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Bridgend County Borough Council



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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Thursday, 7 October 2021

Dear Councillor,

CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

A meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting will be held remotely - via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 14 October 2021 at 14:00.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 12
To receive for approval the minutes of 08/04/2021
4. Monitoring The Performance And Progress Of The Western Bay Regional Adoption Service 13 - 42
5. Approval Of The Statements Of Purpose For Residential Services 43 - 152
6. Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Of Residential Homes 153 - 166
7. Urgent Items
To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should be reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: Please note: Due to the current requirement for social distancing this meeting will not be held at its usual location. This will be a virtual meeting and Members and Officers will be attending remotely. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

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Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal, HR & Regulatory Services

Councillors:

SE Baldwin

NA Burnett

HJ David

J Gebbie

Councillors

D Patel

JC Radcliffe

CE Smith

T Thomas

Councillors

PJ White

AJ Williams

HM Williams

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 8 APRIL 2021 AT 14:00

Present

Councillor NA Burnett – Chairperson

HM Williams
CA Green

N Clarke
D Patel

HJ David

J Gebbie

Apologies for Absence

RM James, JC Radcliffe, CE Smith and DBF White

Officers:

Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Alex Fitzpatrick	Team Manager Placements
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Steven Howell	Group Manager Placements & Provider Services
Mark Lewis	Group Manager - Integrated Working
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
David Wright	Family Support Services Manager

225. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Huw David declared a personal interest in item 4, “Update on the Establishment of a National Fostering Framework and Current Work in relation to In House Foster Care Provision” as he was a WLGA spokesperson involved in discussions around the National Fostering Framework appointed to the WLGA by BCBC, but had not been involved in recent years.

Councillor Nicole Burnett declared a personal interest in item 4, “Update on the Establishment of a National Fostering Framework and Current Work in relation to In House Foster Care Provision” as she was a member of the Foster Panel and had been appointed by BCBC.

226. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting dated 4 February 2021, be approved as a true and accurate record.

227. UPDATE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL FOSTERING FRAMEWORK (NFF) AND CURRENT WORK IN RELATION TO IN HOUSE FOSTER CARE PROVISION

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing welcomed the opportunity to talk about fostering in Corporate Parenting Committee and highlighted that for Bridgend, the foster care service was an essential part of what the Council did to be good corporate parents. This year had been an extraordinary year, especially for the foster families and children. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing thanked foster carers for everything they had done throughout the pandemic, acknowledging them as unsung heroes for that period.

In Bridgend the fostering service, led by the Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services, was part of a whole system approach to provision for children and young people. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing stated that they wanted to continue to grow the foster care service both in recruitment and also in retention and the figures around recruitment, the stability of placements and the retention of foster carers were encouraging.

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services presented a report, the purpose of which, was to update the Corporate Parenting Committee regarding the progress of work undertaken on establishing a National Fostering Framework in Wales along with updated information about Bridgend Foster Care service provision and the fostering service review and developments that were underway. He concurred with the comments made by the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing and thanked the foster carers and the team supporting them in a particularly difficult year.

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services explained that the report followed on from previous information brought to the Corporate Parenting Committee by the Head of Services back in 2018. He outlined phase one, phase two and phase three where regional development managers were appointed throughout Wales to engage with the national work streams and coordinate plans for delivery in their areas. The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services outlined the current position and that since April 2019, Bridgend was part of Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership/Health Board. The Regional Development Manager post for this region was hosted by Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) CBC. To support the implementation of the National Fostering Framework across the region a strategic group had been established to provide overview and scrutiny in order to monitor the performance of the NFF work-streams at a local and regional level. The strategic group was supported by an operational group to deliver the identified priorities and a regional Work Programme had been agreed that supported the National Fostering Framework.

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services was pleased to report that as of the 1st April the Regional Front Door went live and they had already taken phone calls on behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council with enquires from people who wanted to be foster carers and there had been a first visit to a new prospective foster carer. The next area of work was to develop a regional 'Local Authority Offer' and all three LA's had completed the national core offer template designed by the Regional Development Manager, who collated and highlighted consistencies/differences across the region. Work had been undertaken to develop a new HR policy for each LA with a view to establishing them as "Fostering Friendly Organisations".

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services explained that fees and allowances was a key area to harmonise payments for all foster carers. All three LA's had linked with the national working group for this area of development and were in the early stages of considering options that would support a Regional approach to payment of carers.

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services concluded by saying that the collaboration across the region was very positive in terms of quarterly meetings, representation from each LA in regional task and finish groups, the regional strategic group and the launch of the operational group bi-monthly meetings.

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services explained that in 2018 it was proposed that 6 Transitional Foster Careers would be recruited who would act as a step-down for young people coming out of the residential units before being placed in long-term family or independent placement. The scheme was only successful in recruiting 3 Transitional Foster Carers who were approved at the beginning of 2019 and this did

have an impact upon the overall success. In January 2021 a review of this scheme was undertaken, with one of the previous transitional foster carers' central to and informing the discussions/decisions and they were currently seeking to recruit an additional 5 carers.

The Deputy Leader referred to the 6 transitional foster carers and asked what would be done differently this time and how confident the team was that the positions would be filled. The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services advised that there would be a clear policy in place which supported the work of the transitional foster carers, so they could understand what to expect from the service in terms of what support would be available and how it would be delivered. Some previous feedback was that foster carers who came into the role had been told one thing and then they were asked to do a slightly different role eg, the carer believed they would only have a child placed with them over long introductory periods where they had would get to know the child first but were asked to look after children with very short notice and in an emergency. Some of the support such as respite wasn't available to them.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services for his comprehensive answer and asked how support could be given without a full team. What was being done to attract the social carers to come into the service, were payments competitive with neighbouring authorities and what was the difference between the in-house service and the independent sector?

The Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services replied that having a full team of transitional foster carers was significant as was having a full staff team. Since Nov 2019 they had funding for four reunification workers as part of the support which was in addition to what was there previously. In terms of foster carers, the money paid to the foster carers would not be the same as an independent fostering agency. However, support to undertake the role played a significant part in attracting foster carers and it was important to make sure that the foster carer felt like part of a professional team.

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing added that having a regular break from foster caring, given the intensity of the work, was important. This was not a standalone service and was part of the overall remodelling linked into what was done through Maple Tree and the workforce there. A behavioural analyst had been recruited which made a real difference in terms of the practical support on how to deal with situations. All these things would be critical to make sure that it was fair financially for foster carers.

The Team Manager – Placement Services gave a presentation, "Bridgend Foster Care update". She explained that in the year ending 31st March 2020 there were 142 initial enquiries, they undertook 40 initial visits, they commenced 21 fostering assessments and approved 8 foster carers. They achieved a conversion rate in BCBC of 5.6% compared to 2.6% for RCT and 6.5% for Merthyr. In 2021 there were restrictions on movement due to the pandemic and the team adapted how they worked with carers as part of their assessment process undertaking virtual assessments and by using smartphones and technology. No assessment was approved at appeal without at least one face to face assessment.

The Team Manager – Placement Services outlined changes to pre-approval training which was an extremely important opportunity to make sure the foster carers were aware of the challenges and issues they might deal with and the big rewards that came with fostering. She outlined Fostering Care Fortnight, the Fostering Network's annual two week national campaign to raise the profile of fostering and played a video of a young lady who was previously looked after and still resided with the same foster carer under a 'when I am ready' arrangement.

The Team Manager – Placement Services presented the findings for the year ending 31st March 2021 when they received 104 initial enquires, undertook 43 initial visits, commenced 27 Fostering Assessments and approved 16 foster carers. This was an increase in approvals by 100% and an increased conversion rate of 15.3%.

The Team Manager – Placement Services provided details regarding the Connected Persons assessments of which 53 had commenced. He added that looking ahead, they had learned the value of personal stories and were working to identify carers and young people to be part of recruitment campaigns. They would continue to use social media heavily within campaigning activity. The National Foster Wales campaign would further promote the benefits of local authority foster care to enable them to build on this foundation and a regional approach to recruitment would enable them to share best practice and further improve screening at initial visit stage.

The Chairperson thanked the Team Manager – Placement Services and the Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services. She also thanked the foster carers and everybody involved with the foster teams.

A member commended foster carers for doing a wonderful job. She felt the film was very touching and showed a sense of belonging and thanked the Team Manager – Placement Services and the team for all the work they were doing.

The Chief Executive thanked the Team Manager – Placement Services for the powerful presentation. He was impressed by taken by the engagement and success of stories and social media and was interested to know what the Council could do across all its resources and staff to assist to build on the success they had already had.

The Team Manager – Placement Services advised it would be helpful if people could share their post on social media and ensure the settings were set to public. She would also be happy to go into different environments and deliver presentations about fostering. She had given a presentation at Parc Prison and from this, someone did come through who was assessed and approved to become a foster carer.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing added that when refreshing the Corporate Parenting Strategy it should take into account how the whole council could contribute and what would make a difference for foster carers.

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services acknowledged that the Communications Team had done some fantastic work to support the team and their continued support would be appreciated. He challenged members to identify individuals and point them in the right direction and encourage them to become a foster carer in Bridgend.

The Chairperson requested more training for Councillors to help recruit within their environment and what to look out for and information that they could share specifically with individuals.

The Leader congratulated the team on their performance whilst maintaining high standards and a minimum of one visit to a home. The Leader asked if there were any figures on reunification and stability that they could use as a bench mark against other authorities. He asked if they had connections with local churches and positive minded people who could provide stable caring homes for children. He also asked if there was support for siblings and birth children of foster carers. They were an important part of the family environment and some placements had broken down due to the relationship not working with birth children.

The Team Manager – Placement Services confirmed that she had met with three priests within the area who were really enthusiastic and supportive and happy to work with them

in the future. They may also have social media channels that could be explored. With regards to the birth children of foster carers, some excellent work had been done in that area and there was a dedicated social worker in the post who had previously arranged various activities/trips with them and part of the action plan was to start these activities when safe. She confirmed that the feedback from carer's children had been really good and they shared the same value base as their parents and that were committed to the fostering environment. The other consistent feedback was through the support given by the supervising social workers, where the household was discussed and not just carers or children. Extending the training provision to online had enabled the children of foster carers to also access that training and build on their knowledge.

In terms of the regional partners and performance with regards to reunification and placement stability, she advised they would need to look at the National Fostering Framework Returns for evidence. It was something that could be looked at and was very much in keeping with regional approach, sharing practices, and looking to improve things as a region and targeting areas.

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations asked about where the voice of the looked after child would fit in with the restructure and how the experience of the child would shape the service going forward. Also in relation to housing, they had identified certain characteristics such as relationship status as a potential barrier to fostering and she asked if housing had been identified as a potential barrier and if something could be done with housing partners to help get around it.

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing explained that in terms of the voice of children and young people, a Corporate Parenting Officer post was being created and that post would have a particular role in terms of engagement and participation across all the children looked after and care leavers. They would be working across partnerships and different departments and with the third sector, with RSLs and with health and this was reflected in their corporate parenting work.

The Team Manager – Placement Services agreed that housing had been a challenge particularly when accessing a connective person as part of court proceedings. It was not appropriate to not place a child with someone who had the capacity to provide a permanent home to a child where the only issue was access to housing. It was tackled case-by-case and all the housing agencies were supportive with regards to converting rooms etc.

The Chairperson added that this was really positive and agreed that housing could be a barrier to those that wanted to foster and that it would be helpful to have support in place.

RESOLVED: The Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting noted the updated information contained within the report and supported the further development of the Bridgend Foster Care service as set out in the report.

228. **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN EDUCATION**

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support explained that the purpose of the report was to provide an update on the support for Looked After Children in Education (LACE) across the local authority. The report specifically focussed on the support provided to Bridgend's Looked After Children for the school year 2020-2021.

The Group Manager, Family Support provided some background to the current position and then explained that as at 19 March 2021, there were 271 statutory school age pupils who were looked after by the local authority, 64 of these were educated out of county.

The role of supporting LACE sat within the Education Engagement Team (EET) and this provided a single point of contact for all agencies including schools, Children Social Care (CSC) and other services for information, advice, training and guidance for vulnerable learners including LAC. The team delivered training to the schools and remained a point of contact for the schools designated teacher relating to Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and any other issues presenting for LAC. The EET worked with each school cluster to develop a clear and coherent plan to support LAC via their PDG. This included the appointment of a school-based counsellor to acknowledge the impact of becoming looked-after, could have on learning, Learning Support Officers (LSO) delivering 'Thrive' training to promote educational attainment for looked-after children and mental health and trauma training for staff to consider how behaviour could present itself within school for children who had entered the care system.

The Group Manager, Family Support explained that to support LAC, the local authority via EET had access to PDG funding. This year, the funding had been used to offer additional education to those looked after children most in need of extra support. To date, 33 looked after children had accessed additional tuition via a school teacher over the course of the pandemic. This support ranged from one hour a week to six hours per week dependent on their needs. Support had focussed on literacy, numeracy and practical skills such as forest schools and online music projects. The EET also delivered training to schools and partners in respect of the impact of trauma and how this could affect a child's ability to engage in learning. The team facilitated mental health first aid training to schools in response to the impact on LAC emotional wellbeing. He added that PDG plans produced by schools in Bridgend had been noted in a recent Estyn thematic review regarding good practice with looked-after children (eg tracking of pupils and dedicated transition work). In particular, Brynteg School and Penybont Primary School were identified as implementing good practice models for those learners. The local authority had also been central to the development of work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for LAC. This was developed as a pathway for those learners leaving education in the summer with the aim of securing an employment opportunity. All Year 11 looked after learners were presented with the opportunity to engage in work experience over their summer holidays.

The Group Manager Family Support explained that with the impact of COVID-19, multi-agency working had been key to ensure that all children continued to access education during this period. This included the opportunity to access on site provision within schools when national restrictions were being implemented. Digital equipment was provided for those learners who had required it to assist with home learning. There was regular monitoring and liaison by schools and children's social care to ensure looked after children's needs continued to be met during the pandemic. All looked after children were considered for on site school provision, however, emphasis and priority was given to those children in foster placements that were at risk of placement breakdown. Since January 2021, on average, 50 looked after children were accessing on site provision (primary school age through to Year 8) each week. These children were those deemed by schools, social care and foster carers to be most in need of accessing on site support during the height of the pandemic.

The Group Manager Family Support explained that moving forward, improvements would be made to the PEP process for look after children via EET. This work would focus on the plans being tailored to be more child centred and reviewed consistently within LAC reviews. Joint work between children's social care and Education and Family Support was being undertaken in this area. Ongoing support would be offered to schools in respect of PDG to include the re-introduction (following Covid-19 restrictions) of the termly designated LAC leads forum facilitated by EET. The aim of this was to share good practice across schools in Bridgend with each other.

The Group Manager Family Support concluded that there had been lots of good work in challenging times for all pupils but in particular for LAC. This area would continue to be a challenge with the transition back into education and they would continue to do what they could to support those children.

The Chairperson thanked the Group Manager Family Support for the report and asked him to extend the Committee's thanks to the teams for the way they had reacted in difficult circumstances.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Group Manager Family Support for the report and referred to section 4.7 of the report and the ultimate goal of getting young people into meaningful employment. He asked what range of work experiences were offered and how children were placed, was there interaction with them and did they have the opportunity to go to a preferred area. He replied that yes, opportunities were tailored to young people to allow them to consider more options. The Family Support Services Manager

referred to the importance of multi-agency working and that in terms of the work experience offer this was through joint working with children's social care, Post 16 service, youth development, Inspire to Work and HR. Opportunities ranged from care work, hospitality to business administration and depended on where the young person said they had an interest. For 2019/20 they had 24 year 11 LAC and 14 were identified as being in schools in Bridgend. Of those 7 demonstrated an interest and went on to work experience placements. One young person then took up a business administration apprenticeship within the local authority.

The Deputy Leader asked if COVID had affected the provision of the scheme. The Family Support Services Manager replied that they were in the process of talking to the year 11 young people and exploring opportunities. They were trying to establish exactly what could be done given the restrictions with social distancing etc. The Chairperson added that having teenage children herself, developing that work ethic, routine and confidence building were all key to a young person's future development.

A Member said that she appreciated they had had a very difficult year and asked if the gap in achievement between LAC and other children was consistent across all secondary schools. She asked which schools were doing most for their LAC. The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support explained that it was very challenging drawing on the data for a particular cohort such as LAC because they did not have data particularly from last year and this year would continue to be challenging. The last time there was a national comparison around the performance of LAC was around 2015 so it was difficult to compare the national picture. A statutory requirement was for local authorities to look closely at how schools deployed different resources for example if schools were in receipt of the Pupil Development Grant and the Looked After Child element of that they were required to publish what they did with those learners. Officers would work closely with those schools to ensure the resources were being deployed effectively and that best practice was shared across schools. They were trying to close the gap across schools to make sure there was more consistent performance. The Chairperson explained that she thought the question was more to do with identifying schools at a local level. Brynteg had been identified as a school with good practice and asked if it was being shared with other schools. The Group Manager Family Support replied that there were variations in terms of attainment across secondary schools but it started from a good point in terms of the schools engaging. Clearly LAC would be at different points depending on when they came into the system so there would be variations. Good practice was shared across the schools. A young person's support plan was developed to maximise their performance and ensure the best possible outcome both in terms of educational engagement and practical examples such as being ready

for adult life. The Member confirmed that she was not looking to name and shame but for confirmation that good practice was shared.

