receive age and culturally appropriate advice on health-related matters in order for them to make considered choices and take appropriate action in relation to their own health needs. Such advice would cover issues related to smoking, alcohol, the use of drugs, sexually transmitted diseases, Hep C, HIV and AIDS. This advice will be in the form of one to one key work sessions, group meetings, the supply of literature and information, and referrals to specialist services if required. We also invite speakers to the children and young people's meetings to talk about specific topics.

If a young person has therapeutic needs, then these will be addressed in the course of Looked After Children reviews and arrangements made to provide appropriate assistance in consultation with all interested parties and consistent with the young person's Care Plan

# Education, Enjoying and Achieving

Our aim at The Hollies is to make everyone aware of the things children and young people need to help them to be happy, successful, healthy and safe, actively encouraging learning and development.



## Education

All Children must have an agreement from the placing authority to provide education at the initial placement planning meeting. The Hollies', aim is to re-engage young people in education if they are currently not engaging as directed by the requirements of the individual bail conditions imposed. For those in education, we aim to support this and where young people are progressing, we will support the Pathway Planning process.

**Harmony Childcare** Services are not a registered provider of education. However, we do provide a team of staff to support the young people in order to maximise inclusion, opportunity and individual potential.

Education support staff can work in partnership with placing authorities to support and identify mainstream education plans. Wherever possible we will provide transport and equipment such as pens and books etc. We will also provide supervised access to computers.

At the end of year 11, children and young people are no longer required to attend compulsory education. However, to meet the educational needs of all children and young people, we will have a Pathway Plan and this must involve potential employment, a college placement, modern apprenticeship programme or to be a part of the Connexions Entry to Employment Scheme.



# Safeguarding and Child Protection

In response to the Children Act 2004 and the recommendations of the Safeguarding Review 2005, staff at The Hollies remain committed to practices which protect children and young people from harm; are clear about how to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect; have a full understanding about the thresholds that apply to safeguarding; and know to whom they should refer concerns or safeguarding issues.

- ✚ To ensure that the young people live in safe and comfortable surroundings.
- ✚ To ensure the recruitment and selection process for staff is rigorous.
- ✚ For staff to receive comprehensive training in child protection and ensure clear policies and procedures are in place.
- ✚ To ensure on going risk assessments are undertaken to meet all Health and Safety requirements.
- ✚ To promote a culture of openness and one that is free from any form of prejudice or discrimination.
- ✚ That clear guidelines for staff and young people are in place to address any signs of bullying or intimidation. Staff are very aware of cyber-bullying

## Safeguarding

The Hollies has a clear Safeguarding / Child protection policy and training is provided regarding procedures. Staff at The Hollies attends regular supervision and clinical reviews regarding the young people. The staff are vigilant in relation to the young person's on going safety and protection and is aware of the indicators, signs and symptoms, when abuse is taking place. They are aware of the Local Children's Safeguarding Board procedures for managing suspected safeguarding concerns and are clear about the lines of responsibility and accountability within the home.

In addition to concerns that arise in the community staff are aware of the danger of professional abuse and exercise caution and vigilance in relation to the professionals who have access to young people. The home has a Whistle Blowing Policy where staff are encouraged to speak to their Senior Managers if they have concerns about their colleagues' conduct towards young people. In addition, through the Child Sexual Exploitation Policy adopted by **Harmony Childcare**, staff are aware of issues in relation to child exploitation and are trained to monitor and report any issues.

**Harmony Childcare** has an internal Safeguarding policy and information on how to make a safeguarding referral to the local safeguarding board.

At the Hollies, we recognise that good communication is a key factor in protecting children and young people. We aim to develop open and honest relationships with young people in order to demonstrate and gain trust within appropriate boundaries. In order to maximise this, each young person will have allocated key people within the home that have specific responsibilities regarding their duty of care towards each young person.

We aim to work in partnership with young people, with external professionals involved and wherever possible, their families.

We will ensure that the opportunities for sharing information are maximized by undertaking regular review meetings. This will ensure that progress is reviewed, risks are assessed and evaluated accordingly and also that behaviour management plans are updated.

Young people will be made aware of the Home and its expectations at the commencement of the placement. They will be initially formed by way of a Children's Guide and will be discussed with key

workers at the earliest opportunity. The information contained will outline the homes policies relevant to our duties regarding child protection issues.

