

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAESTEG COMMUNITY HOME

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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(Last Reviewed January 2010)

Introduction to Maesteg Community Home Statement of Purpose

This Statement of Purpose provides detailed information about Maesteg Community Home. It is intended for any parent or any person with parental responsibility, social work professionals and staff working in the home. It provides a basis for parents and social workers to decide whether the service is appropriate to meet the needs of particular children and to measure the suitability and standard of the service that is provided.

Parents will be made aware of the Statement of Purpose at the time of admission of their child and will be provided with a copy on request. Alternatively they may wish to refer to it on their visits to the home. Paper and electronic copies will be available for social workers at their office base and staff will have access to it at the home. Children at the home who wish to see the full document will be given a copy on request.

Maesteg Community Home wishes to provide a service that meets the needs of the children placed there, satisfies the reasonable expectations of their parents and the expectations of the child's social worker. The Manager and staff at the home welcome both positive and critical comments from parents, social workers and the children themselves, at any time and they will use those contributions to improve the service provided. At the time of admission, parents will be shown the facilities available and be invited to comment on their suitability. It is hoped that a culture of openness will continue to grow whereby parents will feel comfortable in discussing their views and concerns with staff, not just in relation to their child, but also to gauge their opinions on the service and facilities available. When placements come to an end, Maesteg Community Home will ask the child, the parents and social workers to give their views on the child's period at the home. Where improvements can be made immediately, the Manager and staff will ensure this happens. Alternatively, where possible and appropriate they will be incorporated into the Annual Service Improvement Plan.

The Statement of Purpose is updated on an annual basis, reflecting changes that are being made to improve the service. Specific consultation with parents and children are a very important part of that process, which will take place between January and March each year, so that a revised Statement of Purpose is in place by the beginning of April each year. As part of a wider consultation, parents and children will be asked for their assistance during this period to identify weaknesses in the service and help identify the improvements and changes that should be made. Other comments made throughout the year will also be considered in this exercise. Parents and children will then be informed of proposed changes and given an opportunity to give their opinion before the revised Statement of Purpose is finalised. It will be made available as described above.

Whenever parents or children are consulted feedback will be provided as early as possible.

CONTENTS

1. Aims and Objectives
2. Facilities and Services
 - A. Within Maesteg Community Home
 - B. Within the Community
3. Name and Address of Registered Persons
4. Qualifications and Experience of Registered Persons
5. The Numbers, Relevant Qualifications and Experience of Persons Working at Maesteg Community Home
6. Arrangements for the Supervision, Training and Development of Staff
7. The Organisational Structure
8. The Range and Needs of Children Accommodated at Maesteg Community Home
9. Admission Policy
10. Strategy for Counteracting Adverse Effects When Providing Accommodation for More than Six Children
11. Ethos and Philosophy of Maesteg Community Home
12. Arrangements Made to Protect and Promote the Health of the Children Accommodated at Maesteg Community Home
13. Arrangements for the Promotion of Education of the Children Accommodated at Maesteg Community Home
14. Arrangements to Promote the Participation of Children in Hobbies and Recreational, Sporting and Cultural Activities
15. Arrangements Made for Consultation with the Children Accommodated in the Home about its Operation
16. Policy on Behaviour Management and the Use of Restraint
17. Arrangements for Child Protection and Countering Bullying
18. Procedures for Dealing with any Unauthorised Absence of a Child from the Home
19. Details of any Means of Surveillance of Children which may be used in the Home

20. Fire Precautions and Emergency Procedures
21. Arrangements made for the Children's Religious Instruction and Observance
22. Arrangements Made for Contact between any Child Accommodated in the Home and His or Her Parents, Relatives and Friends
23. Complaints Procedure
24. Arrangements for Dealing with Reviews of Placement Plans
25. The Type of Accommodation and Sleeping Arrangements Provided
26. Details of any Specific Therapeutic Techniques used in the Home and Arrangements for their Supervision
27. Details of Maesteg Community Home's Policy on Anti-Discriminatory Practice and Children's Rights
28. Non Residential Services Provided

1. Aims and Objectives

Maesteg Community Home is a purpose built Children's Home situated in a small Welsh mining village in the middle of the Llynfi Valley. It has been providing a home to children for over 40 years.

At Maesteg Community Home we are committed to offering a quality needs led service and aim to ensure that all the young people in our care will:

- Be protected
- Be treated as individuals
- Have personal dignity
- Be self-determining in accordance with their maturity
- Be free from exploitation
- Live a normal life within the community

Young People will:

Be afforded intensive staff involvement and support to help them deal with personal and interpersonal difficulties.