The Leader asked if officers were confident that all LAC had proper digital access in terms of their own individual devices. At the start of the pandemic they were keen to ensure every home had access to a device but this could create problems if the device was shared. Also he asked if all young learners were part of the book literacy scheme where children received books from the Trust and how successful this had been. He asked if LAC were encouraged to sign up to libraries and take part in some of the activities that took place such as the Lego Club and the Coding Club, activities that had taken place since the pandemic. The Group Manager Family Support replied that yes, all LAC had been offered a laptop and if required, a dongle to help with connectivity issues. The Book Club was still running and was overseen by the Education Engagement Team and figures could be provided if required. Through the Youth Justice Management Board arrangements, they were looking to work with staff in the library service to encourage young people to sign up. There were significant numbers and they could encourage this although there could be a logistical problems. The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support said that this was an area they were proud of in Bridgend and that over the last year they had worked closely with Welsh Government and the families of 23,000

Learners of which 2,000 learners were identified as being at risk of digital exclusion at the start of the pandemic. Over the last year supported by Welsh Government funding they had now distributed over 6000 devices, often to multiple recipients within the same household. It was not just laptops but also those not having access to the internet with more than 310 supportable broadband devices also distributed, enabling children across the county to have unlimited access for education resources. This was something they were very pleased with and currently there were no outstanding requests for additional kit. The Chairperson agreed it was very positive and added that the authority was committed to its socio-economic duties so it was really important to ensure the learners weren't discriminated against in any way.

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations asked with regard to literacy and numeracy, why only 33 of the 271 had accessed additional tuition during the pandemic. Why was there such a big discrepancy between the figures? The Family Support Services Manager replied that the authority had used the PDG funding to look at the impact the pandemic had on learners and in particular the LAC cohort to identify those that required additional support in addition to what the school was already doing. That offer would continue moving forward, liaising with schools to make sure they were aware that the support was available.

The Leader suggested that if the Summer Reading Challenge was being organised again this year, it would be a fun way of engaging children in learning with lots of activities. It was an opportunity for some to help narrow that gap and do some reading over the summer. He suggested that they consider that initiative specifically because it was a fun and engaging way of getting children more interested in reading. The Chairperson added that introducing children to audio books could be worth exploring in future.

RESOLVED The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the content of the report.

229. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 16:45

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 2021

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS OF THE WESTERN BAY REGIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Corporate Parenting Committee about the performance and progress of the Western Bay Regional Adoption Service, including the Annual Report on Regional Performance Indicators for 2020/2021 which is attached at **Appendix A**.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Adoption has, and continues to receive, high levels of attention from both the UK and the Welsh Government. Members will be aware that the creation of a National Adoption Service is one of the key policy strands of the Welsh Government, as enacted in the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. This Act provides powers, under Part 9, for Ministers to direct local authorities to collaborate in relation to adoption services and to prevent any local authority from withdrawing from these collaborations in the future.
- 3.2 The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015 came into force on 13th March 2015. The primary purpose of these Directions is to ensure that effective joint arrangements are in place between local authorities in Wales for the delivery of adoption services.
- 3.3 Schedule 1 of the Directions sets out which local authorities must collaborate with each other. For the Western Bay region the local authorities are Swansea, Bridgend

and Neath Port Talbot. Swansea host and manage the regional service on behalf of the partner agencies, this having been approved by the Cabinet in all three local authorities in April 2014.

3.4 The Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) is integrated into the National Adoption Service (NAS) as one of the five identified regional collaboratives. The National Service is underpinned by the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015.

3.5 The broad aims of the joint adoption arrangements across Wales as specified in the Directions include:

- Consistent and high quality service
- Keeping delay to a minimum
- Widest choice possible of placement
- Eliminating waiting lists for training and assessments
- Improving the matching process
- Streamlining adoption services improved liaison between adoption social workers
- Keeping breakdowns to a minimum by providing adequate adoption support
- Collaborative working between local authorities, voluntary agencies, health and education services

3.6 The Management and oversight arrangements of the National Service consist of:-

Governance Board

3.7 Includes representatives from each agency:

- Spokesperson and Deputy Spokesperson from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) for Health & Social Services
- Mayor or executive leader of the Host Authority
- Independent Chairperson of the Advisory Group
- Representative on behalf of the voluntary agencies
- Elected member representation for each region

3.8 The functions of the Governance Board include; strategic direction, approval of the annual work programme, ensuring the views of stakeholders are represented, the monitoring and oversight of performance, complaints, engagement with voluntary agencies, service user representatives, budget and financial, Welsh language, and reporting to the Welsh Ministers.

3.9 The nominated elected member representative for Western Bay on the Governance Board is Councillor Alan Lockyer from Neath Port Talbot.

Advisory Group

3.10 Includes the following representatives from:

- each collaborative Head of Children's Service
- the Association of the Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru
- the Association of Directors of Education in Wales

- the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)
- 3 from voluntary organisations
- Legal adviser from the host local authority
- Health professional for Looked After Children
- Medical advisor to an adoption panel
- Community Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Service User
- Social Research Centre

3.11 The functions of the Advisory Group include:

- Provision of professional advice and support to the Governance Board
- Supporting the effective operation of the service
- Notifying the Welsh Minister of any issues

3.12 The City of Cardiff Council has been given the role of Lead Authority for the National Adoption Service and, as host authority, it works with key partners to run an all-Wales adoption website, developing a centre of excellence for adoption services and employing a Director of Operations for Wales.

Director of Operations and Central Team

3.13 The functions of the Director of Operations and Central Team include:

- Production of an annual work programme to include priorities and targets
- Financial plans and budget responsibilities
- Monitoring and analysis of performance data
- Determine actions to address issues arising
- Improvements and developments of the service
- Submission of a 6 monthly and annual progress and financial report
- Analysis of reports from regional collaboratives
- Establish and maintain website
- Co-ordination of pre-approval training and adoption support services

3.14 In addition to the development of the National Service and the Central Team, a Wales Adoption Register has been developed which is hosted by the Central Team operating on the principle of keeping Welsh children in Wales.

3.15 As referred to in paragraph 3.3, the 2015 Directions prescribe the membership of five regional collaboratives for the National Adoption Services with Bridgend County Borough Council presently forming part of the Western Bay regional collaborative with the City and County of Swansea Council and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) became fully operational in April 2015. Prior to this adoption services were delivered locally via the three local authorities.

4.2 The regional adoption service provides a range of services and interventions across the five key domains to those affected by adoption. They are:-

- Assessing and supporting prospective adopters
- Assessing non-agency (parent/carer, formerly step-parent adoptions)
- Birth Record Counselling and Intermediary Services (BRC & IS)
- Adoption support (assessments and support services to anyone affected by adoption)
- Twin tracking and Family Finding (TT&FF), which involves working with birth families of children in or following care proceedings and once a Placement Order has been granted by court in searching for an adoptive placement

Performance and Activity

- 4.3 The attached annual performance report (**Appendix A**) outlines the performance for the regional adoption service for 2020/21.
- 4.4 2020 has been a very challenging year and saw the service having to consider how it could continue to operate during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Staff within the service have worked tirelessly to ensure that it has very much continued as business as usual and have adapted all the work that is needed to be completed via Virtual means. Panel, Assessments, family finding and adoption support tasks have continued via virtual means with risk assessments in place for limited face to face work when it has been needed. The work that this report highlights is testament to the commitment and drive of the staff group. Despite the challenges that this has brought the service has continued to deliver on both local and national objectives and maintain many aspects of performance
- 4.5 Key achievements for the year including for Bridgend children include:-
- The number of children referred for twintracking to the service saw a 16% decrease on the previous year. 44 Bridgend children were referred compared to 62 in 2019-20. A higher proportion of these referrals resulted in a placement order being granted, the service saw a 10% increase on the previous year with 69 children having a plan of adoption approved by the Court. 26 children were made subject of a Placement order compared to 18 the previous year, however this included two siblings groups of 3 and a number of sibling pairs so this may account for the slight increase.
 - The number of children placed saw a slight decrease during the year mainly due to the impact of COVID during the early months of the Pandemic - 69 compared to 79 in 2019/20 but more similar in number to 2018/19 when 67 children were placed. The number of Bridgend children placed remained the same as the previous year with 20 children transitioning to their adoptive placement. Of the 69 children 24 children were in the 'harder to place' category, and this included 2 older children, 3 children who had additional needs, 1 sibling group of three children and 8 sibling pairs. 52% of children in the region were placed within 6 months of their placement order being granted.
 - Of the children placed during the year we continued to place more children with Western Bay adopters than in Inter-agency placements (IAs). By year end the service had placed 55 children within Western Bay and at the same time reduced

the number placed in inter-agency placements to only 14. Of the placements made 80% were placed with Western Bay adopters. The service held a number of virtual profile events which were well attended and produced a number of links. 17 children from Bridgend were placed with Western Bay adopters and 3 were placed in Inter-agency placements.

- There continues to be collaboration between the Family Finding and Adoption Support functions within the service to put together packages of support for more complex children or where placements need additional support. The Service is now working hard to implement the “Understanding The Child Day” meetings which identifies earlier on children’s likely support needs.
- The number of Adoption Orders granted (AOG) increased by one from the previous year from 62 to 63. Of the 63 Adoption Orders granted during the year 20 were Bridgend children. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 a number of the applications were contested, however, were dealt with by the Court in a timely way using virtual technology.
- Following a number of strategies implemented by both Western Bay Adoption Service, including the development of life-journey worker using Welsh Government Grant funding, and the local authorities, there has been a significant improvement in this area with all children going to matching panel having a draft life-journey book and later life letter. In relation to final versions being available at the second adoption review performance has steadily improved from 51% in 2018-19 to 83% in 2020-21.
- 2020-21 has seen a significant increase in the number of enquiries received - 260 enquiries were received despite the challenges of COVID, possibly because more people had time to look on online, undertake their own research; this is compared to 166 the previous year and was the first time the service has reached over 200. The marketing officer post is now firmly embedded in the service and is working closely with the three Local authority marketing teams and the national marketing service which is delivered by Cowshed. The focus this year will be on targeting recruitment activity specifically in Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot.
- The number of adopters approved remain consistent at 53, one less than the previous year. 9 of these adopters came from the Bridgend area. 79% of the adopters approved were approved within the National Benchmark of 6 months.
- The service saw a 34% decrease in the number of new adoption support assessments commencing. The additional Welsh Government funding has enabled the adoption support team to grow to meet the demand and be able to focus on early intervention strategies to support adoptive families. The team work creatively to offer all adopters support early in placement e.g attendance at therapeutic parenting courses in an attempt to reduce later higher cost interventions. It is positive to note that adopters no longer have to wait for an initial assessment which had been the case in previous years.

4.6 The service plan reflects the key priorities for the coming year, the service are very aware that this year has been very different due to the Pandemic and the forthcoming year will be very much recovery. Areas and priorities for future development for the forthcoming year are:

- Embedding the national good practice guides within current practice.
- Learning from cases that have not gone as well as we would have liked, these will be considered at whole service events, panel business meetings and a summary provided to the interface meetings and management Board.
- Leading the development of the WCCIS adoption module with NAS.
- Develop quarterly panel business meetings responsible for monitoring quality assurance, performance and learning.
- Implement the two stage model for adopter assessments which will now be formally launched in October 2021.
- Marketing focus will need to be intensified in Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot.
- Recruitment work to consider with prospective adopters the needs of the children in family finding, attempting to narrow the gap in children and adopters waiting.
- Embed the nationally agreed core offer of adoption support
- Provide training in direct work to Children's social workers to support their understanding of why they are looked after.
- Offer an increased range of support to birth parents, eg start up a birth parent support group, working closely with the three regional Reflect services.
- Offer holiday and after school activities throughout the region to adopted young people and their families.
- Strengthen the interface arrangements between the three Local authorities' front door and early intervention service and the adoption service.

Conclusions

4.7 The current overall position of the regional adoption service remains positive. The overall assessment of the service during these difficult times is good, new ways of working have been identified for all aspects of the work of the service and performance has very much remained on target in the majority of areas. The service has continued to develop significant areas of the service and a growing number of adopters have agreed to support marketing activity. The use of virtual media necessitated by COVID-19 has also supported new ways of training and learning which will be continued after COVID-19 is over. Morale in staff across the service is good, and staff actively support new service developments.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect on the Policy framework and Procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies,

strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The implementation of the duties and responsibilities under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) (SSWBA) 2014, in turn, supports the promotion of two of the seven goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 within the County Borough of Bridgend. By promoting an environment that maximises people's physical and mental well-being and by supporting children, young people, adults and their carers and families to fulfil their potential no matter what their circumstances, the wellbeing goals of a healthier and more equal Bridgend and Wales are supported.

7.2 The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how the Authority should work to deliver wellbeing outcomes for people. The following is a summary to show how the relevant well-being goals have been considered in this report:

- **Long Term** – Social Services is demand led and the SSWBA focusses on sustainable wellbeing outcomes for the future. There is a requirement to meet the needs of people in the longer term and, because of rising demographics and increasing complexity, the transformation of services continues to be a priority.
- **Integration** – the implementation of the SSWBA and the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015 requires local authorities to work with partners, particularly the NHS and Education, to ensure care and support for people and support for carers is provided. The report evidences work with partners to enable children to be placed in permanent arrangements.
- **Collaboration** – The collaborative approaches described in the report, are managed and monitored through the regional collaborative management board and the National Adoption Service Advisory Group and Governance Board where there is local authority and sector stakeholder representation.
- **Involvement** – the key stakeholders are the people who use social care. There is considerable engagement including surveys, stakeholder meetings, feedback forms and the complaints process. The provision of accessible information and advice helps to ensure that the voice of adults, children and young people is heard.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising directly out of this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Corporate Parenting committee considers and notes the performance and progress of the Regional Adoption Service.

Claire Marchant
CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
September 2021

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Background documents:

- Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions
- The Adoptions Agencies (Wales) regulations 2007

NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu
Cenedlaethol

National
Adoption
Service

Achieving More Together /
Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd

QUALITY OF SERVICE REVIEW

For Period 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021



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Western Bay Adoption Service

Quality of Service Review

Date 1st April 2020-30th September 2020.

1. Introduction

The requirement to provide six monthly reviews of the Adoption Service is set out in Regulation 39 of The Local Authority Adoption Services (Wales) Regulations 2019. The aim of this report is to bring into one document a presentation and analysis of the activity of each of the local authority adoption agencies, operating as a regional service. In addition, Section 15 (c) of The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015 sets out the responsibilities of regional collaboratives to report to the Director of Operations for the National Adoption Service on a quarterly and annual basis.

The report and information within it will be used for:

- The Review of Service (Regulation 39 report).
- Given the broad content of this report it will be used for informing senior managers, cabinets and scrutiny committees.
- Quarterly and annual reports to NAS.

This report is in respect of the period 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented is an accurate record of the activity and quality of the Adoption Service and consider targets for the forthcoming year. The performance information provided is for the full year.

2. Current Position

2020 has been a very challenging year and saw the service having to consider how it could continue to operate during the Global COVID pandemic. Staff within the service have worked tirelessly to ensure that it has very much continued as business as normal and have adapted all the work that is needed to be completed via Virtual means. All staff are now fully agile and have lap-tops that enable them to work at home. Panel, Assessments, family finding and adoption



support tasks have continued via virtual means with risk assessments in place for limited face to face work when it has been needed. The work that this report highlights is testament to the commitment and drive of the staff group. The service initially adapted well to the ever changing situation and managed to maintain this throughout the year. Despite the challenges that this has brought the service has continued to deliver on both local and national objectives and maintain many aspects of performance.

3. Staffing

Staffing has remained fairly stable throughout the year and vacancies have been filled without difficulty. A new recruitment and Assessment Team manager has now commenced in post. Staff are now enjoying working in small cross function working groups to consider revising the existing processes and how the good practise guides will be implemented across the service.

For future development the service is currently looking at the potential to use the apprenticeships scheme this year running locally to support business support this would be utilising maternity savings within business support. The development of practise and performance measures and panel activity has taken the current experienced staff away from basic business support tasks such as managing the mail, admin tasks associated with the letterbox and supporting the duty system. These are very much roles that could be undertaken by an apprentice.

There was also a large underspend on staff this year due to maternity and short term periods when vacancy filling was in process. Regional manager will be meeting with the finance officer to maximise the staffing budget.

4. Adoption Panel

Membership

The support of both Medical Advisors Dr Peter Barnes and Dr Emily Payne continues with both joining the service in regular interface meetings aimed at improving quality and timeliness of documentation used for panel. This has been an effective venture, utilising the expertise of the Medical Advisors to shape practice in the service. WBAS recognises that the support and service both provide to the service is considerable.

Panel Training and Development

Panel were offered a training session on the implementation of the Good practise Guides. The panel chair and Vice chairs were also invited to attend the GPG AFA Cymru workshops.

For the first time all panel members have been offered an appraisal this year. It has been hugely beneficial to hear from members their experience of panel and feedback in respect of how panel can be improved. A number of changes are being implemented in panel arrangements following these appraisals.

Adoption Panel Activity

Panel continues to have a central list of members. Panel has now moved across to use Microsoft Teams as a virtual platform. To Panel's credit no panels were disrupted or cancelled due to COVID or lockdown. The service are grateful to panel members for their flexibility in adapting to the new arrangements. As part of the implementation of the virtual boardroom to share panel documents panel members have been provided with tablets which is far more efficient and safe in terms of document sharing.

Quarterly business meetings have now been arranged for 2021-22 in order that panel members can consider quality assurance issues, performance and learning from disruptions.

Number of Panels held

	Period 2020/21
Number of Planned Panels held	50
Number of extra, replacement or emergency panels	2 1 panel was for a termination of approval the first WBAS has undertaken
Number of Panels cancelled due to lack of quoracy	0
Number of Panels cancelled for other reasons*	4 – No cases And on two of these sessions panel appraisals were undertaken.