Each young person will have a Placement and a Care Plan that is individual to him or her and addresses their diverse needs, individually. It is recognised that where risk assessments indicate that higher levels of supervision are required, that this shall be undertaken in a manner that continues to recognise human rights and dignity.

Staff at The Hollies places a high value on the education that young people receive. In order to support individuals' learning and education, The Hollies will offer group work and individual key work sessions that maximizes the potential of young people to protect themselves from abuse by supporting topics such as misuse of substances, exploitation and bullying etc.

The Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer (DSCO) for the Company is Nursat Janjua who can be contacted on 07539 893138, they will be contacted by the homes Safeguarding Officer or the staff member on duty for consultation and agreement on management and progressing all safeguarding concerns.

The Local Authorities LADO (Looked after Designated Officer) [www.staffscb.org.uk](http://www.staffscb.org.uk)

If your workplace has a Designated Senior Manager (Nusrat Janjua) who deals with allegations, advise him/her of your concerns. If, after professional consideration by the manager, the allegation or concerns appear to meet the criteria he/she must contact the Duty LADO via the First Response Team within 24 hours of any situation arising (see contact details below). It is important that you take advice from the LADO before commencing an internal investigation. For instance, it may not be appropriate to immediately inform an employee or volunteer that there has been an allegation or that there are safeguarding concerns. Such action could prejudice a criminal investigation.

#### Contact Details

Free phone: 0800 1313 126

(Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm)

Email: [firstr@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:firstr@staffordshire.gov.uk)

In an emergency outside office hour's telephone 0845 6042 886

## Complaints & Bullying

We are committed to providing the best care we can for the children and young people who live at The Hollies and we want them to feel safe and well looked after. We believe it is important that children and young people are able to talk freely about their care and to complain if they are unhappy about anything while living at the home. It is important also that others who have an interest in a young person's welfare - parents, friends, advocates etc. have an opportunity to make comments or complaints about any aspect of the young person's care.

**Harmony Childcare** has a Complaints Policy (in which all staff has received training) which is provided to each young person on their arrival and which the key worker explains at an early stage of their stay. It is also available in a form, which can be understood by the young person. The complaints forms can also be made available in different languages upon request.

We have a positive attitude to complaints and see them as an opportunity to improve the quality of care we provide for children and young people. All complaints, whether major or minor are taken seriously and responded to in a timely fashion in line with our policy. The young person, or the person making a complaint on his/her behalf, is kept informed on the progress of the investigation throughout. Children

and young people are reassured that they are free to complain at any time about anything without fear of reprisals. In creating a positive care environment, which has a pro-active approach to complaints we will:

✓	Help children and young people to make complaints and criticisms in an acceptable manner
✓	Make it possible to deal with the majority of issues raised, on a day to day basis within the home.
✓	Give opportunity for complaints to be raised about matters outside of the care setting e.g. school or family
✓	Make sure children and young people are aware they have rights. Staff will revisit issues and procedures with children and young people in children and young people's meetings and in one to one sessions
✓	Help children and young people to raise complaints about difficult issues and matters that might have appeared right to them within the context of their experiences, but which are generally not acceptable in society
✓	Reduce the number of complaints that need to be dealt with formally

All young people are made aware of our complaint's procedure and are informed about how to make a complaint.

We will always try to resolve a complaint at the lowest possible level, whilst respecting the seriousness of the complaint. All complaints are taken seriously and are recorded in our complaint's log.

The Manager meets regularly with young people from the home to provide an opportunity for feedback. Young people are advised that they can complain to:

- ✚ Adult members of the team including the Manager
- ✚ OFSTED
- ✚ Child-line
- ✚ NSPCC
- ✚ Their social worker
- ✚ The Host Authority
- ✚ NYAS
- ✚ Independent Regulation 44 Inspector

The Registered Manager, who will if necessary liaise with external agencies, will investigate all complaints about the behaviour of staff.

All Young People have the right to an independent person to support and advise in complaints, and this right will be upheld at all times by the home.

Exerting power through intimidating others is not acceptable. Some of the young people in our care may try to bully others in order to feel better about themselves.