Staff will endeavour:

To meet the needs of every child placed at Maesteg Community Home through a consistent, planned approach that addresses in a holistic manner all the needs of the young person. This will be in accordance with the Children Act 1989, and Children Act 2004 regulations and the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes.

Staff will endeavour:

To ensure that suitable strategies are identified and implemented to help young people and their families to overcome the problems that led to the young people being 'looked after' by the department. These will include behaviour modification techniques, life story work, etc., as appropriate.

Young People will:

Be cared for through a programme designed to deal with an individual with behavioural problems, where appropriate. Be faced with the consequences of their actions within a climate of maximum staff support. A system of sanctions is used to respond to behaviours that are unacceptable. For example doing extra chores, paying to replace something they have damaged or broken, or missing out on trips or activities.

Young People will:

Be encouraged and supported by staff to take a full part in the life of the local community.

Staff will endeavour:

To work closely with families or substitute families to ensure that when young people return home or go to other placements, adequate support is given to both the young person and their family to ensure success.

Maesteg Community Home continually monitors its practice and seeks to improve its service. One aspect to help achieve this is to undertake a process of evaluation at the end of each placement with the help of the young person, their family and the social worker and any other person deemed appropriate due to their involvement with the child during the placement.

2. Facilities and Services

(a) Within Maesteg Community Home

The home has a large lounge where the young people have the use of a television, video recorder and DVD player and there is a varied selection of videos and DVD's to watch. A large cupboard in the lounge stores a selection of board games, art materials and keyboards.

There is a smaller lounge, which is used for family visits and meetings. There are two computers one has access to the Internet and the young people are encouraged to make use of this to assist with homework and their wider educational needs. Access to the Internet is supervised and its use is monitored as part of a system of checks to ensure it is used appropriately, young people also require an appropriate adult to sign a consent form for it's use. The young people are able to enjoy their choice of music in this room, as well as having the use of a Play Station 3, X Box and a wide selection of games. This room also has a desk, which may be used for homework.

There is a selection of Encyclopaedias for reference, as well as an extensive range of books that the young people are encouraged to use.

The Residential Manager, the Clerk and other staff members use the office. Due to issues of ensuring confidentiality children do not have access to the office unless a member of staff is present.

A downstairs toilet and washroom is available for general use. There is also a separate toilet for the use of staff only.

The kitchen has all the mod cons including a dishwasher. There are table and chairs and the children and staff share mealtimes and its associated conversations there together. There is a separate laundry room with a sink/drain, two automatic washing machines, tumble dryer and free-standing electric airer. There is a gas boiler contained in a separate room.

The first floor consists of two bedrooms for staff use and four for the young people. There is a bathroom and a shower room for young people to use, both have toilets. There is a separate shower room for staffs use; the upstairs toilets are a shared facility.

The home has plenty of storage facilities which are used for household linen, toiletries and sports and camping equipment, etc. There is also a large attic.

There are large, well kept gardens to the front, side and rear, with three sheds and a garage.

Current legislation states smoking is prohibited in public places, this re-enforces Bridgend County Borough Councils 'No Smoking Policy' inside their establishments. Smoking is very much discouraged and the young people that do smoke are asked to smoke away from the premises.

Maesteg Community Home offers a comprehensive range of services to young people:

- Direct work with young people and their families
- Counselling and support
- Link working
- Networking with other agencies
- Transport to school where needed
- Use of a People Carrier
- Transport to visit families
- Laundry facilities
- Recreation facilities
- Room for contact visits
- Children's meetings
- Individual Bedrooms
- Computer and Internet access to support learning
- Use of telephone – in private or with staff available for support

Along with providing the above services, staff are involved in working in partnership with the looked after children's After Care Team, providing an after care service to young people previously accommodated at MCH, this may take the form of offering advice via the phone or in person etc.

Maesteg Community Home has camping and water sports equipment for use under the supervision of a qualified member of staff.

Young people are also encouraged to use the facilities in the community.

(b) Within the Community

Maesteg Community Home is situated in a quiet residential area of a busy town about 10 miles from the centre of Bridgend. Maesteg town has its own comprehensive school which is within walking distance of the home.

Maesteg Community Home also strives to assist in transporting young people where necessary either by use of its own transport, or via the use of volunteer driver arrangements. Public transport links are within close proximity for both train and bus connections.

The borough of Bridgend is fairly widespread and offers a choice of:

- Two Colleges, one in Maesteg and one in Bridgend
- Three Recreation Centres
- Swimming Pool
- Y.M.C.A.
- Numerous Youth Clubs
- Ten Pin Bowling
- Snooker Clubs
- Guides
- Scouts
- Sea/Army/Air Cadets
- Junior Rugby, Cricket, Football

Maesteg Community Home makes use of a local Doctor's Practice, Optician's and Dentist near to the home, but if possible young people stay with their own Doctors, Dentists and Opticians.