Table 1 – Number of Panels held 2020/21

The service has referred one set of adopters back to panel who recommended that the couple's approval was terminated. This case highlighted a number of learning points for the service and as a result the following has been undertaken:

- Implementation of the annual review of adopters process
- Strengthening of the interface between the service and the three LA front door teams (this work had started just prior to Lockdown)

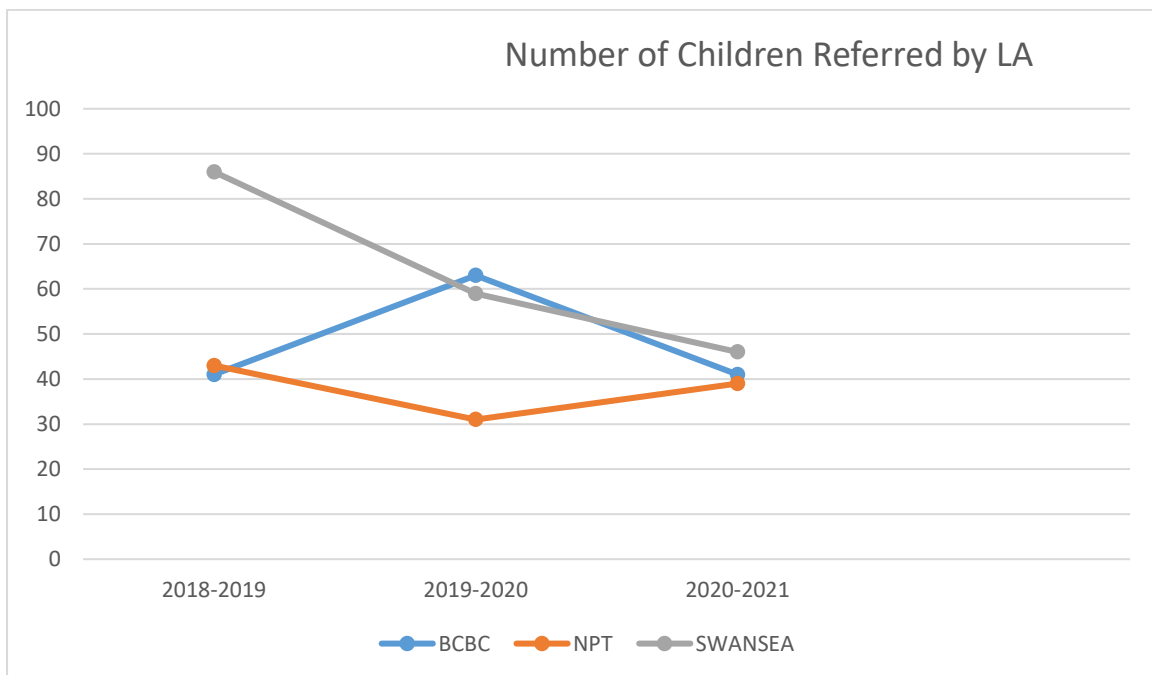
5. Children

Performance in relation to Twintracking/matching and Placement

The service performance in the first two quarters has been maintained despite the significant challenges of COVID in the majority of performance indicators.

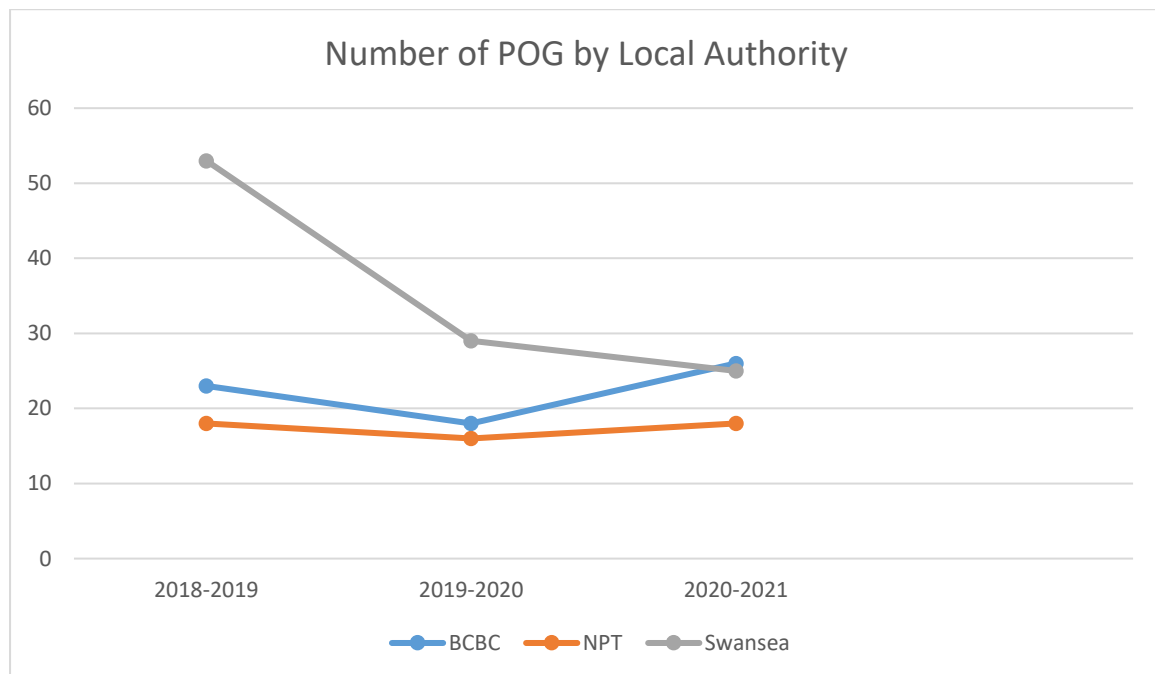
Number of Children Referred for Twin Tracking

Number of children referred to adoption for twin tracking	Regional Total
2020/2021	129
2019/2020	153
2018/2019	170



Number of POG in the Region

Number of children made subject to a Placement order	Regional Total
2020/2021	69
2019/2020	63
2018/2019	94



It is hard to predict the number of referrals and placement orders that are likely to be achieved this forthcoming year. The impact of COVID, the extended periods of lockdown and closure of schools for significant periods is not yet known. It could be likely that there is an increase in referrals during this recovery year.

Number of Children Matched for Adoption

Number of children placed for adoption	BCBC	NPT	Swansea	Regional Total
2020/2021	23	19	37	79

2019/2020	22	22	36	80
2018/2019	26	13	31	71

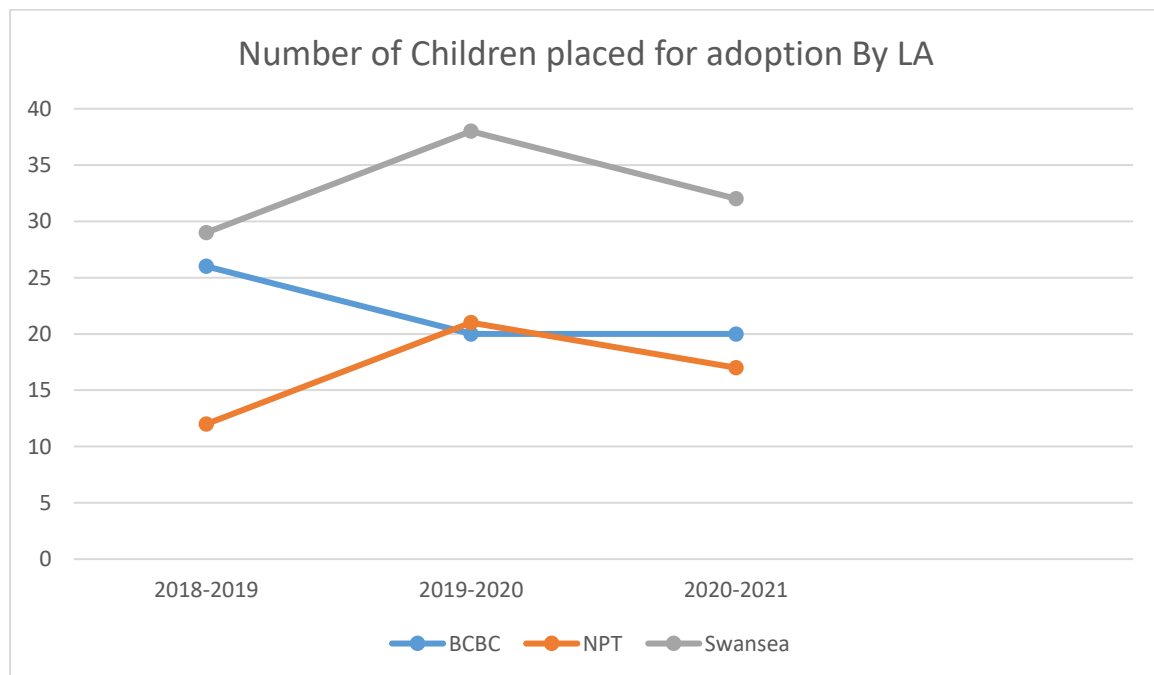
Table 3 - Number of Children matched for Adoption

One area which has been impacted by COVID is the placement of children, this is due to so few children achieving placement in the first months of the quarter. Once the risk assessment process was established the children waiting were placed and there has been no repeat of these early months although COVID did pose additional challenges in terms of timescale. 12 children were matched but not placed at the end of the year, these children were three sibling groups and 5 single children.

Number of Children Placed for Adoption in the Region.

Number of children placed for adoption	Regional Total
2020/2021	69
2019/2020	80
2018/2019	67

Table 3 - Number of Children Placed for Adoption in the region



Location of children Placed for Adoption

	BCBC	NPT	Swansea	Regional Total
Placed in Western Bay Region 2018/19	19	10	20	49
Placed in Western Bay Region 2019/20	11	15	18	44
Placed in Western Bay Region 2020/21	17	12	26	55
Placed outside of Western Bay region in 2018/19	7	2	9	18
Placed outside of Western Bay Region in 2019/20	9	6	21	36
Placed outside of Western Bay Region in 2020/21	3	5	6	14

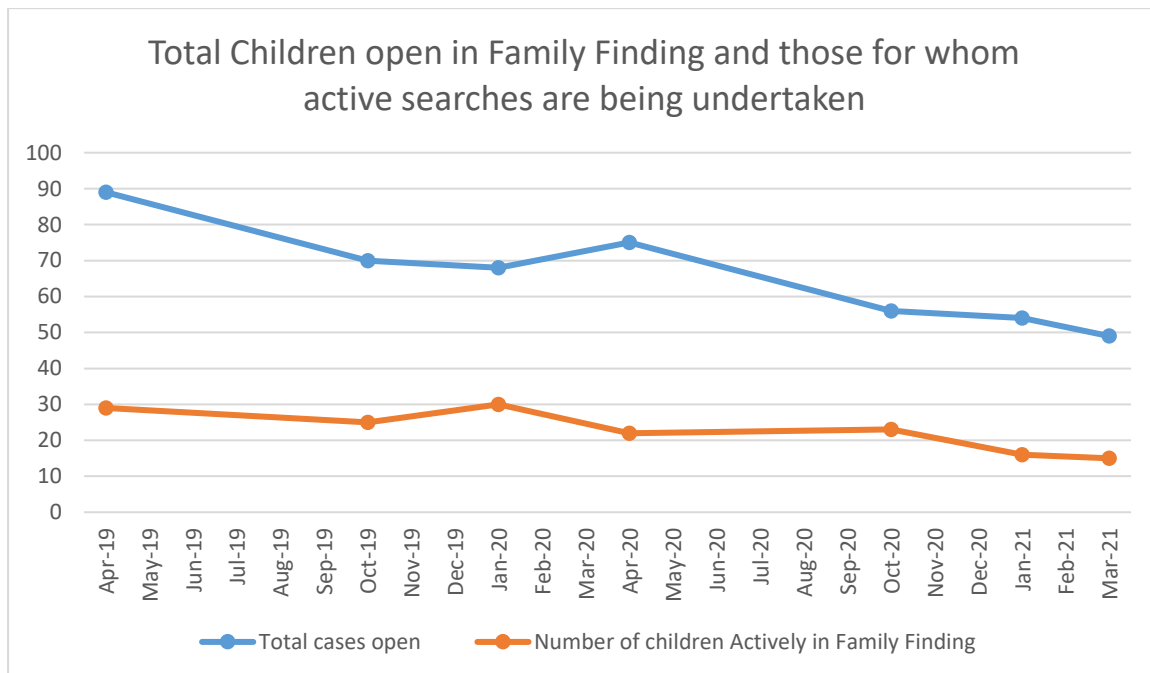
A move away from the reliance on out of county placements has been seen in this year, there has been a steady flow of adopters approved each month and the service intends to build on placing children with regional adopters where at all possible. Monthly linking meetings have been reintroduced and strengthened to ensure that children can be matched where appropriate with Western Bay adopters. Interagency fees are only considered for children with complex needs where there are no potential links with WB adopters. Two virtual profiling events have taken place this year which have been successful in linking children.

In relation to the 14 children placed out of the region, 12 were placed in England, the location/provider of these placements were as follows:

Sibling group of three children	Adoption East Midlands
Single child	Croydon Local Authority

Single child –Birth mother significantly drank alcohol in pregnancy	Adoption Focus - Leicester
Single child, genetic condition and had undergone heart surgery at birth	Barnardos South west
Single child placed with siblings	St Davids- South Wales
Sibling group of two –unable to be placed in south Wales due to birth father	Adopters for Adoption -Kent
Single older child – significant attachment behaviours	St Davids Cardiff
Single older child	Adopt south west -Devon
Single older child	Barnardos south west - Somerset
Single older child	Adoption for Adopters - Surrey
Single older child	Adoption Focus - Midlands

The number of children open to family finding has also reduced considerably over the last two years which is shown below:



As of the 1st April there are 49 children within the family finding function, these can be broken down into the following categories

	Strong link	Matched booked into panel	Change of plan (awaiting final court outcome)	No links –active family finding
BCBC	5	0	5	9
NPT	4	2	0	5
SWANSEA	6	6	5	2
Total				16

The service is currently looking actively for placements for 16 children (this was 29 in March 2020 and 33 in March 2019).

Of these 16 children there is one sibling group of three children all who have significant developmental delay and are undergoing genetic testing, three sibling groups of two children and 7 single children. One of the single children requires a placement out of South Wales due to birth parents involvement with the forced adoption groups. Four of the other single children have complex medical issues. Referrals to the Adopting Together Service have been made for these children at a very early stage to maximise their potential for a placement to be identified.

Number of Adoption Order's granted

Number of AOG	BCBC	NPT	Swansea	Regional Total
2020/2021	20	14	29	63
2019/2020	17	14	31	62
2018/2019	24	18	30	72

Table 3 - Number of Adoption Orders granted

Despite lockdown the Court have continued to manage the Adoption Hearings without any impact in performance.

49 children were placed in their adoption placement with no AOG (BCBC 16, NPT 12 and Swansea 24) as at 1st April 2021

Number of applications before the court or in process	26
Number of children placed in Q4 (not eligible for the application to be made)	21
Children eligible for application but application not yet made	2 – two older children adopters not yet ready to make application

Disruptions & Breakdowns of Placement

Within Western Bay in the reporting period there has been no placement disruptions post formal placement. There has however been one disruption during the introductions phase prior to formal placement. Regional manager who had not been involved in the matching process has met all involved staff and undertaken a review of what happened. This will be made available to Management Board and panel.

Priorities for improvement in respect of Children during 2021-22

The forthcoming year will see the launch of the Marketshare project. The purpose of this pilot is to test the impact of implementing an upfront agreement on placement numbers between the Regional Collaborative and the VAAs. It is hoped that by establishing closer partnership relationships between the two sectors (statutory and voluntary) this will make a positive difference to the length of time children wait for an adoption placement, reduce the number of children remaining in foster care or having their Placement Order revoked and see more Welsh children placed within Wales.

Development of the understanding the child day as part of the transition service is a key priority, developing a small team to lead on the implementation (using core budget and maternity savings creatively) will support this being embedded across the service.

In this recovery year coming out of Lockdown the service will aim to place as many children as this year.

6. Adopters

Performance/Enquiries/Stage Two Model

Western Bay Adoption Service has been in the fortunate position to continue to attract a number of prospective adopters who have enquired from both word of mouth and through accessing the Website. Despite the challenges posed by COVID there is real evidence that both the advertising on radio and our improved website are having an impact as referenced by enquirers.



Number of adopter enquiries and approvals

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Number of adopter enquiries	134	166	257
Number of adopter approvals	42	54	53
Number of Placements Generated	44	62	64

The service is starting to address the issue of ensuring that adopters for siblings are approved with a continued increase in the number of placements that are generated by the approvals.

It is also pleasing to see the increase in enquiries to the service as a result of the focused marketing activity, enhanced website, social media campaigns and radio advertising.

An audit of the 53 approved adopters has been undertaken and the following identified:

Locality	Total Number of Adopters
Bridgend	9
Swansea	25
Neath Port Talbot	8
Cardiff and Valley areas	7
Carmarthenshire and Tenby	3
England (adopters originally from Wales)	1

The location of the adopters does prove problematic as a larger number of children come through Swansea as the larger LA which does make it difficult to place children in Swansea who are also the larger producer of adopters and this is an area that will need to be addressed by the marketing officer this year.

Of the 53 approved adopters 10 were in a same sex relationship and 4 were single adopters. Three of the approved adopters were the child's foster carers.

Priorities for improvement during 2021-22

In relation to the forthcoming year the service aims to build on the number of approved adopters achieving at least the same amount as the last two years. Identifying placements which will be a match to the children we have referred to the service will be the focus of work. The target set for adopter approvals this forthcoming year is 55, maintaining the performance of the previous two years whilst coming out of COVID 19.

7. Advertising and Marketing

Marketing activity continued to be focused on digital activity and radio advertising into the final months of 2021 - peaking with National Adoption Week (12 – 18 October) and the launch of Western Bay's video series, the national podcast and our new advert on Nation FM.



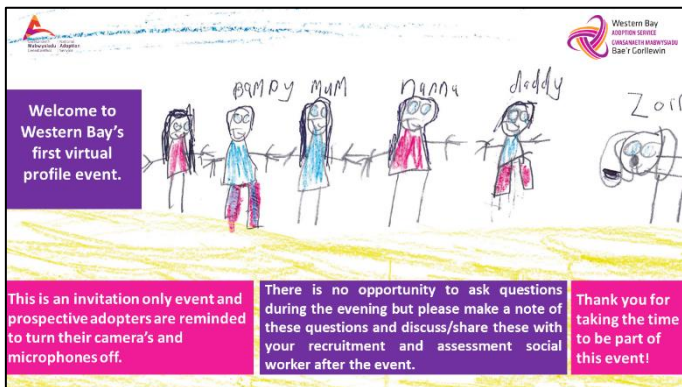
National activity during National Adoption Week (NAW) consisted of a series of webinars under the 'Lets Talk Adoption' campaign title covering a range of subjects - such as LGBTQ+ adoption using a variety of welsh adopters and workers.