It is our responsibility to be continually aware of the possibility that bullying may occur in the home or in areas external to the home. We must offer protection to those who are bullied and guidance to those who bully.

At **Harmony Childcare**, we recognise the problems that bullying can create both for the victim and the bully alike. Bullying at **Harmony Childcare** will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The home has an Anti-Bullying Policy that is made clear to all new residents in their introduction to the home. The policy is designed to discourage bullying and to encourage victims to speak out about it if it occurs. When incidents of bullying are observed, or reported action is always taken to ensure the victim is safe and supported and to reinforce with the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Staff at **Harmony Childcare** recognises that bullying is a complex issue and that often the same young person is both a victim and a perpetrator at the same time. They adopt a pragmatic, pro-active, no-blame approach to managing the problem with the intention of helping the bully modify his behaviour and recognise that there are more acceptable ways of having their needs met than intimidating others.

All incidents of bullying are recorded and detailed notes kept. We ensure that children and young people who are victimised receive the help and protection they need. While those who bully have their unacceptable behaviour appropriately challenged this will also include sitting down with the victim to hear how the bullying affects and impacts on them as individuals. On-going work continues with the bully to initiate change.

Bullying is a regular item discussed within the Residents and Team meetings. The staff at **Harmony Childcare** have all received training in the recognition and management of bullying and are aware of the home's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## Children Missing from the Home or Absent Without Authority

In order to keep the children and young people who live at **Harmony Childcare** safe it is important that staff know their whereabouts at all times and that when they are not directly supervised by a member of staff they are engaged in an approved activity alone or in the company of a responsible adult. The purpose of this expectation is not to be restrictive but rather to acknowledge the particular difficulties faced by the children and young people looked after at the home and their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation and their potential to engage in risky, sometimes antisocial, behaviour.

The staff takes the issue of children missing from home seriously and there is in place a clear policy which includes procedures such as staff searching the home and the local area and involving the police at an early stage if the young person is not found. Whenever a young person goes missing staff work actively in partnership with other agencies and those with parental responsibility to ensure that he/she is located as soon as possible. They also ensure appropriate written risk management plans are in place to ensure strategies are in place to prevent further incidents and to enhance the future safety of the young person.

Risk management plans are key in informing staff of the procedures to follow if a young person does absent themselves without authority, such as informing parents, police and/or social services and further action the young person's Key Worker and other staff must take to ensure that future risk is minimised as far as possible.

When children and young people who have been missing return to **Harmony Childcare** they are welcomed back and informed by staff that they are pleased that they are safe. It is important to understand why children and young people feel the need to absent themselves without permission and each young person will be interviewed at an appropriate time, either by their placing Social Worker or an independent person (who could be a police officer). The interview will be properly recorded and the appropriate people

informed. If it emerges that the young person absented his or herself because of victimisation from bullying or abuse the appropriate procedures will be followed.

Where a young person persistently goes missing the issue will be addressed within a planning meeting with all interested parties present and any strategies agreed to deal with the matter incorporated into the Placement Plan through the use of Risk Management Plans.

We hope that the children and young people that come to live at **Harmony Childcare** find it a positive, safe and rewarding period in their lives.

## Behaviour Management Policy

The young people who are looked after at The Hollies are cared for within an ethos in which they are treated with unconditional positive regard, where they are aware of their rights and responsibilities and where there is an expectation that they will behave in ways which are acceptable and conducive to living harmoniously with other people. The Hollies has a policy based on the National Children's Homes principles. The staff team will create an environment where young people are valued, respected and care for each other:

- ✚ Always address the anti-social behaviour not the young person. Young people should never be labelled as 'bad' or 'naughty' directly to them or within ear shot. A young person will usually live up to what they think is expected of them.
- ✚ Correction and direction should be given in a positive manner.
- ✚ Praise and encouragement should be given as often as possible, especially when behaviour is positive or modified. Play down negative behaviour as long as it does not impact on another individual or put anyone in danger.
- ✚ Set realistic boundaries with explanations to provide a feeling of security.
- ✚ Appropriate behaviour is reinforced through consistency and reaction for the boundaries set.
- ✚ When speaking to young people about their behaviour, remain calm and positive.
- ✚ Young people should be made aware of how the expression of their own feelings may affect other peoples. Young people need a platform to safely express how they are feeling.
- ✚ There are times when reasoning is inappropriate. Children and young people need to recognise an adult's authority and respond to the command 'no'. A child will learn to recognise the change in voice tone. An explanation, with regard to the incident, will need to be given as soon as possible.
- ✚ All incidents will include a reflective practice with the young person and the staff members involved, this will be a key- worker session where reengagement is essential and young people feel valued and respected from expressing their opinions and feelings.
- ✚ All incidents will be reflected upon the risk management plan and critical information will be shared accordingly.