3. Names and Addresses of Registered Persons

Responsible Individual:

Lindsay Harper
Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
Bridgend County Borough Council
Sunnyside
Bridgend
CF31 4AR

Tel No (01656) 642200

Registered Manager:

Karl Culpeck
21, Brookfield Road,
Garth,
Maesteg.
CF34 0NJ

Telephone Number: (01656) 733466

4. Qualifications and Experience of Registered Persons

Manager – Karl Culpeck

His qualifications include:

- NVQ Level 4 in Management
- NVQ Level 4
- Diploma in Welfare Studies
- Certificate in Welfare Studies

The Manager commenced the post on 14th August 2005 after previously being employed as an Acting Residential Manager at Maesteg Community Home since August 2004 and prior to that as a Senior Residential Social Worker at Maesteg Community Home since 15th August 1999. He has responsibility for the overall management of Maesteg Children's Home, he's has completed 'in house' training courses relevant to the post.

Prior to becoming a senior member of staff, had experience as a Residential Social Worker for nine years, working with young offenders. Prior to this was employed as a Social Care Worker, working with people with learning disabilities.

5. The Numbers, Relevant Qualifications and Experience of Persons Working at Maesteg Children's Home

Residential Manager (See above)

Two Senior Residential Workers

Senior Residential Worker (1)

- (a) **Qualifications** NVQ Level 4 Health and Social Care (children and Young People)
NVQ Level 3, Caring for Children and Young People.
(Currently undertaking NVQ Level 4 Management)
- (b) **Experience** Fifteen years' experience of Residential Childcare, and commenced the post on 16 September 2005. Prior to this role he was employed as a Residential Social Worker within the Juvenile Justice System.

Senior Residential Worker (2)

- (a) **Qualifications** Degree Crime and Community Justice
Foundation Degree in Health and Social science
Diploma in Welfare Studies
Certificate in Welfare Studies
(Currently undertaking the Social Work Degree)

- (b) **Experience** Six years six months experience of Residential Childcare, and commenced the post on 01 July 2006. Prior to this role was involved with the Youth Offending Team.

One Full Time Residential Worker

Full Time Residential Worker: (Vacant)

Seven Part Time Residential Workers

Part Time Residential Worker (1): (Vacant)

Part Time Residential Worker (2)

- (a) **Qualifications** NVQ Level 3 Caring for Children and Young People.
- (b) **Experience** Eighteen years' experience of residential child care at Maesteg Community Home and is the unit's designated in-house First Aider.

Part Time Residential Worker (3)

- (a) **Qualifications** NVQ Level 3 Caring for Children and Young People.
Diploma in Welfare Studies
Attends 'in-house' training as appropriate to post.
- (b) **Experience** Twelve years' experience of residential child care at Maesteg Community Home. Has been involved with the Play Scheme Programme and is also a Registered Psychiatric Nurse.

Part Time Residential Worker (4)

- (a) **Qualifications** European Business Management Degree
NVQ Level 3, Caring for Children and Young People
- (b) **Experience** Six years six months experience of residential work, two at another Community Home within the Council

Part Time Residential Worker (5) (Temporary Contract)

- (a) **Experience** Six months experience of working within a residential establishment has worked within a number of projects with young people and is undertaking in-house training relevant to the post. (Currently undertaking the Care Council induction)

Part Time Residential Worker (6)

- (a) **Qualifications** NVQ level 3 Caring for Children and Young people
- (b) **Experience** Four years six months experience of working in a residential establishment. Previously employed as a Civil Servant dealing with the public. Is undertaking relevant training appropriate to the position.

Part Time Residential Social Worker (7)

- (a) **Qualifications** NVQ level 3 Caring for Children and Young People
Diploma in Welfare Studies
- (b) **Experience** Three years three months experience of working in a residential establishment. Has undertaken volunteer work with young people

Annualised Hours staff and casual staff are used to cover:

- Sickness
- Courses
- Annual Leave

Part Time Annualised Residential Worker (1)

- (a) **Qualifications** Has undertaken the Care Council induction
- (b) **Experience** Two years two months experience of working in a residential establishment. Is undertaking training relevant to the position

Part Time Annualised Residential Worker (2)

- (a) **Qualifications** Has undertaken the Care Council induction
- (b) **Experience** Two years experience of working in a residential establishment. Is undertaking training relevant to the position

Casual Residential Worker

- (a) **Experience** Six months experience of working within a residential establishment, is undertaking in-house training relevant to the post. (Currently undertaking the Care Council induction)

Clerk

- (a) **Experience** Thirteen years' experience of clerical and administrative duties at Maesteg Community Home
Various administrative and clerical duties relating to the day-to-day running of the home, including payments and statistical information.
Attends 'in house' training as appropriate to post.