The podcast 'Let the truth be told' was also launched during NAW featuring one of Western Bay's couples. The podcast has

been received successfully by our audiences, available on all the major streaming sites and has actually been entered and shortlisted into the British Podcasting Awards 2021, where the national team are hopeful of some recognition in the welsh spoken category



Western Bay experienced some positive results on the back of the national activity and regional activity with 400 visitors to our website and almost 30 new followers to our Facebook page. More on this can be seen in the digital marketing performance page.



During October we launched our first ever virtual profiling event which again in line with the above digital activity was received well and was a success.

A number of matches were made as a result of the event and it is a practice we are currently continuing and developing.

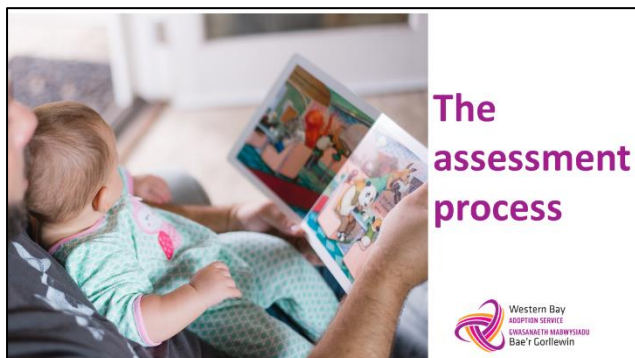
Expanding on the theme of #LetsTalkAdoption recently approved

Western Bay adopters talked about their experience of the profiling event – they have actually recently been placed with a little boy as a result of the event! They are very active on social media and keen to work with as advocates for adoption.



Our regular advertising campaign with Nation FM resumed first week of November following NAW ensuring that Western Bay was kept in the front of our audiences mind's following all the discussion during October.

Ensuring that we had integrated marketing activity to really get the most mileage out of such a busy month in October, Western Bay's 'Our Family' video series was launched on our social media and website. Engagement and reception was exceptional with the choice of featured adopters resonating with staff and potential adopters alike.



None of the featured adopters have had what could be called a smooth experience/journey, so their stories of joy and success carried even more weight. The videos will be used more heavily on our website and YouTube going forward - providing Western Bay with valuable marketing content for our adopters, with a focus on each of the key adoption stages.

December has historically seen a large decrease in enquiries over the last few years as people's minds are occupied with the festivities. Desiring to address we started a Christmas social media campaign early, at the end of November called #FirstFamilyChristmas.



Using a variety of media releases via the local authority communications teams and colourful, emotional social media the aim was to really tap into the spirit of the season and use that emotion as a vehicle for driving enquiries.

We ended up with almost 20 enquiries for December and our most ever in January at almost 40.

As we've entered into 2021 increased marketing cross working with the various WBAS teams has fostered a development of our

marketing messages, adding more adoption support elements and sensitivity to the wider picture of adoption with regards to birth parents. This will continue to develop.

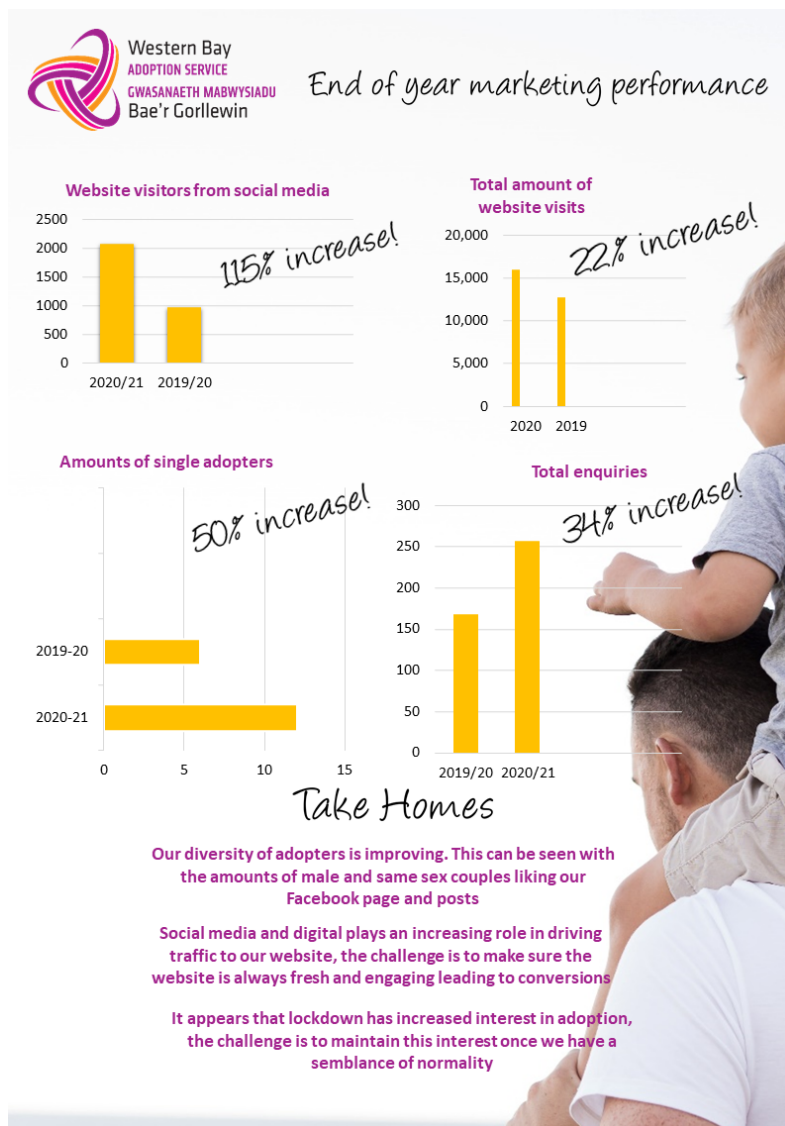
As restrictions loosen, businesses become more flexible and foot fall increases Western Bay will increase its visibility in key public areas and presence with local employers, this coupled with our strong digital capabilities should hopefully keep our high rates of enquiries consistent.

Recruitment of adopters in NPT and Bridgend remains lower in comparison to Swansea, which whilst to be expected, is something that marketing attempts to address with extra paid for advertising on Facebook and local publications targeting these areas



Priorities for improvement during 2021-22

The Marketing Officer will have a focus of activity in NPT and BCBC areas to bring the number of adopters recruited from these areas up. The use of social media and online advertising will continue as it has been positive however with Lockdown easing the Marketing officer will also look for other events or face to face opportunities.



8. Development of Adoption Support

Embedding adoption support within the service has remained a key priority. Lockdown posed additional challenges for some families who were already struggling, for others the pressure of school being taken away from them alleviated some stress and anxiety within their home. Those families open to adoption support continued to receive weekly intervention during lockdown via virtual means.

Key highlights from adoption support:

- No waiting list for initial assessment of adoption support needs, all cases are responded to, signposted or allocated within the week of being received,

- 25 families have been referred to the TESSA project between October 1st and 1st March 2021. Three families have since been withdrawn or not engaged with the programme.
- 11 families have had a psychological consultation during the reporting period. Three families have been able to access the group work. Following their initial meeting 22 families referred have been offered parent partner support. The TESSA coordinator has maintained intensive support to 4 referred families supporting with education issues. One family is also receiving support from the in house therapy team (NVR) in conjunction with the TESSA intervention due to the young person displaying high levels of aggression.
- From September until Lockdown in December the CYP worker provided an afterschool youth club to 5 adopted children who were really struggling at home. This was received extremely positively. The plan is for this group to restart now that lockdown arrangements are easing. Contact was maintained with the young people via virtual means during lockdown. A Halloween themed workshop was held in half term at the wellbeing centre and attended by 5 young people aged 7-11 years old. This included mindful crafts, mindful meditation and fun building activities.
The CYP worker continued to offer one to one intensive support to 6 young people who were struggling with school and their wellbeing. As part of that work she was beginning to talk to them about becoming young ambassadors which is something we are seeking to develop this year. The CYP worker has supported 10 schools during the reporting period on training and support in trauma, attachment and relationship based play. This work was integrated with the work undertaken with the school and young person so as to ensure a consistent approach to the young person.
- The service has in excess of 900+ open letterbox cases and approximately 57 contact investigations ongoing and there are 5 cases which have direct face to face contact supported by the team. Parents are now able to be referred for support by the family finding social worker to ensure that they receive support to maintain contact with their adopted children. Despite the challenge of lockdown staff have maintained the running of the letterbox system.
- The LJW project continues to support the timely completion of Life journey materials at matching and second review

Priorities for improvement during 2021-22

- Embedding the adoption support Core offer
- Implement drop in sessions and workshops in respect of LJ work
- Provide training to CSW's in undertaking direct work with Looked after children
- Develop adopter champions and Young ambassadors
- Work with reflect to develop birth parent support and co-produce birth parent support sessions
- Offer holiday and afterschool activities to adopted young people.

9. Policies and Procedures

The Service will be working with NAS to review of all policies and procedures across the Welsh regions and VAA's.

10. CSSIW

The service was last inspected during 2018-19 and an appropriate subsequent plan drawn up which has been reviewed at the Management Board with actions completed.

11. Local Monitoring and Governance

The Management Board is fully compliant with the Directions Powers Regulations, the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) 2015 - with health and education representatives having now joined the Board. There are terms of reference in place.

Monitoring and governance of the service is the responsibility of the Management Board, which initially met every two months and during the latter part of the year moved to quarterly meetings. The Board members interrogate data provided on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. Strategic decisions are shared with the board for approval whereas, in the main, operational decisions are overseen by the Regional Manager who is supervised by the 'Host' authority Head of Service. The service is measured on both the service plan and the national performance indicators through regular reports, presenting the achievements of the service compared to previous years and where data is available, with other regions across Wales.

An annual report is presented to Scrutiny Committees in all three local authorities. Periodically, reports are submitted and shared with Cabinet, Scrutiny Panels and Corporate Parenting Cabinets/Committees.

In addition the regional adoption service has a management by exception route to the Western Bay Programme Team/Leadership Group if there is ever a need to resolve issues at a regional strategic level. Performance indicators are reported to the National Adoption Central team on a quarterly basis, this information is provided to the Advisory Group and the Governance Board of the National Adoption Service.

12. Consultations and engagement of those who use the Service

The use of survey's and qualitative data has been developed during this period with survey's being used to collect feedback with the following pertinent points:

Closure

At the point of closure following the granting of an AO adopters are sent a closing survey about their experience of working with the service. 18 responses have been received in this time frame. All 18 respondents rated the service either good or excellent. They used words such as reliable, empathetic, knowledgeable and timely. All those who completed the survey advised that they would recommend WBAS to others considering adoption.

Therapeutic Parenting Support

Following adopters attending this group they are asked to complete a survey, 9 responses were received from the cohort who attended the training which ran into the new year. All those who attended found the sessions useful and really benefitted from meeting and hearing from other adopters in similar situations.

Future Developments 2021-22

The therapeutic parenting course has now been split into two different course, the adoption support service are now running a course for adoptive parents who have had their child placed for under 12 months (early identification and support before issues become established) and a course for adoptive parents whose children have been placed longer than 12 months.

13. Quality Assurance, Compliments, comments, complaints, safeguarding issues, whistleblowing and representation.

Attempts are made to address any complaints received by the service at the informal stage but registered with the relevant local authority within the region. Fortunately complaints remain very low with many issues being resolved informally before reaching the formal process. Five complaints have been received in this reporting period, two in relation to requests for exceptional adoption allowances being denied, one in relation to the provision and timeliness of adoption support being provided to a child placed in England, one in relation to a second time adoption assessment and finally one from a birth parent who was not in agreement to the service sharing any information about him with prospective adopters. All of these were resolved informally.

Audits were undertaken in Q1 and Q2 in line with the Quality Assurance Framework which was developed in the early part of the year. A audit of staff supervision was undertaken in Q4. This indicated that staff were well supervised on case issues but there was less of a focus on staff development and training. The use of the supervision template was not widely used and measures are in place to address this.

A selection of some of the recent compliments received by Western Bay from service users and stakeholders is below.



14. Overall assessment of the Service

The overall assessment of the service during these difficult times is good, new ways of working have been identified for all aspects of the work of the service and performance has very much remained on target in the majority of areas. The service has continued to develop significant

areas of the service and a growing number of adopters have agreed to support marketing activity. The use of virtual media necessitated by COVID has also supported new ways of training and learning which will be continued after COVID is over.

15. Future recommendation

The service are very aware that this year has been a very different due to the Pandemic and the forthcoming year will be very much recovery. Areas and priorities for future development for the forthcoming year have been considered within the body of the report, however the key priorities for the service are:

- Embedding the Good practise Guides within current practise
- Learning from cases that have not gone as well as we would have liked, these will be considered at whole service events, panel business meetings and a summary provided to the interface meetings and management Board.
- Supporting the development of the WCCIS adoption module
- Development of adopter champions across the LA's and young people's ambassadors to support service development.

June 2021



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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 2021

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

APPROVAL OF THE STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE FOR RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the revised statements of purpose for the current children and young people's residential services provision in Bridgend County Borough Council. It is a requirement under the Council's constitution that these are presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee to approve.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient**– To reduce demand through targeted early help and intervention programmes (contributing to the safe reduction of looked after children).
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Bridgend County Borough Council currently has four children's residential homes delivering services to children and young people aged 0-19 years:
- **Maple Tree House** provides a service for children and young people aged 8-18 years who require a period of assessment to establish a long term placement plan. The assessment period is 6 months. Maple Tree house also has two emergency beds which provide accommodation for up to 28 days.
 - **Sunny Bank** provides a medium term to long term service for children and young people aged 8-18 years who display complex needs and have been assessed as requiring a residential placement.
 - **Bakers Way** provides a short break service to disabled children and young people aged 0-18 years.

- **Harwood House** provides a medium to long term 52 week residential service for up to three children and young people aged 8 – 18 years with complex needs, including a learning disability. However continuing provision will be considered for young people aged up to 19 years who continue in educational placements.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The introduction of The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) came into force on the 2nd of April 2018. The purpose of the Act was to build on the success of regulation in Wales and reflected the changing world of social care. It places service quality and improvement at the heart of the regulatory regime and strengthens protection for those who need it. Regulation will move beyond compliance with minimum standards, and focus more on the quality of services and the impact which they have on people receiving them.
- 4.2 Each Local Authority is now issued with a certificate of registration as opposed to individual services being registered. This means that all Statements of Purpose are presented in a more uniform way. A guide to compiling a statement of purpose was provided under the above Act by Care Inspectorate Wales in April 2019.
- 4.3 In the Autumn of 2018 all of our services were registered to meet the requirements of the new legislation. Each in-house service provision has its own statement of purpose which is attached as an Appendix as follows:

Appendix 1 – Bakers Way

Appendix 2 – Harwood House

Appendix 3 – Sunny Bank

Appendix 4 – Maple Tree House

- 4.4 In line with Regulations the Statements of Purpose have now been subjected to their annual review and changes to the statements are described below:
- **Bakers Way** – Page 14 was updated to ensure the staffing was accurately recorded.
 - Pages 14 and 15 were updated to reflect that in the absence of the Residential Manager staff can contact the Group Manager as well as the Responsible Individual.
 - **Harwood House** - Page 9 has been updated to highlight that the number of staff at the home overnight is two (one sleeping in and one wakeful night).
 - Page 13 has been updated to reflect the Senior Residential Worker staffing levels and an update to the qualifications held.
 - Page 14 and 15 were updated to reflect that in the absence of the Residential Manager staff can contact the Group manager as well as the Responsible Individual.
 - **Sunny Bank** – On Page 2 we have added that a young person can remain in placement until 7 days after their 18th birthday to support transition.
 - Page 12 – Staff qualifications have been updated.

- Page 13 – Updated as the manager no longer works across Sunny Bank and Maple Tree House. Also updated to reflect that in the absence of the Residential Manager staff can contact the Group Manager as well as the Responsible Individual. Page 13 also now sets out under Specialist staff that Sunny Bank can access support from the Behaviour Analyst.
- **Maple Tree House** – Page 15 has been updated as the manager is now based full time at Maple Tree House.
- Page 16 now describes the role of the behaviour analyst under heading specialist staff.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is a report which details proposed amendments to the Statement of Purpose where there are no significant or unacceptable equality impacts, and therefore it was not deemed necessary to carry out an EIA.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The implementation of the duties and responsibilities under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) (SSWBA) 2014, in turn, supports the promotion of two of the seven goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 within the County Borough of Bridgend. By promoting an environment that maximises people's physical and mental well-being and by supporting children, young people, adults and their carers and families to fulfil their potential no matter what their circumstances, the wellbeing goals of a healthier and more equal Bridgend and Wales are supported.

7.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how the Authority should work to deliver wellbeing outcomes for people. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been considered in this report:

- **Long term:** The residential provision has been assessed to meet the needs of the current and future looked after children population.
- **Prevention:** Harwood House enables children with complex needs to remain living in the county whilst Bakers Way provides respite to support disabled children and young people to remain living within their families. The

statements of purpose will support the other residential provisions to run effectively meeting the needs of Looked After Children.

Maple Tree House provides accommodation which enables children with complex needs to remain in the community. The multi-disciplinary team facilitates the return of children who are currently placed outside of county. The wrap around support services assists in the prevention of long term residential care episodes and provides short term intervention to enable children to return home or to a placement with family or foster carers.

- **Integration:** Children and young people have homes in the county borough that support familial contact, attendance at local education provision as well as helping to maintain their community and ethnic links.
- **Collaboration:** All of the homes have strong links to health, education, police and other local community services to meet the holistic needs of children and young people who live in them. The homes work in close collaboration with other departments within the Local Authority as well to ensure that young people's needs are met.
- **Involvement:** Each of the residential units have independent rota visits undertaken, are inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales and review feedback from children and young people and their families through meeting or evaluation forms.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of the report and approve the statement of purpose for each of the residential services provision.