## Methods of Care and Control

It is accepted that consistent guidelines and controls form an integral part of a child's development. As a child develops they gradually internalise these controls and reduce the need for external reinforcement. The children and young people, who are looked after at The Hollies, will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities and the expectation that they will behave in ways which are acceptable and conducive to living harmoniously with other people.

## General Principles

Staff are expected to manage and control the children's behaviour. Clearly setting boundaries of acceptable behaviour and achieving tight levels of consistent care practice reduce the need for sanctions. Acceptable behaviour should always be encouraged as a normal part of day to day living.

## Use of Consequences / Restorative Justice

Consequences will only be used sparingly and after all other alternatives have been considered. The overall approach from the home will be addressing negative behaviours through restorative justice, If the need is felt to impose a Consequence, the child will be informed and the matter discussed with either the Home Manager or Shift Leader before deciding an appropriate consequence. Consideration must be given to the child's emotional state, understanding of their transgression and the effect that imposing a consequence will have on future relationships.

The range of consequences used must be:

- ✚ Legal
- ✚ Appropriate to the behaviour under consideration and its circumstances.
- ✚ Relevant to the age, understanding and Care Plan of the young person.
- ✚ Enforceable and achievable.
- ✚ Realistic and sensitive.
- ✚ Contemporaneous (applied as soon as appropriate after misbehaviour is recognised).
- ✚ Not disruptive to other young people in the home, e.g., everyone misses the trip to the cinema because one child misbehaves.
- ✚ Compatible with the method and ethos of the home.
- ✚ Applied consistently and equitably in line with agreed criteria.
- ✚ Regularly reviewed.

## Reasons for Consequence

- ✚ Damage, such as damage to windows, furniture and decoration of the home.
- ✚ Criminal Damage caused outside the home - i.e. in the local community.
- ✚ An assault on an individual.

This list is not exhaustive but gives guidance in relation to situations where consequences can be legitimately implemented

## Permitted Consequences

- ✚ Increased Supervision - Escort to school. Prevent/reduce likelihood of absconding.
- ✚ Curtailment of Leisure Activities - Should be relevant, contemporaneous and time limited.
- ✚ Withdrawal of Privileges - e.g., late TV.
- ✚ Reparation payments - To compensate for damage or theft. They will not amount to more than 50% of allowance and of limited duration.
- ✚ Supervised Spending of pocket money or adjustments to personal handling.

## Inappropriate Consequences

**NEVER** impose physical punishment on a child. **NEVER** deprive a child of food, sleep or medical help. **NEVER** deprive a child of your care and consultation.

All staff should be aware that disciplinary action will be taken against them for the imposition of any of the above inappropriate sanctions.

## Physical Interventions

Whilst strongly believing that all children/young people should have the main responsibility for their own behaviours, **Harmony Childcare** recognises and understands that the children/young people in our care may sometimes demonstrate difficult or challenging behaviours which could require support or as a last resort, physical intervention. Subsequently all staff undertake training with regular refreshers which offers a framework for dealing with challenging behaviours through theoretical and practical based training. The emphasis of training focuses on de-escalation of situations and the avoidance of situations, which could potentially lead to flash points.

Physical intervention will only be used if all methods of dealing with a specific situation have been deemed unsafe and will only be actioned by staff as a very last resort. The time period of any physical intervention should be as short as is possible, and all details of the intervention, fully recorded within the Physical Intervention Log. The child/young person involved will be afforded a debrief period following any intervention and the opportunity to discuss the situation, whilst considering the appropriateness/inappropriateness of the actions taken and any complaints which may result from the actions taken.