6. Arrangements for the Supervision, Training and Development of Staff

In accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000 the children are looked after by staffs that are trained and competent to meet their needs (standard 22). To assist staff development, team consistency and competency each member of staff, including the Annualised hour's staff, receive regular supervision and are encouraged to access the Directorate's Training Programme. In accordance with BCBC policy Senior Management and Residential Workers are expected and supported to undertake further training at NVQ level 3 and 4 as commensurate to their post. Supervision takes place on a monthly basis and discussion centres on:

- Roles and responsibilities (e.g. Link working)
- Work performance against objectives
- Relationships and performance of the team
- Current service issues and new priorities
- Time keeping, presentation, attitude at work
- Any skill deficiencies / training needs
- Action plans to smooth the way ahead.

In addition to this, staff meetings are held on a minimum of a monthly basis in order to help facilitate the maintenance and cohesion of the staff group as well as to exchange information and ideas. In line with Directorate Policy and Procedures the Residential Manager at Maesteg Community Home will also carry out annual appraisals with all staff members.

7. The Organisational Structure of the Home

Within the Children and Families Division, the Principal Officer - Accommodation Services is responsible for the line management of the establishment. Statutory visits are carried out on a monthly basis in accordance with Regulation 32 of the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes and reported to the Head of Service – Safeguarding and Family Support

The staffing establishment totals 263 hours for childcare and 12 hours clerical support.

- 1 Full Time Residential Manager
- 2 Full Time Senior Residential Workers
- 1 Full Time Residential Workers
- 7 Part Time Residential Workers
- 1 Clerk

There is also provision for 6 Annualised Hours staff who work across the Residential Service covering staffs absence due to sickness, annual leave and courses. This allows for two Annualised hours staff to be attached to each unit.

Maesteg Community Home does not have waking night cover. Two members of staff sleep in every night. Maesteg Community Home is one of 4 residential homes owned and operated by Bridgend County Borough Council.

All staff, including annualised hours staff, have appropriate staff appraisals undertaken by the management team in line with the directorates Supervision and Appraisal policy. The appointment of staff is consistent with the recommendations of the Warner Report.

8. The Range and Needs of Children Accommodated at Maesteg Children's Home

Maesteg Community Home provides placements of varying lengths to children/young people of either sexes who cannot live with their own immediate or extended family. It is best able to provide placements for those who are particularly vulnerable, in need of 'therapeutic' intervention and in the younger age range i.e. 11 to 15 years at the time of admission. Maesteg Community Home accommodates 4 young people in full time placements. We have a thorough referral and admission policy to assist us to establish whether this setting is appropriate to the needs of the young person and their family. Families are encouraged to visit the home as part of an active policy to encourage the facilitation of placement choice, as well as part of the young person's ongoing placement plan. Where appropriate efforts are made for the children to have a successful return home to their families, otherwise families and the young person are encouraged and supported to achieve the best quality relationships and contact possible.

9. Admission Policy

Being away from home for any period of time can be difficult and anxious for everyone involved. Advice on referrals for admissions is made via the Threshold of Care Panel and in consultation with the unit. Decisions are based on thorough consideration of the needs of the young person, and a judgement on the ability of the Children's Home to meet those needs, within the terms of our Statement of Purpose, and within the circumstances prevailing at the time, especially the needs of the young people already placed at Maesteg.

Admissions will be planned, meaning that the referring Social Worker will have determined the suitability of the service, having discussed it with the young person and his/her parents. Pre-admission visits and discussions will have taken place, with Looked After Children (ICS) documentation completed, and Maesteg Community Home will have offered a service, with a clear agreement on the needs and issues to be addressed, actions to be taken, expected outcomes, time-scales and the respective roles of the participants to the Care Plan.

The referral and admission process will seek to engage the young person and his/her parents positively and collaboratively in a partnership approach.

Young people and their families (where possible and appropriate) will be encouraged to visit Maesteg Community Home prior to admission. Staff will provide visitors with verbal and written information about the service available and the expectations of the young person and parents and the obligations and responsibilities of staff. After an informal visit, should the Social Worker, young person and / or parents wish to pursue a placement; the Social Worker will provide the home with detailed documentation in order that staff can establish the basis to determine whether to offer a placement.

Preparation for leaving and discharge processes will seek to prepare and support the young person through a difficult transition. Post discharge support will be made available and is constantly being developed by Maesteg Community Home.