Claire Marchant
Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
September 2021

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Background documents:

None

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**BAKERS WAY – LOCAL AUTHORITY
CHILDREN’S SHORT BREAK SERVICE**



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Bakers Way

TEL: 01656 720509

Responsible Individual: Laura Kinsey
Residential Manager: Debra Evans

The Responsible Individual is a senior officer at Bridgend County Borough and has been designated to undertake this role by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing.

The manager of Bakers Way is registered with Social Care Wales.

Section 1: Description and Location of the Service

Bakers Way Short Breaks Home is situated on the outskirts of Bridgend, close to the M4 and the McArthur Glen Outlet Village. It is within easy reach of many attractions. Our minibus is used to take children/young people on outings to a wide-range of recreational, outdoor and activity settings.

The provision is based within two residential properties that were combined to make one large home creating suitably sized accommodation to meet the needs of the children who access our service.

Many children who come to Bakers Way attend Heronsbridge School and close links are maintained between Bakers Way and Heronsbridge. Minibuses and taxis are arranged to bring children directly to Bakers Way from school and to take them to school in the morning.

There are many facilities on offer in the town of Bridgend and surrounding area including:

-

- Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools.
- Coastal and Beach Areas.
- Country Parks.

Section 2: About the service provided

A) Range of needs we can support

The primary focus of this service is to support children with a disability and their families to enjoy appropriate and safe respite care to support them to remain living together. The service can offer a respite placement for children with complex medical needs who are cared for by appropriately trained staff.

Service Aim

To provide a high quality short breaks service to disabled children and young people aged from birth to eighteen years, who live in the Bridgend County Borough. A maximum of 5 children will attend at any one time and the service will address their individually assessed care and support needs, support their families, and promote their access to community services and facilities.

Objectives

- To assess each child/young person's needs before the service starts, developing and regularly reviewing a care and support plan for each child / young person.
- To schedule stays for children/young people who are matched for their compatibility, where possible.
- To introduce children/young people to Bakers Way at their pace, through a series of tea-time visits, prior to longer stays.
- To clearly define the service to be provided through a written agreement with the child's parents/carers.
- To meet each child's emotional, social, behavioural, health and developmental needs during their stay, in a way that ensures their dignity and promotes self-reliance.
- To offer children and young people the opportunity to socialise and to develop their independence outside their immediate family.
- To promote the inclusion of disabled children and young people in mainstream activities in an anti-discriminatory way.
- To provide parents or carers with a break from their caring responsibilities, assuring parents or carers that their children are happy and well cared for.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers/families, so that the timing, frequency and duration of a short break best assists the child and their family.
- To consult with children, parents, carers, social workers and other professionals so that the service continually adapts and develops.
- To resolve issues for children/young people and parents promptly.

Section 3: How the Service is provided

The service is provided through:

- A suitably qualified, experienced and skilled staff team dedicated to providing an excellent experience for children during their stays.
- A high ratio of staff to children so that individual attention can be given to each child/young person during their stay meeting their assessed care and support needs.

- A purposeful care programme during stays which is well-designed and executed, and based on individuals assessed needs.
- A partnership approach to working with parents.
- A Key Working system where a member of staff with special responsibilities is allocated to each child/young person.

Admission, care and support planning and review

Children are referred to Bakers Way by the Local Authority Disabled Children's Team and each child / young person has an allocated worker from that team who visit Bakers Way and who oversee the arrangements for the child to ensure they are working effectively.

Being away from home, for however short a period of time, can be difficult and could generate anxiety for disabled children and their families. To ensure continuity of support between home and Bakers Way, with minimum stress for the child/young person, their family and the service itself, effective care planning is fundamental to a successful outcome.

A Short Break will be offered under the following circumstances:-

- The child/young person's need for a short break has been comprehensively assessed by a social worker.
- Bakers Way has been approached to ascertain that it has the resources to meet the child/young person's needs.
- An impact and risk assessment has been completed so that the Manager of Bakers Way is fully aware of what the expectations of the service are to provide care and support for the child/young person.

Arranging the Placement

Prior to using any service, the Disabled Children's Team will undertake a full assessment of the kind of practical help or support the disabled child/young person needs and a short break referral would be made to the service. It is the responsibility of the social worker from the Disabled Children's Team to discuss the child/young person's needs, and offer information to the family on the service available through Bakers Way.

Information for parents/carers is available in a leaflet format. The Children's Guide in DVD format provides information about Bakers Way which is suitable to the level of understanding of the profile of children who would likely use our service. There is also a Children's/young person's guide in a leaflet format.

The admission paperwork includes a 'Child Profile' being undertaken with the child/young person and his/her family and a risk assessment and details of any other services currently being provided. This helps to build up a clear overall picture of the child/young person's support needs in a variety of settings. This profile is completed by the child/young person's parent/carer. The information is returned to the manager or senior at Bakers Way and the profile is used to plan with the child/young person, their parent/carers, and child/young person's social worker, the details of the placement. The information will be stored in a personal file in a locked cabinet.

All children and young people also have an individual risk assessment that is reviewed every 6 months. If the child/young person poses a risk to other children using the service and/or the service itself, a more detailed risk assessment will be carried out. This will indicate, more precisely, the support needs of the child/young person, and any additional specialist support that may be necessary. Risks identified with behaviour will lead to the completion of a behaviour management plan, which sets out how the risk will be managed. To ensure consistency of approach, Bakers Way works closely with Heronsbridge School and utilises existing behaviour management plans. Multi agency working with other professionals is also important to ensure continuity of approach.

When the child/young person, his/her family/carers have agreed with the offer of the service at Bakers Way, a Placement Agreement is agreed and signed prior to the child/young person commencing placement.

The agreement takes place between: -

- Child/young person to the extent that is possible.
- Parent/ Carer.
- Social worker.
- Manager or Senior Staff member of the service who will identify the aims/goals for the child/young person for the next year.

Introduction process

Following the initial introductory visit to Bakers Way. The child/young person begins with visits at teatime to which their family is invited to attend. A child will usually have six tea visits and those progress at the child/young person's individual pace. Arrangements for the child/young person to have a planned initial overnight stay will then commence.

Appropriate levels of staffing will be planned in accordance with the needs of the individual child/ young person.

Care and support planning and review.

During the time the child / young person attends Bakers Way, staff will work with the child / young person and others to achieve the well-being outcomes identified in the care and support plan. A formal review of the care and support plan will take place in line with the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The placement will be monitored and reviewed regularly in line with statutory guidance and the child / young person's legal status. Short breaks for disabled children/young people may be made under either section 37 (Part 4) or section 76(1)(c) (Part 6) of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Key-worker, or Manager, will prepare a report for the review and attend. The review can take place at Bakers Way, at the home of the parents or at another appropriate venue. Children/young people will be encouraged and supported to attend and participate in their review.

If at any stage there are issues of concern or changes of circumstances, a review meeting can be convened at an earlier stage.

Standard of Care and Support provided at Bakers Way

The care provided to disabled children and young people at Bakers Way is based on the principles contained in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Children Act, 1989 and 2004 especially that:

Disabled children are children first, and their disability is a secondary, albeit a significant issue.

The following approach is adopted:

- Children/young people at Bakers Way are treated as individuals and will be provided with staff support according to their individual needs.
- The pattern/amount of short breaks is determined with the child/young person, their social worker/care manager, family and Bakers Way worker.
- The service provided by Bakers Way is in response to the identified needs and planned outcomes as detailed in the individual care plan of the child/young person.
- Young people have support in preparing for adulthood, again determined by their individual needs.

Children/young people are encouraged as far as possible to: -

- Discuss and agree activities.
- Choose where they would like to sleep.

- Choose toys and learning materials.
- Shop, cook and develop domestic living skills.
- Show consideration to other children/young people, their property, rights and choices.
- Share any concerns they may be feelings during their stay.
- Take up opportunities to access community based activities.

Outreach Service

Bakers Way provides an Outreach Service once a week for young people between the ages of 11-18 (this does not include an overnight stay). This service supports young people with their transition into adulthood by teaching them independent skills. Each young person has an individual assessment before starting the service, Bakers Way will provide activities and tasks for them tailored to support the development of independence skills so that they achieve their personal outcomes.

Arrangements made to protect and promote the health needs of the children/young people in Bakers Way

Many children/young people have specific health needs. Efforts are made pre-placement to understand and address these needs in discussion with the social worker and parents/carers; and where relevant health professionals. Therefore, ensuring, each child/young person's individual health needs are appropriately met.

Some children's/young person's health needs may require specialist health interventions during their stays. Careful consideration will be given to whether staff are sufficiently trained and competent to carry these out, and if not, arrangements will need to be made to address these needs through appropriate health care services, in order for children/young people to receive a service at Bakers Way.

Staff at Bakers Way can be provided with in-house training by health colleagues with reference to specific health needs, which includes the administration of medication. Such training is monitored and reviewed by Bakers Way manager and health colleagues to ensure competency and compliance for all staff.

All medication which accompanies the child / young person is recorded and kept in its original packaging in a locked cabinet. Medication is given according to the prescribed dosage. Records are kept of all medication, which is signed and countersigned by staff when administered to the individual child and when medication is returned home. A copy is kept on the individual child's / young person's file.

In the first instance, if a child/young person becomes ill or overly distressed, parents/carers would be contacted and asked to collect their child. Emergency Services would be contacted if necessary.

Arrangements for the promotion of the education of children

Each child attends his or her own appropriate school. Arranged transport collects them from and returns them to Bakers Way during their stay.

Staff at Bakers Way read and complete the school communication book, which comes with each child. Information is shared between school, home and Bakers Way, this ensures a co-ordinated approach to the child's/young person's education is taken to meet needs and minimise any confusion for them.

Staff will provide advice and assistance to any child who has homework. Children have the use of i-pads on to which educational apps have been downloaded. If necessary advice can be sought from school, so that children's learning can be supported informally at Bakers Way, as well as the provision providing stimulating and rewarding activities.

Arrangements to promote children's/young person's participation in hobbies, recreational, sporting and cultural activities

Parents/carers normally send in advance any special request for their child's participation in any sporting or cultural activities. As a matter of good practice staff at Bakers Way would endeavour to respond to any request, however short the notice.

We have a range of toys, books, games and learning materials available to children/young people.

Bakers Way has a sensory room with a range of equipment to provide sensory stimulation to children/young people whilst at Bakers Way.

Bakers Way has its own mini-bus, which has a tail-lift for children/young people who use wheelchairs, so staff can transport the children/young person to different venues,

enabling them to access a range of social and recreational opportunities, when children/young people are receiving respite.

Arrangements for Religious Instruction

Children and young people stay for brief periods. Parents are expected to make their own arrangements for worship but arrangements would be made in accordance with the care and support plan, as appropriate.

Arrangements made for contact

Some of the children/young people that come into Bakers Way have limited communication skills. Some have issues in relation to being able to communicate their anxieties about being separated from their family and that which is familiar to them.

Staff will be sensitive to their emotional needs and feelings, giving comfort and reassurance when needed.

Families would be contacted and encouraged to ring up at any time to check on their child's welfare. Children would have the use of the telephone to contact their family, day or night and staff will assist them.

Children/young people are enabled to visit family or friends who are in hospital when staying at Bakers Way.

Contact will only be prevented when a court order exists which prohibits contact.

Type of accommodation and sleeping arrangements

Bakers Way is a Short Breaks Service which accommodates up to five children per short break. There are two downstairs bedrooms which are wheelchair accessible and three upstairs bedrooms. There is a minimum of one member of staff to sleeping and one staff member to be awake throughout the night.

Details of any specific therapeutic techniques used and arrangements for their supervision

Staff use therapeutic techniques as detailed in the child / young person's care and support plan. Advice and guidance is available from a relevant professionals e.g. specialist nursing services.

Behaviour Management

Some children/young people present concerning behaviours which may place themselves or others at risk. These would be identified via a Risk Assessment undertaken by the social worker and provided within the referral to Bakers Way. In situations whereby a child/young person presents concerning/challenging behaviour, an individual behaviour management plan, will be completed by Bakers Way staff in conjunction with parents/carers, and social worker. This behaviour management plan will include a description of the presenting behaviour, first signs of agitation and what triggers the child to present the behaviour. A detailed plan of preventative and responsive strategies; for staff to use with the child to ensure firm boundary settings and a consistent approach.

A copy of the plan is kept on the child/young person's individual file and discussed in team meetings. This is updated following any incident of challenging behaviour.

Bakers Way will involve all children/young people in decision-making as far as possible. This will hopefully result in incidents of challenging/concerning behaviour being managed safely and effectively. Boundaries are clearly discussed and explained to the children/young people and parents/carers during the introductions to the placement.

Low level sanctions are used in accordance with individual behaviour management plans at Bakers Way. This includes boundary setting and distraction/diffusion techniques.

Sanctions that will not in any circumstances be used are:-

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

The use of restraint at Bakers Way is limited to extreme circumstances and only used to prevent likely injury to the child / young person or others, or likely serious damage to property. In this case physical restraint will follow the Bridgend County Borough Council Policy and Guidance, and be in accordance with a specially developed individual plan. The minimum force necessary will be used and all cases of restraint will be formally recorded.

A restorative approach/work is also applied where possible with the child / young person.

Safeguarding Children at Risk

Staff members at Bakers Way are provided with training in safeguarding children at risk which is updated as part of a rolling programme. Bakers Way has a clear flow chart 'Reporting a Child Protection Concern' advising staff of the processes to follow

Bridgend has a Corporate Safeguarding Policy which is updated in line with changes to legislation and guidance. There is also practice guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Young People with Disabilities' to assist with staff's awareness in respects of the risks to children with disabilities.

Staff are made aware of their responsibilities to report children at risk and follow legislation statutory guidance: Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguarding People and the Children Act 1989.

Children / young people at Bakers Way are provided with short stays. Most are living at home and are ordinarily the responsibility of their parents/carers, who maintain parental responsibility for their child/young person whilst they are receiving a short break stay at Bakers Way.

Many of the children/young people receiving the service at Bakers Way have communication difficulties, and it is recognised that disabled children/young people can be more vulnerable to abuse/neglect. Bakers Way staff, therefore, are continually alert to any expression, verbal or non-verbal or any other signs, that a child/young person may be experiencing abuse.

Anti-Bullying

Bakers Way recognises and affirms the right of all children and young people to live in an environment free from bullying and harassment. Bakers Way aims to provide a culture that positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying taking place,

Any risk assessments undertaken as part of the admissions process should highlight whether the child / young person may be a victim of perpetrator of bullying.

Care is taken to match groups of children/young people to ensure compatibility of age, personalities and behaviours. Careful planning can eliminate possible friction between individuals and avoid any unnecessary conflict. However, if bullying does occur staff would take immediate action to stop the behaviour, protect the individuals and address the behaviour if the child/young person continues bullying. Parents and others will be informed as appropriate and engaged more fully if the behaviour persists.

Staff are vigilant about all aspects of bullying and ultimately a young person's placement could be jeopardised and considered unsuitable if bullying behaviour persists. They are also aware that bullying may constitute a significant risk of harm and if so that safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Action to be taken in the event of an absence

The majority of children who stay at Bakers Way are restricted, for their safety and welfare, to the house and garden area, which are secured by a keypad security system inside the premises, and garden gates, which are locked.

Children and young people must have the opportunity to feel cared for and protected at all times. As a Corporate Parent, the Local Authority has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of any child/young person, taking appropriate action as/when necessary. South Wales Police will respond immediately to any referral made by a statutory or voluntary agency that follows Joint Protocol for children absent without authority who are looked after and the All Wales Protocol for children who run away or go missing from home or care.

A child/young person under 18 years of age is absent without authority whenever they have left the placement without agreement or failed to return at a previously agreed time.

If a child/young person absents themselves from Bakers Way or from the care of member of staff whilst outside of the home, a risk assessment is undertaken in conjunction with the Social Worker or out of hours the Emergency Duty Team, giving consideration to their individual needs and vulnerabilities.

In terms of vulnerability, the child / young person may have additional or complex health needs, and/or a life-limiting condition, or be subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs) so time will be of the essence in locating them. If considered an emergency then the Police should be contacted. Family / Carers will be kept fully informed.

The relevant documentation will be completed and copies are set sent to the Responsible Individual, one sent to the relevant senior manager within Children's Social Care at Bridgend County Borough Council and the other placed on the child/young person's personal file.

Religious Observance

Children/young people have the choice to follow their own particular beliefs and can be supported to attend places of worship locally or in the closest provision that meets their needs.

Language and communication needs for children and young people using the service

Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to the treating Welsh and English on an equal basis when carrying out its public business and to meeting the requirements of The Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017.

Language is at the heart of safe care and to achieving good quality care outcomes. The service is committed to meeting the language and communication needs of the children / young people who access Bakers Way. We ensure the methods used to engage with and gain the views of individuals using the service are appropriate to their age, level of understanding and take into account any specific condition or communication need (in line with Regulation 76)

Our statement of purpose is available in Welsh and English. Personal documentation and general information about Bakers Way can be provided in Welsh. Language preference is identified and recorded on the child's care and support plan and Bakers Way endeavours to provide services that reflect the child's language needs.

Staff are supported to take up opportunities provided by the Local Authority to develop their Welsh language skills. Staff are encouraged to use Welsh with the children and family members who need to communicate in Welsh.

Due to the complex needs of the children/young people, Bakers Way/social workers/families will identify their communication needs on admission and we will work with the children to develop ways of meeting those needs. Bakers Way uses a range of methods to communicate and engage with children who are non-verbal.

Section 5: Operating hours and staffing arrangements

Bakers Way provides an Outreach Service one day a week between the hours of 3pm-10pm. Bakers Way operates the respite service from Wednesday to Saturday. Overnight stays are from 3.30pm-9.00am school days and 2.30pm-11am on weekends and school holidays. Bakers Way is closed on a Sunday evening and all

day Monday. The business support officer works 4 days a week across Bakers Way and Harwood House.