Physical intervention can only legally be used where there is belief that immediate action is required to prevent injury or prevent serious damage to property. The following criteria for restraint would therefore apply:

- ✚ When the child/young person is attempting to harm him/her self
- ✚ Where this is substantial risk of physical injury to another child/young person
- ✚ Where there is substantial risk of physical injury to a member of the public or a staff member
- ✚ Where there is likely to be serious damage to property
- ✚ Where serious damage is occurring

The Hollies has a behaviour management and physical intervention policy and guidance document that goes into significant depth outlining good practice and our response to challenging situations. Our approach is therapeutic and we intend to embrace an approved and recognised provider to deliver on-going training and a good model of intervention.

The training provider and programme used for staff training is delivered by OUR IN-HOUSE PRICE INTERVENTION TRAINER.

[www.pricetraining.co.uk](http://www.pricetraining.co.uk)

## Criteria for Admission

The Hollies provides placement for young people aged between 08 and 18 years old who are 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.

Where possible, prior to the commencement of the placement, we would require as much relevant 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 matching considerations risk assessment is undertaken regarding the new placement and the young people already resident. The manager and the relevant members of the MDT will discuss the placement and determine whether or not the placement is suitable for The Hollies.

Once the placement has been agreed, an initial risk assessment and behaviour management plan will be undertaken.

We believe 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.

***Emergency Admissions are subject to assessment and matching. We are not able to take same day referrals.***

The Hollies will require as much detailed information as possible - this will include details of the reason 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. The placement may be refused at this point. Upon arrival at the home the relevant Looked After or Asset paper work must be provided. A post-placement meeting will be held within 72 hours of the commencement of the placement. Thereafter an initial risk assessment and behaviour management plan shall be undertaken.

The Hollies will undertake a risk assessment prior to 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 a senior manager, together with relevant care or referral orders. The local authority will visit the young person within statutory timescales.

We work with the young people to help them understand their behaviour and its effect on others and themselves, whilst providing an environment that provides a secure base for young people to develop emotionally and mentally to enable them to form positive attachment relationships in the future.

Risk management plans inform our work with all young people placed with us. These are formulated together with a young person and ensure that all situations are safe and managed in the young person's best interest.

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

- ✚ That the young person is welcomed and introduced by the Manager, Senior Shift Leader or the Shift Leader for that day.
- ✚ That the young person's bedroom has been prepared for their arrival.
- ✚ That their immediate physical needs will be met.
- ✚ That they are shown around the building.
- ✚ That time is taken to explain what will happen next.
- ✚ That the young person has received a copy of the Children's Guide and a member of staff spends time explaining it.
- ✚ That particular attention is paid to the building evacuation section.
- ✚ That the young person has received a copy of the Complaints Procedure and understands their rights. Also, it will be explained that their own local authority's Complaints



Procedure takes precedence over ours, and that we will keep a copy of this on file so that the young person can have access to it should they misplace their own copy.

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.

A full fire drill/evacuation of the building routine will be carried out within 48 hours of a new admission.

## 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 **Harmony Childcare**, 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 The Hollies' 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 a full Independence Training Programme.

## Children's wishes and views

At the Hollies children and young people are actively encouraged to be involved in the development and running of the home. This is evident through a number of participation and involvement activities within the home such as children and young people's meeting's, Key worker sessions, written and verbal feedback from the children and young people, questionnaires.

We will also seek the views of family members/significant others through regular consultation.

Our role is to assist children and young people to deal successfully with significant changes and challenges, develop positive relationships and display positive behaviour. With staff members as role models, children and young people learn to behave towards each other and within the local community in a non-discriminative manner.

Children and young people are encouraged to understand the diversity of cultures and beliefs that exist within the home, local and wider communities. To ensure that these outcomes are achieved we will:

- ✚ Consider the young person's wishes and feelings, with regard to their understanding in relation to decision making.
- ✚ Ensure that the young person, parents/significant others are involved in the decision-making process.
- ✚ Support children and young people to fully participate in children and young people's meetings and activity meetings.
- ✚ Hold weekly direct key work sessions with the young person covering areas identified in their individual
- ✚ Care/Pathway Plans with specific targets identified.
- ✚ Consider and actively provide for, religious and cultural differences.
- ✚ Encourage and support children and young people to identify and follow appropriate activities and interests within the community.