10. Strategy for Counteracting Adverse Effects When Providing Accommodation for More than four Children.

Maesteg Community Home does not provide placements for more than 4 children at a time. Consequently no strategy is required.

11. Ethos and Philosophy of Maesteg Children's Home

- a. Each young person upon admission will be provided with an introduction booklet which has been designed with the help of residents to give information, advice and a welcome to life at Maesteg Community Home. Bridgend County Borough Council also publishes a range of information booklets for Looked After Children which will be discussed with the young person upon admission.
- b. Each young person will have a personal plan, which reflects an analysis of general and specific needs, and this will be regularly reviewed and updated.
- c. We ensure that young people are included in decisions about their lives. Regular children's meetings are held to empower children to contribute to the happy atmosphere of the home.
- d. Young people at Maesteg Community Home will be encouraged and supported to take a full part in community life. They are supported to continue with or take part in suitable activities or hobbies. Family members and significant others will be welcomed to maintain regular contact, as well as to be supported to address difficulties within a systemic approach in order that the best outcomes for both child and their family can be achieved.
- e. Staff are committed to providing an environment within the unit, which facilitates the young person's growth, maturation, self-respect and personal dignity. The young people contributed to the production of an anti-bullying policy that the unit is committed to subscribing to.
- f. Young people at Maesteg Community Home will be treated in such a way that ensures their culture, religion, ethnicity and gender are valued.

- g. Staff will access other professional networks where available and appropriate in order to meet the child's needs as comprehensively as possible. These include Social Workers, the young person's school and the Looked After Children Education Team, representatives of the Health Service and the LAC Health Visitor, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, at the Princess of Wales Hospital and the Youth Offending Service.

12. Arrangements Made to Protect and Promote the Health of the Children Accommodated at Maesteg Children's Home

Maesteg Community Home will aim to meet the needs of the young people placed here as assessed by the looked after children's Health Visitor and Community Paediatrician. Throughout the child's placement the Health Visitor continues to remain involved and consult with staff in the carrying out of individual health plans. This assistance is specialised and provides a useful resource for promoting:

- Immunisation and screening
- Nutrition and diet
- Exercise and rest
- Personal hygiene
- Sexual health
- The harmful effects of alcohol, smoking and substance misuse
- The impact of HIV/AIDS and other blood borne viruses

Staff also liaise with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, supporting young people in clinical consultations.

Staff will endeavour to assist each young person upon admission to register with one of the local Doctors and Dentists, unless remaining registered with their own Practitioner. All young persons are expected to have an annual statutory health assessment and also a six monthly dental check. They are provided with a well balanced diet, which takes into account their personal choices. Where appropriate, use is made of the Youth Advice Clinic. Each young person follows a health education programme, which deals with HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, drug misuse, sex and sexuality.

As previously mentioned, young people are discouraged from smoking.

13. Arrangements for the Promotion of Education of the Children Accommodated at Maesteg Community Home.

Each child attends his or her own appropriate school. Within the local area there are ten comprehensive Schools in Bridgend. These are Brynteg, Bryntirion, Maesteg, Ynysawdre, Archbishop McGrath (Catholic), Ogmore, Pencoed, Porthcawl, Cynffig and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwydd (Welsh), There are two Colleges one in Bridgend and the other Maesteg

There is also a range of specialist schools and specialist units, which can cater for a wide variety of educational needs, e.g. Ysgol Bryn Castell caters for children with behavioural problems and learning disabilities, Pupil Referral Unit provides education for young people experiencing difficulties within main stream school and looks to reintegrate them and Heronsbridge School offers special needs education.

Staff at Maesteg Community Home foster effective working relationships with the young persons' schools to support their educational, emotional and social needs. This is achieved through close liaison, regular contact – by telephone and in person, attending school meetings and teachers being invited to the home for reviews, etc. Staff also support each young person's education by checking homework diaries, monitoring and encouraging progress and attending school events such as sports days, award ceremonies, parent / teacher evenings and school plays.

The looked after children's Education Team are able to provide individual support to the young person. Each young person placed at Maesteg Community Home receives a Personal Education Plan which details how residential staff will work with the school to contribute and implement the plan and meet the assessed needs.

The young people are also encouraged to make use of computer software, the internet and other various books and materials, as well as being provided with private study space to complete homework. Every child is expected to attend school in accordance with their school timetable.

14. Arrangements to Promote the Participation of Children in Hobbies and Recreational, Sporting and Cultural Activities.

Young people at Maesteg Community Home are actively encouraged and fully supported to continue with, or take part in suitable activities and hobbies. These may include after school clubs, local clubs such as Air Cadets, Girl Guides and Scouts, Youth Clubs, Church Community Groups, rugby and canoeing. Maesteg Community Home also encourages the young people to participate in staff supervised activities such as body boarding, mountain biking and camping with appropriately trained staff. Parents are requested to complete an activity permission form to give consent for their children to participate on adventure activities.