A) Numbers & Qualifications of Staff

Staff at Bakers Way either hold or are working towards the required qualification to practise within a regulated service and to register as a Social Care Worker with Social Care Wales. These requirements are set out within the Social Care Wales document: 'Qualification framework for social care and regulated childcare in Wales'. The qualifications detailed below are limited to those required, although many staff members hold other qualifications in addition.

The Staff Team:

1 Registered Manager

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Residential Management) Wales and Northern Ireland

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)

Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland

2 Senior Residential Workers

Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework) working towards

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)

9 Residential Workers

Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

2 Night Care Workers (20 hours)

Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

Casual Residential Care Workers

Casual workers are engaged to cover staff sickness and leave. These staff will be Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

Business Support Officer

Relevant experience appropriate to the role

b) Staff Levels

Residential Manager x 37 hours (shared with Harwood House)

Two Senior Residential Workers x 33 hours

Two Residential Workers x 28 hours

Three Residential Workers x 18 hours

Four Residential Workers x16

Two Night Care Workers x 20 hours

Casual Residential workers

Administrative Assistant (4 days per week shared with Harwood House)

The manager works between Bakers Way and Harwood House throughout the week. In the managers absence there are senior residential workers completing office hours and deputising in the manager's absence. All staff are aware that the manager, Group Manager and the Responsible Individual will be available by phone for support and can go to the service if needed.

c) Specialist Staff

There are no specialist staff employed at Bakers Way. However, the service has access to support from Heronsbridge School and from other specialist professionals e.g. Health staff

d) Deployment of staff at service

All staff are deployed within Bakers Way Short Breaks service

9 staff are deployed for the day shifts running on an am/pm rota.

One member of staff is deployed on a night shift. One member of staff will sleep in.

Casual staff are deployed within all areas of work days or nights to meet the children/young people's needs.

Ratios of staff: the children / young people will be support by at a minimum of 4 to 5 carers, the ratio will be increased as specified in individual child's/young person's care and support plan. At night-time there will be two staff in residence, one undertaking sleep in duties and one waking night. If an individual care and support plan specifies that they need one to one support during the night then consideration will be taken into increasing to two waking night staff.

All Staff have appropriate checks undertaken by Human resources.

e) Arrangements for delegated staff

All Staff in Bakers Way are required to work providing specialised care for children and young people. When staff are inducted into Bakers Way they receive training to meet the needs of the children/young people within their probation period.

All Staff are aware of the individual care and support plans for the children/young people we provide short breaks for and these are read by staff prior to the start of each of the child / young person's visit.

The rota in Bakers Way is completed on a four weekly basis making sure that it takes into consideration the children/young people who are having their overnight stays and the level of care they need. When the rota is being completed, Bakers Way makes sure that the staff on shift have the necessary skills so they can meet the individual children/young people's needs.

There are two senior residential workers in Bakers Way and the rota has been designed that so there is a senior on each shift (apart for a Saturday am shift) to make any decisions for the children/young people.

In the absence of a senior residential worker, a permanent member of staff has the ability to make decisions with guidance from the residential manager. As the residential manager works across Bakers Way and Harwood House, if they are not present in the service then they can be contacted via email or phone.

If the residential manager is not in work then the staff are able to contact either of the two other Childrens residential care managers who work for Bridgend County Borough Council, Group Manager or the Responsible Individual for advice and guidance and they would always be made aware of any presenting issues that arise.

f) Arrangements for Supervision

The Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate of the Local Authority is committed to the supervisory process and sees the quality of supervision as directly supporting the focus of frontline practice and service provision on what matters to people and the outcomes they would like to gain from a range of interventions.

Supervision has an essential role in the effective management of staff performance and practice and is a primary means by which staff are supported to evidence accountable practice.

Regular, planned and competent supervision is both a right and a requirement for all members of staff. The Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate has developed a

Supervision Policy and Guidelines. Supervision usually takes place once every 4-6 weeks for most staff groups in line with the policy.

Staff participate in annual appraisals which provides them with the opportunity to review and discuss previous and current performance as well as their views and future development needs. There is an expectation that actions identified and agreed in appraisal are reviewed in supervision.

g) Staff Training

Training is an essential part of developing the practice of our staff and to support the delivery of good quality care. All staff receive ongoing training appropriate to their role. All staff will complete an induction. Our induction follows the All Wales induction framework for health and social care. Staff will also complete the Corporate Induction Framework. Once staff will have completed their induction they are put forward for the required Health and Social Care Award.

Staff have access to a programme of core training provided by Bridgend CBC which may include Safeguarding Children at risk, Epilepsy and administration of Midazolam, Complex Health Training, Paediatric First Aid, Manual Handling passport, Medication Awareness and Administration, Behaviour management and Communication for non-verbal children.

Other training is available provided by Bridgend CBC to meet identified development and service needs and may include, for example; Child Sexual Exploitation, Attachment and Child Development. In addition, staff access training related to caring for a child with a disability and on specific conditions for example autism. Health colleagues provide advice and guidance on managing specific conditions for example peg feeding.

Managers have access to a programme of training focusing on the development of leadership and management skills. The programme is co-ordinated on an annual basis, based on an analysis of training and development needs. Bridgend CBC is fostering a coaching and mentoring approach to management and this is a key focus of the programme.

Section 6: Facilities & Services

Bakers Way is large adapted property, previously two semi-detached houses.

Bakers Way has a fitted kitchen, a utility/laundry room, a garden to the rear containing specialist equipment and an upstairs office.

a) Number of single and shared rooms

3 children/young people's bedrooms: The bedrooms are well equipped with toughened furniture offering plenty of storage and a work space area where school/homework can be completed. Individually decorated suited to specific individual needs and allowing some choice.



b) Number of rooms with en suite facilities

None. Staff have their own bathroom facility to use separately from the children.

c) Number of dining areas

One Dining area in the lounge

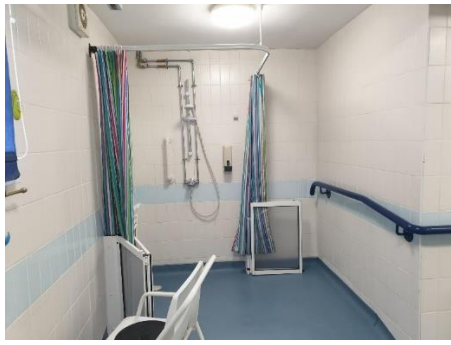
d) Number of communal areas

One spacious lounge, One downstairs play room and one upstairs soft play room.



e) Bathrooms

One ground-floor bathroom – with shower, hoist and other specialist equipment. One upstairs children's bathroom with no specialised equipment.



f) Specialist equipment

Mobile hoist, Safe Space bed and two domiflex beds.

On the ground floor there is sensory room equipped with sensory stimulating toys. Specialised swing in the garden for children to use who have a physical disability. An upstairs room has been developed into a soft play area.



g) Access to outside space and facilities at Bakers Way

Bakers Way provides:

- Safety and security within a comfortable and pleasant home-like environment
- Range of individually decorated and furnished bedrooms suited to specific individual needs, therefore allowing some choice
- Bathroom and toilet facilities on both floors adapted to cater for specific individual needs
- Aids and equipment suitable for those children / young people with physical disabilities
- Specialist bed's for children with physical disabilities
- Laundry facilities
- Individualised menus and provision to meet special dietary requirements
- A soft play room

- A room furnished with sensory equipment
- A large secure garden area with recreational equipment such as swing, roundabout, trampoline, wooden castle, play house and mud kitchen.
- Toys, games and books suitable for all ages and both genders
- Televisions, DVD's, music centre, game consoles, tablet and iPad.
- A mini-bus for trips for social and recreational purposes.

At the front of the property Bakers Way has its own drive way. Both front doors of Bakers Way have key pad locking systems, due to complex needs of the children / young people that use the service. The back door of the property has thumb locks fitted as per regulatory requirements.

Other agencies/services:

- Supporting access to advocacy services provided by an independent service offering impartial advice and guidance.
- Transport to and from school for term-time overnight stays
- Advice from community nursing, paediatric Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy and physiotherapy services, so that the team can provide a specialised service for special health or caring needs. Bakers Way also liaise with Heronsbridge School for support with the continuity of care for the children/young people.

h) Security arrangements in place and use of CCTV

Surveillance

All bedrooms are connected to a central PA system, which will alert staff of movement, the system has both audible and visual indicators of noise. This system is fully adjustable to suit the requirements of each child. Independent mobile monitors are also available to staff.

i) Fire precautions/procedures

A Fire Alarm and smoke detection system is in operation throughout the premises. Self-closing doors are connected to the alarm system. Fire-fighting equipment is installed in the form of fire-blankets and extinguishers and an evacuation 'Resqumat'. All members of staff undertake the Fire Prevention Course and are familiar with emergency procedures.

Fire drills are planned when the children / young people are present. To alleviate any distress or panic, we advise the children/young people that an alarm may go off shortly, reassuring them that there is no need to panic and explaining to them what course of action they need to take.

Fire Drills take place monthly, whilst the alarms are tested weekly. All equipment is checked on an annual basis. The Health and Safety Officer together with the Residential Manager also carry out annual Safety Fire Risk assessments.

In the event of a fire, staff will follow the written procedures of the house, the fire service would have already been contacted and parents would be notified to collect their children.

Should staff be unable to contact families, then arrangements are in place to take the children to another Social Services' establishments.

Section 7: Governance and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Quality Assurance

The Responsible Individual for the service reports directly to the Statutory Director of Social Services. The Responsible Individual will visit the service at least once every quarter and will ensure the quality, safety and standard of service is maintained at all times and meets regulatory requirements in line with the Statutory Guidance for service providers and responsible individuals on meeting service standard regulations relating to Parts 3 to 20 of the Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

The Responsible Individual will establish and maintain arrangements for monitoring, reviewing and, where necessary, improving the quality of care and support provided by the service. This will include a system for reviewing the quality of care and support at least every six months, resulting in the preparation of a report to the service provider, which will inform the statement of compliance and service provider's annual return.

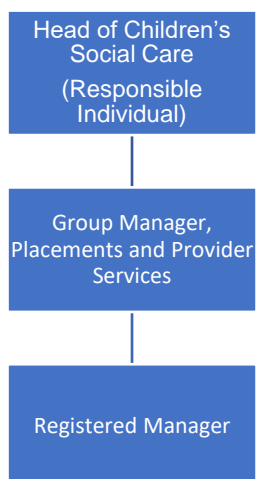
During the visit the Responsible Individual will speak with the manager, other staff members, young people and their families and other visitors or professionals, as available and appropriate.

The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services is responsible for the line management of the Registered Manager. The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services, reports directly to the Responsible Individual.

Visits are also carried out on a monthly basis by a manager from within Children's Social Care. The manager shall interview, with their consent and in private, the children and young people accommodated, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home.

They will inspect the premises of the home, its daily log of events and records of any complaints; and prepare a written report on the conduct of the home. The visiting officer will provide a copy of the report which will be stored at the home, a copy will also be provided to the Responsible Individual.

Management Structure



A range of policies and procedures are available to staff. All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care.

Records are kept in line with data protection legislation and all data is handled subject to the directorate Fair Processing / Privacy statement (<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3891/fair-processing-statement-social-services-and-wellbeing.pdf>). Any individual with concerns over the way BCBC handles their personal data may contact the Data Protection Officer at the Council or the Information Commissioner.

Data Protection Officer, Bridgend County Borough Council, Information Office, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB. E-mail foi@bridgend.gov.uk . Telephone 01656 643565

Information Commissioner's Office – Wales, 2nd Floor Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff CF10 2HH Telephone: 02920 678400 Fax: 02920 678399 Email: wales@ico.org.uk Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Staff working in the service are supported to raise any concerns that they may have in relation to service provision. Any concerns will be thoroughly investigated and acted upon as necessary. Bridgend County Borough Council has in place a Whistleblowing Policy to afford staff the necessary protection to report malpractice or other concerns.

Complaints

Ideally, any complaints should initially be raised directly with the service in the first instance, where the residential manager or senior staff member will try to resolve it immediately. However, if this is not possible, there are two stages to the complaints process:

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

We will acknowledge complaints within 2 working days of its receipt. The complainant will be contacted within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement by the person looking into the complaint and they will offer to meet with the complainant face-to-face or can discuss the complaint over the telephone. The discussion will ensure that we understand the complaint and what the complainant would like to happen.

When the complaint has been resolved, we will write to the complainant within 5 working days of the date that the complaint was resolved.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

If the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 1, the complainant can request that the complaint be investigated by a person who is independent of the Council.

If the request is granted, we will write to the complainant with a formal written record of the complaint (as we understand it) within 5 working days of the date of the request.

Before the investigation can start, the complainant will be asked to confirm that our understanding is correct and also to confirm what they would like to happen. The date on which the detail of the complaint is agreed will be the 'start date' for the complaint investigation.

A response to the complaint investigation should be sent to the complainant within 25 working days of the 'start date'. If this is not possible, we will write to them and tell them why there is a delay and when they are likely to receive the response. This will be as soon as possible after the 25 working day deadline and no later than 6 months from the date we received the complaint.

In our response we will:

- Summarise the complaint;
- Describe the investigation undertaken;
- State whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld;
- Explain what action will be taken (if any);

- Apologise where appropriate;
- Enclose a copy of the Independent Investigator's Report. (If there is a specific reason why we do not provide this, we will why);
- Offer the complainant an opportunity to meet with us to discuss the response and the Independent Investigator's Report.
- Advise how the complainant can refer the complaint to the Public Services

Complainants may also contact Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) directly to make a complaint. Please note CIW are unable to investigate complaints or resolve disagreements between people and their service providers, but, where the above complaints process has been exhausted, CIW may consider the issues and look at them during the inspection process.

Feedback from Complainants: we want to hear from complainants about their experience of using our complaints procedure. They can do this by completing and returning our feedback questionnaire. This will only take a few minutes of their time and will provide us with valuable information to ensure that we handle complaints as effectively as possible.

Useful Contacts

Complaints Office,
 Bridgend County Borough Council
 Directorate of Wellbeing
 Civic Offices
 Bridgend. CF31 4WB. Tel: 01656 642253
 E:mail:social.services@bridgend.gov.uk

Children's Commissioner for Wales
 Oystermouth House
 Charter Court, Phoenix Way
 Llansamlet
 Swansea, SA7 9FS Tel: 0808 801 1000
 Fax: 01792 765601
 Email: post@childcomwales.org.uk

Care Inspectorate Wales (South West Wales)
 Government Buildings
 Picton Terrace
 Carmarthen, SA31 3BT Tel: 0300 7900 126
 Email: CIW.Carmarthen@.gov.wales

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Policy on anti-discriminatory practice

Staff at Bakers Way 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 accordance with professional and personal boundaries. Expectations of behaviours for staff and children/young people are clearly understood and negotiated by those living and working at the home, this includes appropriate control over children/young people in the interests of their own welfare and the protection of others.

Disabled children are at significant risk of experiencing discrimination. Staff members are especially alert to practices which disadvantage disabled children/young people and seek to redress them, where possible.

Bridgend County Borough Council has a policy on Anti-discriminatory practice. Children/young person'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.

Arrangements for consultation with children about the operation of the home

The home holds a monthly children/young people meeting where everybody is able to contribute and offer suggestions to ensure the home remains a happy place to stay. The home is committed to empower children/young people, to have their say and their views and opinions are heard in a positive manner.

Staff are alert to the child's/young person's wishes, feelings and needs. These can be expressed verbally and non-verbally; and staff consistently respond in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

Children/young people are encouraged to participate in planning activities and care within the home and in the wider community during their placement, taking into account individual preferences. This ensures that the day-to-day operation of the home is responsive to the needs and views of the children/young people who receive the service.

The service will annually send out quality assurance questionnaires to children/young people resident, parents/carers and social workers. On leaving the service there will be a leaving/exit interview/questionnaire completed. This will be in the child's/person preferred choice of language/communication levels.

Health and safety

Health and safety checks are carried out within set guidelines, this includes:

- Fire safety checks
- Environmental checks
- Legionella management checks

There is also a schedule of maintenance undertaken which covers:

- The heating system
- Electrical wiring
- Water storage tanks
- PAT testing

**HARWOOD HOUSE – LOCAL AUTHORITY
CHILDREN’S RESIDENTIAL HOME**



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Harwood House

TEL: 01656 653766

Responsible Individual: Laura Kinsey
Registered Manager: Debra Evans

The Responsible Individual is a senior officer at Bridgend County Borough and has been designated to undertake this role by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing.

The manager of Harwood House is registered with Social Care Wales.

Section 1: Description of the Location of the Service

Harwood House is a three bedroomed house, refurbished in 2017, which is situated in the grounds of Heronsbridge School in Bridgend, close to the town centre and Bridgend College. It is within easy reach of many attractions for children/young people and the minibus is used to take children / young people on trips to a wide-range of recreational settings.

There are many facilities on offer in the town of Bridgend and surrounding area including: -

- Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools.
- Coastal and Beach Areas.
- Country Park.
- Cinema.
- Soft play area and Trampoline Park.
- 3 recreation/fitness centre.
- Ten pin bowling.
- Gymnastics club.
- Youth clubs.
- Library.
- Sea/Army/Air Cadets.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinic.
- Doctors and Dental Surgeries.
- Bus and train services.

Section 2: About the service provided

A) Range of needs we can support

Harwood House can support three young children/young people (mixed gender) within the age range of 8-19yrs with complex needs, which include a learning disability or a

disability diagnoses such as Autism. We are not able to provide accommodation for children in wheelchairs due to the design of the home.

Referrals are received from the Local Authority Disabled Childrens Team; we will also consider referrals from other Local Authorities. Each referral is looked at carefully taking into consideration the individual needs and the match with the children / young people already resident at Harwood.

Service Aim

At Harwood House we are committed to providing a high quality 52 week residential service for up to three children/young people with complex needs, including a learning disability, aged from eight to nineteen years (nineteen age limit applies to any young person with Additional Learning Needs.) Children/young people are usually enrolled in Heronsbridge School.