- ✚ Provide the young person with regular feedback on their progress. Offer lots of positive praise at every opportunity no matter how small the achievement.
- ✚ We will ensure that positive encouragement is given at all times, particularly if the young person is facing difficulties.
- ✚ Support children and young people to develop into positive members of the community, cultivating intrinsic boundaries and values with the help of outside agencies.

There will also be weekly resident's meetings facilitated by staff where there will be set items on the agenda, such as bullying, consequences, Equality and Diversity, menu choices and activities. There is also the opportunity for the children and young people to add their own items to the agenda for discussion.

These meetings minutes are signed by all present. A copy of the minutes with an action plan is displayed on the young person's notice board. Children and young people are encouraged to chair these meetings with support from staff if they wish.

## Equal opportunities, anti-discriminatory practice and children's rights

**Harmony Childcare** is an organisation committed to promoting equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice both in terms of the staff it employs the children and young people it looks after.

All staff at **Harmony Childcare** will have equal access to training, supervision, support and promotional opportunities. Any inappropriate comments or behaviours relating to sexual orientation, gender, age and able bodied status will be challenged and the relevant action taken (if needed). This will not affect the individuals' position within the home.

Similarly, all children and young people looked after at **Harmony Childcare** will have equal access to the benefits and opportunities available. It is recognised that on occasion, children and young people will behave in a way that attracts consequences. If so, these will be applied consistently and fairly and in line with the guidelines provided by the Department of Health. Staff at **Harmony Childcare** are clear that the purpose of the use of consequences with children and young people is to promote change not to punish.

Our staff believe that all people – colleagues, children and young people and visitors should be treated with respect. Disruptive or offensive language or behaviour will not be tolerated and will always be challenged. When such incidents are perpetrated by children and young people they will be dealt with in a way that promotes better understanding and encourage a change of attitude and behaviour. If children and young people are subjected to discrimination they will be offered protection, comfort and support.

We believe that all children and young people are equally entitled to have their needs met and to be free from abuse and exploitation. Each young person will have a Key worker who will explain to him or her, their rights as a looked after child and consistently ensure that these are being met.

There will be regular meetings between staff and children and young people where the issue of children's rights will be addressed to ensure that children and young people feel that they are being consulted, listened to and treated equally and fairly. Children and young people will also have access to information related to their rights as a child.

We Promote Equal Opportunities by:

Providing a family environment giving all children and young people the opportunity to address the dilemmas associated with the differences they will have experienced in the past:

- ✚ Providing culturally specific care and support for children and young people in line with the National Care
- ✚ Standards, meeting their cultural, religious, racial, gender and linguistic needs.
- ✚ Empowering children and young people to have knowledge of, access to, and respect for their community.
- ✚ Supporting self-identity by recognising that a young person's ethnicity religion, culture, sexuality and language are crucial to their self-image and self-esteem.
- ✚ The provision of education, after school activities, group holidays and staffing, our services will ensure positive integration of all community groups whilst respecting and maintaining a functional family setting.
- ✚ Recruiting an appropriate mix of ethnic minority staffing reflecting children and young people's gender and ethnic background to overcome cultural, religious and linguistic barriers and providing on going diversity training to staff to promote and maintain multi-cultural awareness.

## Contact with family and friends

It is usually beneficial for the children and young people who live at **Harmony Childcare** to maintain constructive contact with the important people in their lives, either directly or by phone or letter. Staff encourages children and young people to keep in contact with their family and friends and offer support to allow them to do so.

Staff do not place any restrictions on a young person's contact with their family or friends unless it is specifically stipulated within the Care Plan. Staff can support or supervise contact visits if this is identified within the Care Plan or requested by the visitor. Alternatively, a private place can also be arranged for contact if this is needed. A written contact agreement must be completed by the Social Worker prior to admission.

- ✚ Taken and received at convenient and appropriate times.
- ✚ No calls are allowed during meal times or after the young person has retired for the night, unless an emergency and this will be closely monitored by staff.
- ✚ Other than when directed by the placing authority, children and young people can send and receive mail, which will not be opened or read by staff.
- ✚ Within the Children's Guide children and young people are provided with the procedures for visitors to the home. No young person is made to see a visitor that they do not wish any contact with.
- ✚ Family or visitors to the home are provided with privacy and refreshments.