In line with Bridgend County Borough Council Policy appropriate risk assessments are completed as necessary according to the activity being considered.

Maesteg Community Home has its own People Carrier so that staff can transport the children as required, thus enabling them to access a range of social and recreational opportunities. We also have a range of videos, X Box games, Playstation games, board games and outdoor recreational items within the home for the young people to use.

15. Arrangements Made for Consultation with the Children Accommodated in the Home about its Operation.

Maesteg Community Home endeavours to hold regular children's meetings where everybody is encouraged to take part and offer suggestions to ensure the home remains a happy place to live. These take place on an informal and formal basis, for example a discussion may be generated around the dinner table by staff, or a young person could make a request for a meeting to be convened in order to address an issue of concern. We have a comprehensive policy on consultation and user participation. Maesteg Community Home is committed to empowering its service users and gaining and utilising views and opinions in a positive way. There is an established process of service evaluation and a 'Compliments Book' to record positive feedback, as well as a Complaints Procedure.

16. Policy on Behaviour Management and the Use of Restraint.

Control at Maesteg Community Home is maintained on the basis of good personal and professional relationships between the staff and young persons in residence. It is not seen as a negative concept, but as a way of enabling young people to develop self-control and self-discipline. When young people display behaviour, which in any family or group environment, would be considered unacceptable, some form of sanction may be needed. Sanctions should be contemporaneous, relevant and, above all, just. They may include reparation, restitution, curtailment of leisure activities and increased supervision. These are negotiated with the young person and can be renegotiated to positively encourage good behaviour where effective and appropriate.

Sanctions that will not in any circumstances be used are:

- Deprivation of food and drink
- Restriction or refusal of visits
- Requirement to wear inappropriate or distinctive clothing
- The use, or withholding of medication or dental treatment
- Confinement to a room or area within the home.

All sanctions used will be recorded with the date, name, inappropriate behaviour, sanction and date of sanction, and will be signed by the relevant member of staff. The Residential Manager and Senior Residential Workers oversee this process.

Physical restraint is not normally used in Maesteg Children's Home. However, it is recognised that in certain circumstances its use may be necessary. If there is clear evidence, or genuine belief, that a young person's actions may lead to physical injury to themselves or others, physical restraint may be used. In any case of physical restraint, the minimum force necessary will be used and all cases of restraint will be formally recorded.

17. Arrangements for Child Protection and Countering Bullying

The key principles on which to base work with children and families are found in the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 guidance, Care Standards Act 2000 and National Minimum Standards and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the UK is a signatory and Maesteg Community Home fully subscribes. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. They should be enabled to:

- Be as physically and mentally healthy as possible
- Gain the maximum benefit possible from good quality educational opportunities
- Live in a safe environment and be protected from harm
- Experience emotional wellbeing
- Feel loved and valued, and be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships
- Become competent in looking after themselves and coping with everyday living
- Have a positive image of themselves and a secure sense of identity, including cultural and racial identity
- Develop good inter-personal skills and confidence in social situations.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm such that the child is impeded from experiencing and achieving one or more of the above. Staff are always vigilant to any signs of abuse whether it is expressed verbally or non-verbally, as well as responding to concerns where the child is perceived as failing to thrive. Where concerns are suspected a referral is made within the framework provided by Bridgend County Borough Council and the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. To this end thorough investigations would be carried out and the child would be listened to and consulted throughout as part of the process to involve and empower them.

Staff work alongside other professionals engaging in ensuring that the welfare of the child is maintained as paramount.

A bullying policy has been designed with the involvement of young people in care. To this end the young people defined it as:

“Bullying is anything that hurts someone else’s feelings. It could be by punching or hitting them, but also by saying spiteful remarks or taking property or not respecting their privacy.”

Every young person entering residential care is expected to sign up to an anti-bullying contract where they agree to try to eliminate bullying by

1. Not tolerating it whatsoever,
2. Respecting other people for who they are, not what they are,
and
3. Not ignoring it.

Staff are vigilant about all aspects of bullying and ultimately a young person's placement could be jeopardised and considered unsuitable should they refuse to comply and bullying behaviour persists.