The service is located within the grounds of this school enabling ease of access to the school for the children/young people. In addition, fostering a close liaison between staff and a shared understanding of the complex needs of the children/young people and consistency of approach in working with the children/young people which support better outcomes.

The service enables children/young people with complex needs who are unable to reside with their families to continue to attend their specialist school and remain living locally to their family, friends and school.

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Objectives

- To assess each child/young person's needs before the service commences, to develop an individualised package of care and support that focuses on their needs and to review it regularly.
- To introduce children/young people to Harwood House at their pace, through a series of familiarisation and tea-time visits, prior to moving in.
- To offer children and young people interventions to assist them in achieving their personal outcomes. To meet each child/young person's emotional, social, behavioural, health and developmental needs during their placement, in a way that ensures their dignity and promotes self-reliance.
- To provide a homely relaxed environment within which children/young people are encouraged to achieve their personal goals and individual potential.

- To support all children/young people to make good use of all community based resources, thereby promoting social and economic inclusion.
- To provide a comprehensive package of educational support to promote the best possible outcome for the children/young people.
- To assess the child/young person's level of life skills and to develop these skills through an individual living skills assessment programme. Providing support through transition planning through to adult social care.
- To consult with children/young people, parents, carers, social workers and other professionals so that the service continually adapts and develops.
- To resolve issues for children/young people and parents promptly, and to address concerns wherever possible, with the residential manager and social worker.

Section 3: How the Service is provided

- A suitably qualified, experienced and skilled staff team dedicated to providing an excellent experience for children /young people during their stays.
- A high ratio of staff to children/young people so that individual attention can be given to each child/young person during their stay.
- A purposeful care programme which is well-designed and executed, and based on individual assessed needs.
- A partnership approach to working with parents/carers.
- To promote contact with the child/young person and their parents/carers and any significant persons in their lives.
- A Key Working system allocating a member of staff to assume specific responsibilities for a particular child/young person.
- Independence living skills assessment and development programme.
- Transition process to support a successful move into adulthood.
- Provision of transport to visit families and promotion of contact.

- Recreational activities, as approved by Bridgend County Borough Council Social Services Guidelines.
- Encouraging children/young people to lead a normal and independent life and to participate in local community facilities. The home creates an atmosphere in which young people are encouraged to make decisions of their own choice in a safe environment.
- Enabling children and young people to have a voice, choice and control whilst respecting their personal dignity and emotional wellbeing.
- Facilitating access to specialist advocacy provision via an independent agency.

a) Arrangements for admission, assessment, planning and review.

Harwood House provides a long-term residential service for a maximum of three children/young people with complex learning disabilities. The service provides support to young people within the age range 8-19 years.

It is envisaged that children and young people will attend Heronsbridge School. However consideration will be given to referrals received for children/young people who attend other educational provision.

Referrals route is via Local Authority Social Care Teams. The Local Authority Accommodation and Permanence Panel will make an initial determination as to the suitability of the referral. Once the panel has given approval the referral will be sent to the Residential Manager for consideration.

The individual needs of each child/young person referred to the service will be robustly assessed. Staff will engage with the child/young family, their family/carers, social worker and other professionals in establishing whether Harwood House can fully meet their needs.

An impact assessment will be completed by the manager or a senior residential worker to determine the suitability of the referral in relation to the children/young people already placed and their compatibility.

Decisions to place are based on assessed needs of the child/young person ensuring the service is able to accommodate the placement safely whilst meeting regulatory requirements.

Pre admission visits and discussions will have taken place prior to the child/young person being placed. The service will complete a placement agreement with the child/young person's family/carer, which sets out clearly, what support the service will offer ensuring clear identification of 'what matters' to the child/young person's whilst meeting their assessed needs according to their care and support plan. The referral and admission policy will seek to engage the child/young person and his/her parents/carers positively and collaboratively in a partnership approach.

Families are encouraged to visit the home as part of an active policy to encourage the facilitation of placement choice, as well as the child/young person's ongoing placement plan.

We adopt a person centred approach and work to support the child/young person to achieve their personal outcomes. We encourage and support each child/young person to reach their full potential and to make their own choices in order to live fulfilled lives. We offer a stimulating, safe, caring environment that promotes a holistic approach to all aspects of the child/young person's life.

The service will work with the children/young people to help them understand and contribute to their care and support plan. We establish strong working relationships with other multi-disciplinary professionals involved in supporting the child/young person.

During the placement, staff will assist and support the child/young person whilst working closely with their families/carers to contribute and achieve better outcomes for the young person. Staff will support and assist the transition process of the child/young person prior to discharge into adult services provision or to their own home. This process is managed via the transition panel.

We ensure children/young people are provided with accurate and accessible information which promotes the rights, responsibilities and the choices of children and young people. Such information is provided in the child/young person's preferred format and language.

A formal review of the care and support plan will take place in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Part 6 Code of Practice Looked After and Accommodated Children).

Within this process the role of the staff is to assist in the completion of the consultation documents and to advocate on behalf of the child/young person to assist with meeting their needs, whilst giving an informed view point about the child/young person's progress whilst placed at Harwood House.

Before their sixteenth birthday, young people will have a Pathway planning meeting; this will look at the ways in which the service can assist the young person when they leave residential care.

b) Standard of Care and Support you will receive and experience at Harwood House

The care provided to disabled children and young people at a 52 week home is based on the principles contained in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Children Act 1989

Disabled children are children first, and their disability is a secondary, albeit a significant issue.

The approach is to adopt the following principles:

- Children/young people at Harwood House are treated as individuals and will be provided with staff support according to their individual assessed needs.
- The service provided by Harwood House is responsive to the identified needs and planned outcomes as detailed in the individual care plan of the child/young person.
- Young people have support in preparing for adulthood through an individualised independence living skills and development programme.
- Children/young people are encouraged as far as possible to: -
- Discuss and agree activities.
- Choose toys and learning materials.
- Shop, cook and develop daily life skills.
- Show consideration to other service-users, their property, rights and choices.
- Share any concerns they may be feeling during their stay.
- Take up opportunities to access community based activities.
- Children/young people will be treated in such a way that ensures their racial, gender, religious and cultural needs are taken into account.
- The home is committed to providing an environment which promotes the child/young person's growth, maturation, self-respect and personal dignity.

Arrangements made to protect and promote the health of the children/young people in Harwood House

Many children/young people have specific health needs. Pre-placement discussions take place to understand and address these needs in discussion with the social worker, parents/carers and multidisciplinary professionals. This ensures each child /young person's individual health needs are appropriately met from the point of admission.

Some children's/young people's health needs may require specialist health interventions during their placement. Staff will be upskilled through specialist or bespoke training to support children and young people within the accommodation as and when required. Specialist training is provided by Health Colleagues.

We will aim to meet the needs of the children/young people placed as assessed by the Looked After Children's Nurse/Health Visitor and Community Paediatrician. Throughout the child/young person's placement the Looked After Children Nurse/Health Visitor continues to remain involved and consults with staff in the carrying out of individual health plans. This assistance is specialised and provides a useful resource for promoting:

- Immunisation and screening.
- Communication for Non Verbal Children.
- 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 will liaise with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Occupational therapists and Speech and Language Therapists team supporting children/young people in clinical consultations.

Staff will endeavour to assist each child/young person upon admission to register with one of the local doctors, dentist and opticians, unless they chose to remain with their own registered GP practice. All children and young people are expected to have an annual statutory health assessment. They are provided with a well-balanced diet, which takes into account their personal choices.

Arrangements for the promotion of the education of children

Staff will take and meet the child/young person from the school to walk back to their accommodation. If not enrolled at Heronsbridge then transport will be arranged. Opportunities are provided for a short verbal handover to take place between accommodation staff and class teacher/assistant regarding the day's events of the child/young person attendance or any other matters that need to be addressed. This enables an integrated approach. The children/young people have school communication books where the education staff write information about the child/young person's day. Harwood House will then respond back in these books on how the child/young person evening has been so a robust handover can be given so we can work closely with education. Staff will also share information concerning the child/young person whilst being accommodated in placement with education colleagues.

If a child/young person does not attend Heronsbridge School the same systems as above will be put in place to ensure that there is continuity between Harwood House and their education placement.

Staff will support and assist a child/young person to complete any homework they receive from school. Children have the use of i-pads (educational apps have been downloaded on them). Advice is sought from school, so that children's learning can be supported informally as well as providing stimulating and rewarding activities.

Arrangements to promote children's/young person's participation in hobbies, recreational, sporting and cultural activities

Children/young people at the 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, gymnastics, swimming, youth clubs etc. The children/young people are also offered staff supervised activities; e.g., Cinema, leisure centres, outdoor pursuits, walks in local gardens, parks and beaches.

The home has its own transport so that staff can convey the children/young people as needed, thus enabling them to access a range of social and recreational opportunities.

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

Arrangements for Religious Instruction

Children/young people have the choice to follow their own particular beliefs and can be supported to attend places of worship locally or in the closest provision that meets their needs.

Arrangements made for contact

Children/young people residing at Harwood House are enabled to have contact with their parents/carers as agreed by their social worker, unless legal considerations preclude this. Children and young people have a choice of rooms to use during visits from their relatives and friends.

Some of the children that live in Harwood House have limited communication skills. Some have issues in relation to being able to communicate their anxieties about being

separated from their family and that which is familiar to them. Staff will be sensitive to their emotional needs and feelings, giving comfort and reassurance when needed.

Type of accommodation and sleeping arrangements

Harwood House provide a home for three children/young people at any given time. At night there is one member of staff undertaking sleeping in duties and one member of staff undertaking wakeful duties.

Details of any specific therapeutic techniques used and arrangements for their supervision

Harwood House will provide each child with individualised services and interventions through the delivery of their care and support plans which will be routinely reviewed in accordance with statutory timescales. If the children's care and support plans identify that their assessed need is to have specialist therapeutic techniques then we will use outside agencies to support the home, for example Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS.)

Policy on Behaviour Management/use of restraints

Some children/young people present concerning behaviours, which may place themselves or others at risk. These would be identified via a Risk Assessment undertaken by the social worker/care manager and provided with the referral to Harwood House. In situations whereby a child/young person presents concerning/challenging behaviour, an individual behaviour management plan will be completed by the residential manager in conjunction with parents/carers and social worker. This behaviour management plan will include a description of the presenting behaviour, first signs of agitation and what triggers the child to present the behaviour.

A detailed plan of preventative and responsive strategies for staff to use with the child to ensure firm boundary settings and a consistent approach is delivered safely. A copy of the plan is kept on the child/young person's individual's file and discussed in team meetings. This is updated following any incident of challenging behaviour and will be reviewed after the every staff team meeting.

Harwood House staff will involve all children in decision-making as far as possible using communication tools if necessary. This will hopefully result in incidents of challenging/concerning behaviour being managed safely and effectively. Boundaries

are clearly discussed and explained to the children/young people and parents/carers during the introductions to the placement.

Low level sanctions are used in accordance with individual behaviour management plans at Harwood House. This includes boundary setting and distraction/diffusion techniques. A restorative approach/work is also completed where possible with the child.

A record of any sanction is kept on individual children's files and recorded in Harwood House sanction book.

Sanctions that will not in any circumstances be used are:-

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

Physical restraint is only used as a last resort and if there is clear evidence, or genuine belief that a child/young person's actions may lead to physical injury which will harm them and/or others. In this case physical restraint will follow the Bridgend County Borough Council policy and guidance, and be in accordance with a specially developed individual plan. The minimum of force necessary will be used and all cases of restraint will be formally recorded. Staff will be trained in appropriate methods of behaviour management.

Safeguarding Children at Risk

Staff members at Harwood House are provided with training in safeguarding children at risk. Harwood House has a clear flow chart 'Reporting a Child Protection Concern' advising staff of the processes to follow.

Bridgend has a Corporate Safeguarding Policy which is updated in line with changes to legislation and guidance. There is also practice guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Young People with Disabilities' to assist with staff's awareness in respects of the risks to children with disabilities.

Staff are made aware of their responsibilities to report children at risk and follow legislation statutory guidance: Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguarding People and the Children Act 1989.

Children/young people living at Harwood House may have communication difficulties, and it is recognised that disabled children/young people can be more vulnerable to abuse/neglect. Harwood House staff, therefore, are continually alert to any expression, verbal or non-verbal or any other signs, that a child/young person may be experiencing abuse.

Anti-Bullying

Harwood House recognises and affirms the right of all children and young people to live in an environment free from bullying and harassment. Harwood House aims to provide a culture that positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying taking place.

Any risk assessments undertaken as part of the admissions process should highlight whether the child / young person may be a victim of perpetrator of bullying.

Care is taken to match groups of children/young people to ensure compatibility of age, personalities and behaviours. Careful planning can eliminate possible friction between individuals and avoid any unnecessary conflict. However, if bullying does occur staff would take immediate action to stop the behaviour, protect the individuals and address the behaviour if the child/young person continues bullying. Parents and others will be informed as appropriate and engaged more fully if the behaviour persists.

Staff are vigilant about all aspects of bullying and ultimately a young person's placement could be jeopardised and considered unsuitable if bullying behaviour persists. They are also aware that bullying may constitute a significant risk of harm and if so that safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Action to be taken in the event of an absence

The children/young people who stay at Harwood House are restricted, for their safety and welfare to the house and garden area. A secured keypad system is in place to ensure access in and out of the premises are monitored and controlled safely. Adequate staffing levels ensure that children/young people are supervised or monitored at all times. Deprivation of Liberty is considered for each individual young person bearing in mind their needs and any risks.

Should some impulsive behaviour result in a child/young person running away, and cannot be located, as a Corporate Parent, the Local Authority has a duty to safeguard

and promote the welfare of any child/young person, taking appropriate action as/when necessary. The following relevant people would be informed immediately:-

- Police.
- Parent/person with parental responsibility.
- Social worker/Emergency social worker out of hours.
- Care Inspectorate Wales.

The South Wales Police will respond immediately to any referral made by a statutory or voluntary agency that follows the policy and procedures. Harwood House follows the All Wales Missing Child Protocol.

The relevant documentation will be completed and copies are set sent to the Responsible Individual, one sent to the relevant senior manager within Children's Social Care at Bridgend County Borough Council and the other placed on the child/young person's personal file.

Language and communication needs

Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to the treating Welsh and English on an equal basis when carrying out its public business and to meeting the requirements of The Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017.

Language is at the heart of safe care and to achieving good quality care outcomes. The service is committed to meeting the language and communication needs of the children who access Harwood House. We ensure the methods used to engage with and gain the views of individuals using the service are appropriate to their age, level of understanding and take into account any specific condition or communication need (in line with Regulation 76).

Our statement of purpose is available in Welsh and English. Personal documentation and general information about Harwood House can be provided in Welsh. Language preference is identified and recorded on the child's care and support plan and Harwood House endeavours to provide services that reflect the child's language needs.

Staff are supported to take up opportunities provided by the Local Authority to develop their Welsh language skills. Staff are encouraged to use Welsh with the children and family members who need to communicate in Welsh.

Due to the complex needs of the children/young people, Harwood House will identify their communication needs on admission and work with the children to develop their communication needs. Harwood House uses a range of communication tools to communicate with non-verbal children.

Section 4: Staffing Arrangements

Ratios of staff: the children will be supported by at a minimum of 1 to 1 care, the ratio will be increased as specified in individual child's/young person's care and support plans. At night time there will be a minimum of two staff in residence, one undertaking sleep in duties and one waking night. Due to the children/young person needs they are supported 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

A) Numbers & Qualifications of Staff

Staff at Harwood House either hold or are working towards the required qualification to practise within a regulated service and to register as a Social Care Worker with Social Care Wales. These requirements are set out within the Social Care Wales document: 'Qualification framework for social care and regulated childcare in Wales'. The qualifications detailed below are limited to those required, although many staff members hold other qualifications in addition.

Staff Team:

One registered manager

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Residential Management) Wales and Northern Ireland

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)

Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland

3 senior residential workers

1 x Vacant Post

Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework) and Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)

Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework) and Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's) Wales and Northern Ireland

6 Residential workers

Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

3 Night Care Workers (21 hours)

Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

Casual Residential Care Workers

Casual workers are engaged to cover staff sickness and leave.

Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

Business Support Officer

Relevant experience appropriate to the role.

b) Staff Levels

The staffing structure is as follows:-

- Residential Manager x 37 hours (shared with Bakers Way)
- Three Senior Residential Workers x 32 hours
- Three Residential Workers x 28 hours
- Three Residential Workers x 24 hours
- Three Night Care Workers x 21 hours
- Casual Residential workers
- Business support officer (4 days per week shared with Bakers Way)

The manager works between Harwood House and Bakers Way throughout the week. In the managers absence there are senior residential workers completing office hours and deputising in the manager's absence. All staff are aware that the manager, Group Manager and the Responsible Individual will be available by phone for support and can attend Harwood House if needed.

c) Specialist Staff

There are no specialist staff employed at Harwood House, however the service has access to support from Heronsbridge School.

d) Deployment of staff at service

All staff are deployed within Harwood House residential home.

Nine staff are deployed for the day shifts running on an am/pm rota.

One member of staff is deployed on a night shift. One member of staff will sleep in.

Casual staff are deployed within all areas of work days or nights to meet the children/young people's needs. The staff team work over a 3 week rotational rota.

All Staff have appropriate checks undertaken by Human resources.

e) Arrangements for delegated staff

All Staff at Harwood House have to complete the All Wales Induction Framework and the BCBC's Corporate Induction to assist in them understanding their role and strengthen their competencies.

There are three senior residential workers in Harwood House and the rota has been designed, so there is a senior on every shift to make any decisions for the children/young people as the manager may not always be present. In the absence of a senior, staff are encouraged to make decisions with guidance from the residential manager.

The rota is planned in advance, this ensures that the children/young people are safe and their specialised care needs are provided. The rota is arranged on an AM/PM shift pattern making sure there are enough staff on to care for the children/young people on a 24/7 basis.

The manager works across two services, if they are not present in Harwood House then they can be contacted via email or phone to deal with any decision making.