Where a young person does not have contact with any family or friends **Harmony Childcare** will request from the Placing Authority permission for an Independent visitor.

**Harmony Childcare** recognises the importance of attachment related issues for our children and young people in a care environment and the subsequent separation from their families. Continuity of relationships is important and attachments will be respected, sustained where possible, and developed. We feel it is important to show an interest in how visits have gone, for some children and young people specific strategies may need to be developed to manage their behaviour and give additional support at these times. Partnerships with parents and relatives are crucial to ensuring that children and young people retain and build their identity.

# Participation in Recreational, sporting and cultural activities

In order to promote participation and equality of opportunity, staff at The Hollies endeavour to maximize young peoples' opportunity to participate in their choice of activities. At the onset of the placement staff will aim to obtain the views of the young people regarding hobbies and interests. Each home has a budget specifically for recreation and each young person will have weekly planners detailing their choice of activity.

Where a young person expresses a particular interest in a specific activity this will, if appropriate, be promoted by the staff and additional money made available to pursue this where possible.

**Harmony Childcare** has ever-growing links within the local community and readily accesses culturally appropriate activities for young people. All activities are encouraged as a strategy to develop and enhance individuals' confidence, physical and emotional well-being, team building and inclusion.

The religious beliefs and individual forms of worship of the young person will be taken into consideration within the Care Plan and where necessary arrangements will be made to facilitate this area. This may include transportation to and from a place of worship, providing religious articles such as books, clothing or specific food items. If required a member of staff will accompany the young person to the place of worship or to a place for formal religious instruction.

## Making a Positive Contribution Objectives

At the Hollies, we actively promote the involvement of young people and their families (where appropriate) in the development and running of the home. Not only do we accept the principle of the young person's involvement but it can be seen in practice through a variety of participation and consultation activities within and outside of the home and school environment.

Our role is to assist young people to deal successfully with significant changes and challenges, develop positive relationships and display positive behaviour. With staff members as role models, young people learn to behave towards each other and within the local community in a non-discriminative manner. Young people are encouraged to understand the diversity of cultures and beliefs that exist within the home, local and wider communities.

- ✚ Give due consideration to the young person's wishes and feelings, having regard to their understanding in relation to decision making.
- ✚ To ensure full participation of both young person and parents in the decision-making process.
- ✚ To encourage full participation in young people's meetings and activity meetings.
- ✚ Hold weekly direct work sessions with the young person covering areas identified in their individual Care/Pathway Plans.
- ✚ To take into consideration, and actively provide for religious and cultural differences.
- ✚ Encourage and support young people to identify and follow appropriate activities and interests within the community.
- ✚ To give the young person continuous feedback on his progress. To praise at every opportunity no matter how small the achievement.
- ✚ To ensure that positive encouragement is given at all times, particularly if, and when, the young person is facing difficulties.

- ✚ To help young people develop into positive members of the community, cultivating intrinsic boundaries and values with the help of outside agencies.

## Religious observance and instruction

As part of the admissions process we will make enquiries about a young person's religious beliefs (if any) and discuss with them and their parents/carers the arrangements that need to be made to enable the young person to follow their religion or receive instruction appropriate to his/her particular persuasion.

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

## Fire precautions

The Hollies is fitted with all the required safety devices and equipment to prevent and detect fires and will be regularly inspected by the local Fire Authority and OFSTED. All staff receive training in fire prevention and will be aware of their responsibility to monitor and check that all equipment is in place and working satisfactorily.

There will be regular fire drills and all staff and young people will be aware of the emergency exits and evacuation procedures. We will keep a record of all fire drills and equipment checks in the Fire Register located within the team office at The Hollies.

## Monitoring and Surveillance

Door alarms are only used upon agreement and consented in writing from the associated authority and if deemed to be required in order to safeguard the young person and reduce risk of harm. The use of monitoring alarms will be reviewed and assessed monthly as well as in statutory placement reviews. If pre-assessed risk is no longer seen, then alarms for the young person will be turned off. A monitoring alarm is set of an evening which sensors the stairs and also alarms the external doors, this is as a safeguarding measure and protection of intruders.