18. Procedures for Dealing with any Unauthorised Absence of a Child from the Home

In the event of an unauthorised absence, and once it has been recognised that the young person has no intention of returning to Maesteg Community Home, the following procedures are implemented in accordance with the agreed guidelines

The Residential Manager or Senior Staff are informed. After discussion and completion of a risk assessment, the Police will be involved if the young person is deemed to be a high risk. The appropriate documentation is completed. Out of office hours, the Emergency Duty Social Work Team will be informed that the young person has been reported missing and the Social Worker will be informed directly on the next working day. Every effort is made to inform parents or those with parental responsibility that the young person is missing at the earliest opportunity. If the young person is likely to be at risk, these circumstances would necessitate informing the Principal Officer.

The fieldwork Team Manager will ensure that events and actions are properly recorded. If the young person is still missing after forty-eight hours the Principal Officer is informed who will decide on what further actions are necessary. Further action could entail asking the Police to use publicity. The situation is monitored and reviewed daily for as long as the young person is missing. All unauthorised absences are recorded in the child's file.

At Maesteg Community Home, when a young person is late returning, we first try to locate the young person ourselves by checking with known friends and associates and checking usual haunts, and whenever possible collect and return the young person to the unit. On occasions, it may not be suitable for residential staff to collect missing children. In this case we ask the Emergency Duty Social Work Team to collect these young people. If there are concerns regarding staff's safety in picking up a young person then the police will be asked to assist.

19. Details of any Means of Surveillance of Children which may be used in the Home.

Children are appropriately monitored by staff in line with providing a quality standard of care. These may include observations of behaviour and self-expression such as the young person being withdrawn or showing a change to their usual mood that evokes attention and concern.

Staff make records on a daily basis about the progress of the young person, with Link workers making more extensive observations as part of monthly Link worker reports.

The Youth Justice courts are making greater use of tagging equipment as part of their response to reducing and responding to youth crime. Maesteg Community Home would respond to a request by the Youth Justice Service for a young person in residence to be tagged and cooperate in line with the joint protocol between Children's Services and the Youth Justice Service.

20. Fire Precautions and Emergency Procedures

Maesteg Community Home has a comprehensive fire safety system which includes fire alarms, smoke detectors, a fire hose, fire blanket, fire extinguishers, self-closing fire-safety doors, emergency lighting and fire escapes which are located according to Fire Officer recommendations. The equipment is regularly inspected. All young persons are familiarised with fire procedures and exits on admission and thereafter with monthly fire safety drills to ensure that everyone, including staff are familiar with evacuation procedures and the need for fire safety awareness and vigilance.

Fire bells are tested weekly and emergency lighting monthly and any repairs are promptly carried out. Staff receive fire safety training on fire precautions and emergency procedures. As part of a fire prevention programme there is a strict no smoking policy in the unit, all electrical items are checked and should be disconnected when not in use (particularly at night). We operate a safe storage system for all flammables and potentially dangerous liquids such as bleach, and equipment is regularly maintained. Also, for safety reasons aerosols are kept in a lockable cupboard.

21. Arrangements made for the Children's Religious Instruction and Observance.

Young people have free choice to follow their own particular beliefs. Most Christian denominations are catered for in the locality, but Hindus, Sikhs, Moslems and Jews would have to travel further afield and appropriate arrangements would be made.

22. Arrangements made for Contact Between and Child Accommodated in the Home and His or Her Parents, Relatives and Friends.

Young people residing at Maesteg Community Home are allowed free access to parents, both inside and outside the unit, unless legal considerations preclude this. For persons with parental responsibility the same applies as for parents. Young persons have free access to friends and relatives although not necessarily within the unit. Undesirable friendships would be discouraged or controlled where necessary.

Young persons have a choice of rooms to use on visits from their friends and relatives. They can either use the computer room, their bedroom or, when available, the lounge.

Times for visiting vary with age, with older children being allowed visitors until later in the evening. Agreement with the young person would depend on individual circumstances.

23. Complaints Procedure

The Social Services Complaints Procedure is explained to all young people on admission. A form is completed by a member of staff and signed by the young person, agreeing that the procedure has been explained to them and that they understand it. All complaints are taken seriously and investigated.

If a complaint is made the Residential Manager and appropriate Senior Residential Worker is informed and either or both will interview the young person. Sometimes a complaint can be resolved informally to everyone's satisfaction. However, if the young person wishes to pursue the matter further the social worker is informed, who will ensure that the parents are made aware of the substance of the young person's complaint. Staff at Maesteg Community Home will support young people, if appropriate, to follow through their complaint as part of their role as an advocate and all complaints are reported as a matter of course to the Complaints Officer.

The complaint will also be referred to the Principal Officer who will ensure that it is fully investigated under the terms of the departmental procedures. This will entail discussion with the Complaints Officer and the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support.

Young people can also seek independent support from a number of sources, for example NSPCC, Child-line and Children's Commissioner, contact details of independent supports are made available via the admission process. An independent advocate also visits the home on a monthly basis and is able to assist in the resolution of a complaint.

Maesteg Community Home welcomes constructive feedback as part of its continual service improvement and service user consultation process. There is an evaluation process within every placement and a compliments record book to record positive comments received by anyone connected to our service.

24. Arrangements for Dealing with Reviews of Placements Plan

Young people's plans will be reviewed regularly, in line with statutory requirements. The first review will be within four weeks of a young person becoming looked after. The second review will be held three months later. Subsequent reviews will be held after a period of no more than six months and on an ongoing basis. Within this process our role is to assist in the completion of the consultation documents and to advocate on behalf of the young person to assist with the meeting of their needs, whilst giving an informed viewpoint about the young person's progress whilst placed at Maesteg Community Home.

The purpose of the reviews will be to monitor progress and review personal care plans. Assessment and Action records are kept up to date. All reviews should be attended by:

- The young person,
- Their social Worker,
- Their Family,
- Their Link worker and any other appropriate person.
- An independent Chairperson.
- Educational Representative

An independent chairperson is employed by Bridgend County Borough Council to oversee review meetings. Before their 16th birthday, young people should have an Aftercare planning meeting, which will look at the ways in which the department can assist the young person, when they leave residential care. A Pathway Plan in accordance with the Leaving Care Act will be formulated to help facilitate this.

Reviews are normally held at Maesteg Community Home, but may be convened elsewhere if there are specific reasons to require this.

25. The Type of Accommodation and Sleeping Arrangements Provided.

Maesteg Community Home is a purpose built children's home that has been providing a home to Looked After Children for over 40 years. It provides a home for four children at a time. It has six bedrooms, two for the use of staff when sleeping in and the remaining four for each of the residents.

Two members of staff provide cover on a sleep-in basis, but are available to be awoken should the need arise during the night. They are expected to finish their duties by 10:30pm and recommence duties at 7 a.m. ready to get the children up for school. During weekends and school holidays the staff start slightly later at 8 a.m.

26. Details of any Specific Therapeutic Techniques used in the Home and Arrangements for their Supervision.

Staff at Maesteg Community Home have for many years been assisted in the care and techniques used to achieve positive outcomes with the young people by receiving guidance from the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service where work of a 'therapeutic' nature has been discussed. These may include

behaviour modification programmes, life story work, 1:1 sessions and consultations with a Mental Health Nurse. Arrangements also remain that where necessary a referral may be made to the service and further consultation by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service clinicians are available to staff who are undertaking specific pieces of work. Staff are able to consult with clinicians from CAMHS via consultation sessions which are held at Sunnyside Offices. Staff have regular supervision and are expected to attend monthly team meetings to ensure consistency and appropriate quality of care.

27. Details of Maesteg Community Home's Policy on Anti-Discriminatory Practice and Children's Rights.

Staff at Maesteg Community Home strive to maintain and encourage appropriate and positive relationships based upon honesty and mutual respect with every person they have contact with. To this end anyone receiving our service is expected to treat staff and others similarly in line with professional and personal boundaries. Expectations of behaviour for both staff and young people are clearly understood and negotiated by those living and working at the home, including exercising appropriate control over children in the interests of their own welfare and the protections of others.

In day to day decision making, staff demonstrate an appropriate balance between:

- Each young person and their families wishes and preferences
- The needs of individual children
- The needs of the group of children resident at the time, and
- The protection of others (including the public) from harm.

Bridgend County Borough Council has a policy on anti-discriminatory practice and children's rights are respected in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as referred to earlier. Cultural sensitivity is essential so that consideration is given to different religious beliefs and cultural traditions for different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Staff need to guard against myths and stereotypes, both positive and negative.

Maesteg Community Home has a comprehensive manual of policy and procedures which can be accessed upon request. It is continually being revised and updated as required.

28. Non Residential Services Provided

Along with the residential provision, Maesetg Community Home offers other services which are listed below:

- Supervised Contact
- A venue for meetings
- Aftercare

N.B. These services are only offered when they can be accommodated without impacting on the residential provision.

Address and Telephone Number of the Appropriate Officer for the National Assembly

CSSIW
South West Wales Regional Office
Unit C, Phase 3,
Tawe Business Village
Phoenix Way
Swansea Enterprise Park
Swansea
SA& 9LA

Tel. 01792 310420

Address and Telephone Number for the Children's Commissioner Wales

Children's Commissioner for Wales
Oystermouth House,
Charter Court,
Phoenix Way,
Llansamlet,
Swansea.
SA7 9FS

Tel: 01792 765600

Updated January 29th 2010.