If the residential manager is not in work then the staff are able to contact two other residential managers who work for Bridgend County Borough Council or contact the Group Manager or Responsible Individual for advice and guidance.

The Responsible Individual is made aware of any presenting issues that arise. The Responsible Individual attends quarterly visits to Harwood House and then feeds back reports for the residential manager.

f) Arrangements for Supervision, training and development of employees

The Social Services and Well-being Directorate of the Local Authority is committed to the supervisory process and sees the quality of supervision as directly supporting the focus

of frontline practice and service provision on what matters to people and the outcomes they would like to gain from a range of interventions.

Supervision has an essential role in the effective management of staff performance and practice and is a primary means by which staff are supported to evidence accountable practice.

Regular, planned and competent supervision is both a right and a requirement for all members of staff. The Social Services and Well-being Directorate has developed a Supervision Policy and Guidelines. Supervision usually takes place once every 4-6 weeks for most staff groups in line with the policy.

Staff participate in annual appraisals which provides them with the opportunity to review and discuss previous and current performance as well as their views and future development needs. There is an expectation that actions identified and agreed in appraisal are reviewed in supervision.

g) Staff Training

Training is an essential part of developing the practice of our staff and to support the delivery of good quality care. All staff receive ongoing training appropriate to their role. All staff will complete an induction. Our induction follows the Social Care Wales Induction framework for health and social care. Staff will also complete the Corporate Induction Framework. Once staff have completed their induction they are put forward for the required Health and Social Care Award,

Staff have access to a programme of core training provided by Bridgend CBC which may include areas such as Safeguarding Children at risk, Paediatric First Aid, Manual Handling, Medication Awareness and Administration, Behaviour Management, Communication for non-verbal children.

Other training is available provided by Bridgend CBC to meet identified development and service needs and may include, for example; Child Sexual Exploitation, Life Journey work, Attachment, Child Development. In addition staff access training related to caring for a child with a disability and on specific conditions for example autism. Health colleagues provide advice and guidance on managing specific conditions for example peg feeding.

Managers have access to a programme of training focusing on the development of leadership and management skills. The programme is co-ordinated on an annual basis, based on an analysis of training and development needs. Bridgend CBC is fostering a coaching and mentoring approach to management and this is a key focus of the programme.

Section 6: Facilities & Services

Harwood House offers a comprehensive range of services and facilities to meet the needs of each child.

Harwood House is a detached two floor listed building in the grounds of Heronsbridge school. The building has been extensively refurbished with extended, and the service opened in the summer of 2017. It offers safety and security within a comfortable and pleasant home-like environment.

Harwood House offers:

Kitchen: this room is well equipped with fridge/freezer and cooking facilities, dish washer, washing/tumble dryer machine. Children/young people are encouraged to assist with cooking meals dependent on age and ability which will be assessed by house manager using their individual living skills assessment.

Office: This room is well equipped to assist in the delivery of the service. Due to confidentiality procedures, children/young people can only access the office in the company of staff. The office also contains the locked medical cabinet for safe/storage of medication. A telephone is available for private use.

a) Number of single and shared rooms

Three children/young people's bedrooms: The bedrooms are well equipped with toughened furniture offering plenty of storage and a workspace area where school/homework can be completed. Individually decorated suited to specific individual needs and allowing some choice

b) Number of rooms with en suite facilities

Staff Bedroom: this room is for staff undertaking sleeping in duties and has an en suite for staff use, which has, toilet, sink and shower facilities.

c) Number of dining areas

One Dining area in the sun room



d) Number of communal areas

One Lounge: this is a communal room where children and young people have opportunities to engage with each other and form friendships, watch television/DVD's, sensory bubble tube and can be used when visitors call.



1 Dining/Sun room; this room is equipped with a table and 8 chairs, sofa, TV and music player and is where children/young people and staff will have their meals together. It can also be used as a second living room/quiet area, where arts/crafts and boards games can be used. Double patio doors with accessible access to patio/lawn garden area.

e) Specialist bathing facilities

Shower room: Equipped with a toilet, sink and walk in shower with alert alarm pull cord for use of children/young people and visitors.

Bathroom: is equipped with a shower, bath, sink and toilet with an alert alarm pull cord for the use of children and young people.

f) Specialist equipment

There is no specialist equipment within Harwood House.

g) Access to outside space and facilities at this service



Garden Area:

The garden perimeter is enclosed with a 6 foot fence, which has a double gate opening, which will be locked via padlock, next to this there is a single gate, which has a latch lock, which will not be padlocked due to fire regulations. The garden is mainly grass lawn with a paved patio area to the front of home, paved patio lawn is also at the rear of the property and has access by patio doors from the sun lounge/diner room. There is also a shed, outdoor electric sockets and a water tap.

Parking:

There is a designated parking area for the minibus and car parking spaces for Harwood House.

h) Security arrangements in place and use of CCTV

The home has installed an intruder alarm and an internal bedroom alert alarm, which will notify the waking night worker when a child/young person has exited their room.

Some of the external doors to the property have thumb locks fitted as per usual regulatory requirements but not all. Decisions are taken based on the vulnerability of the child / young person and any legal restrictions (DoLs). All staff will have the exit door keys on them at all times and this is recorded within the fire risk assessment.

Children/ young people are appropriately monitored by staff in line with providing a high quality standard of care. These may include observations of behaviour and self-expression such as the child/young person being withdrawn, agitated or showing a change to their usual mood that evokes concern. Staff complete records on a daily basis in relation to the progress of the child/young person, with key workers making more extensive observations as part of their monthly key working reports.

At night there will be a member of staff on waking duties to observe and monitor the children for health, care and safety needs.

Fire precautions/procedures

A Fire Alarm and smoke detection system is in operation throughout the premises. Self-closing doors are connected to the alarm system. Fire-fighting equipment is installed in the form of fire-blankets and extinguishers. Staff access fire prevention e-learning.

Fire drills are planned when the children/young people are present. To alleviate any distress or panic, we advise the children/young people that an alarm may go off shortly, reassuring them that there is no need to panic and explaining to them what course of action they need to take. The children/young people who are non-communicative have a PECS fire safety drill provided.

Fire Drills take place monthly, whilst the alarms are tested weekly. All equipment is checked on an annual basis. The Health and Safety Officer together with the manager also carry out annual Safety Fire Risk assessments.

Other agencies' services provided:-

Advice from Community Nursing, Paediatric Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services, so that the team can provide a specialised service for special health or caring needs

Section 7 Governance and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Quality Assurance

The Responsible Individual for the service reports directly to the Statutory Director of Social Services. The Responsible Individual will visit the service at least once every quarter and will ensure the quality, safety and standard of service is maintained at all times and meets regulatory requirements in line with the Statutory Guidance for service providers and responsible individuals on meeting service standard regulations relating to

Parts 3 to 20 of the Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

The Responsible Individual will establish and maintain arrangements for monitoring, reviewing and, where necessary, improving the quality of care and support provided by the service. This will include a system for reviewing the quality of care and support at least every six months, resulting in the preparation of a report to the service provider, which will inform the statement of compliance and service provider's annual return.

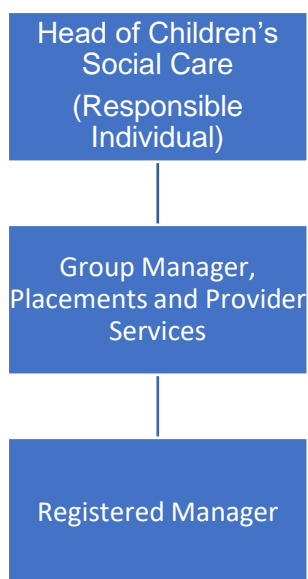
During the visit the Responsible individual will speak with the manager, other staff members, young people and their families and other visitors or professionals, as available and appropriate.

The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services is responsible for the line management of the Registered Manager. The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services, reports directly to the Responsible Individual.

Visits are also carried out on a monthly basis by a manager from within Children's Social Care. The manager shall interview, with their consent and in private, the children and young people accommodated, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home.

They will inspect the premises of the home, its daily log of events and records of any complaints; and prepare a written report on the conduct of the home. The visiting officer will provide a copy of the report which will be stored at the home, a copy will also be provided to the Responsible Individual.

Management Structure



A range of policies and procedures are available to staff and reviewed regularly to ensure currency. All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care.

Records are kept in line with data protection legislation and all data is handled subject to the directorate Fair Processing/Privacy statement

(<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3891/fair-processing-statement-social-services-and-wellbeing.pdf>).

Any individual with concerns over the way BCBC handles their personal data may contact the Data Protection Officer at the Council or the Information Commissioner.

Data Protection Officer, Bridgend County Borough Council, Information Office, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB. E-mail foi@bridgend.gov.uk . Telephone 01656 643565

Information Commissioner's Office – Wales, 2nd Floor Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff CF10 2HH Telephone: 02920 678400 Fax: 02920 678399 Email: wales@ico.org.uk Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Staff working in the service are supported to raise any concerns that they may have in relation to service provision. Any concerns will be thoroughly investigated and acted upon as necessary. Bridgend County Borough Council has in place a Whistleblowing Policy to afford staff the necessary protection to report malpractice or other concerns.

Complaints

Ideally, any complaints should initially be raised directly with the service in the first instance, where the registered manager or senior staff member will try to resolve it immediately. However, if this is not possible, there are two stages to the complaints process:

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

We will acknowledge complaints within 2 working days of its receipt. The complainant will be contacted within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement by the person looking into the complaint and they will offer to meet with the complainant face-to-face or can discuss the complaint over the telephone. The discussion will ensure that we understand the complaint and what the complainant would like to happen.

When the complaint has been resolved, we will write to the complainant within 5 working days of the date that the complaint was resolved.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

If the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 1, the complainant can request that the complaint be investigated by a person who is independent of the Council.

If the request is granted, we will write to the complainant with a formal written record of the complaint (as we understand it) within 5 working days of the date of the request.

Before the investigation can start, the complainant will be asked to confirm that our understanding is correct and also to confirm what they would like to happen. The date on which the detail of the complaint is agreed will be the 'start date' for the complaint investigation.

A response to the complaint investigation should be sent to the complainant within 25 working days of the 'start date'. If this is not possible, we will write to them and tell them why there is a delay and when they are likely to receive the response. This will be as soon as possible after the 25 working day deadline and no later than 6 months from the date we received the complaint.

In our response we will:

- Summarise the complaint;
- Describe the investigation undertaken;
- State whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld;

- Explain what action will be taken (if any);
- Apologise where appropriate;
- Enclose a copy of the Independent Investigator's Report. (If there is a specific reason why we do not provide this, we will why);
- Offer the complainant an opportunity to meet with us to discuss the response and the Independent Investigator's Report.
- Advise how the complainant can refer the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales if they are still not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Complainants may also contact Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) directly to make a complaint. Please note CIW are unable to investigate complaints or resolve disagreements between people and their service providers, but, where the above complaints process has been exhausted, CIW may consider the issues and look at them during the inspection process.

Feedback from Complainants: we want to hear from complainants about their experience of using our complaints procedure. They can do this by completing and returning our feedback questionnaire. This will only take a few minutes of their time and will provide us with valuable information to ensure that we handle complaints as effectively as possible.

Useful Contacts

Complaints Office,
Bridgend County Borough Council
Directorate of Wellbeing
Civic Offices
Bridgend. CF31 4WB.

Tel: 01656 642253
E:mail:social.services@bridgend.gov.uk

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

Tel: 0808 801 1000
Fax: 01792 765601
Email: post@childcomwales.org.uk

Care Inspectorate Wales (South West Wales)
Government Buildings
Picton Terrace
Carmarthen, SA31 3BT

Tel: 0300 7900 126
Email: CIW.Carmarthen@.gov.wales

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
Bridgend, CF35 5LJ

Tel: 0300 790 0203
Fax: 01656 641199
Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Policy on anti-discriminatory practice

Staff at Harwood House 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 accordance with professional and personal boundaries. Expectations of behaviours for staff and children/young people are clearly understood and negotiated by those living and working at the home, this includes appropriate control over children/young people in the interests of their own welfare and the protection of others.

Disabled children are at significant risk of experiencing discrimination. Staff members are especially alert to practices which disadvantage disabled children/young people and seek to redress them, where possible.

Bridgend County Borough Council has a policy on Anti-discriminatory practice. Children/young person'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.

The home has a manual of policies and procedures which can be accessed upon request and is continually revised and updated as required.

Arrangements for consultation with children about the operation of the home

The home holds a monthly children/young people meeting where everybody is able to contribute and offer suggestions to ensure the home remains a happy place to live. The home is committed to empowering children/young people, to have their say and their views and opinions are heard in a positive manner.

Staff are alert to the child's/young person's wishes, feelings and needs. These can be expressed verbally and non-verbally; and staff consistently respond in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

Children/young people are encouraged to participate in planning activities and care within the home and in the wider community during their placement, taking into account individual preferences. This ensures that the day to day operation of the home is responsive to the needs and views of the children/young persons who receive the service.

The service will annually send out quality assurance questionnaires to children/young people resident, parents/carers and social workers. On leaving the service there will be a leaving/exit interview/questionnaire completed. This will be in the child's/young persons preferred choice of language/communication.

Health and safety

Health and safety checks are carried out within set guidelines, this includes:

- Fire safety checks
- Environmental checks
- Legionella management checks

There is also a schedule of maintenance undertaken which covers:

- The heating system
- Electrical wiring
- Water storage tanks
- PAT testing

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**SUNNY BANK – LOCAL AUTHORITY
CHILDREN’S RESIDENTIAL HOME**



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Sunny Bank Community Home

TEL: 01656 782914

Responsible Individual: Laura Kinsey
Registered Manager: Karl Culpeck

The Responsible Individual is a senior officer at Bridgend County Borough and has been designated to undertake this role by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing.

The manager of Sunny Bank is registered with Social Care Wales.

Section 1: Description of the Location of the Service

Sunny Bank is a detached two storey house with space for four young people to be accommodated. Sunny Bank is located in the coastal town of Porthcawl and is well established within the community. The town itself is small and compact and therefore has to rely on facilities and services throughout the authority.

Sunny Bank offers a range of services to children/young people. Children/young people are encouraged to use facilities in the community as part of promoting social inclusion.

Facilities and services in the locality:

- Education provision – ten comprehensive schools and a Further Education College.
- Employment – Careers Wales, Job Centre plus, employment agencies.
- Health provision – Cwm Taf Morgannwg health services, hospital and GP provision and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Dental and Optical services. Third sector support organisations e.g. DASH (Drug & Alcohol Self-Help).
- Leisure provision – HALO leisure centres, swimming pools and libraries. YMCA, Scouts and Guides, Armed Forces Cadets and many clubs and groups e.g. martial arts, gymnastics, coastal areas and green sites.
- Housing – Local Authority Housing Services and Housing associations.

Sunny Bank makes use of a GP practice nearby, where possible, young people stay registered with their own GP and Dentist.

Section 2: About the service provided

A) Range of needs we can support

Sunny Bank provides four placements of varying lengths to children/young people of either sex and in the age range 8 to 17 years (at the time of admission) who (for whatever reason) cannot live with their own immediate or extended family. Young

people moving into adult services / independent living may remain at Sunny Bank post 18 for up to 7 days to support their transition plan. Staff are skilled at supporting placements for those who are particularly vulnerable and present with varying needs. Staff work with children/young people through an intensive approach which could include therapeutic intervention and Positive Behaviour Support. The approach is to work in partnership with children / young people, parents/carers and professionals to stabilise the child/young person in order that they successfully move on to a more permanent placement.

Service Aim

At Sunny Bank we are committed to offering a stimulating, safe, caring environment that promotes a holistic approach to all aspects of the child/young person's life.

Objectives

- Providing children/young people with an individualised package of support that focuses on their assessed needs.
- Offering children/young people therapeutically informed interventions to assist them in achieving personal well-being.
- Assisting children/young people to explore their own issues and experiences and work through any emotions and feelings which may become a barrier to a stable placement and future accommodation.
- Providing appropriate levels of support that recognise, value and encourage children/young people to maintain personal skills and competencies and promote their confidence and self esteem
- Providing a comprehensive package of educational support to promote the best possible outcomes for children/young people within their educational setting
- Working closely with families or substitute families to ensure that when children/young people return home or go to other suitable placements, adequate support via a transition plan is given to both the young person and their family to ensure success.
- Provide age appropriate independent living programmes to assist young people to be able to develop the necessary skills to enable them to, if appropriate, live independently.

Section 3: How the Service is provided

Sunny Bank has a suitably qualified, experienced and skilled staff team dedicated to providing an excellent experience for children during their stay. There is a good ratio of staff to children/young people so that individual attention can be given to each child/young person whilst they are living at Sunny Bank.

Sunny Bank will provide:

- A purposeful care programme which is well-designed and executed, and based on individual assessed needs for each child/young person accommodated.
- Sunny Bank will develop a partnership approach to working with parents/carers.
- A Key Working system providing a member of staff with specific responsibilities for each child/young person.
- The promotion and development of social and self-care skills.
- A system to enable partnership support for a successful move to long-term/permanent placement.
- Through a robust transition process, support to achieve a successful move on to a longer term placement or rehabilitation within their own family.
- Transport to visit families and promotion of contact.
- Encouragement to children/young people to lead a normal and independent life and to participate in local community facilities. The home will create an atmosphere in which young people are encouraged to make decisions of their own choice in a safe environment.
- Support to enable children and young people to have a voice, choice and control whilst respecting their personal dignity and emotional wellbeing.
- Signposting to counselling, advocacy and mediation.

Admission, care and support planning and review

Admissions are planned; social workers are required to present a request for a child/young person to be placed at Sunny bank to the Accommodation and Permanence Panel, who will assess whether it is appropriate to make a referral to Sunny Bank. Once a referral is received it will be considered by the Manager or a senior residential worker. They will complete an impact assessment specifically looking at the suitability of the referral in

relation to the personal details (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation) and care and support needs of children/young people already living in the home.

Decisions to provide a placement are based on a thorough consideration of the needs of the child/young person, their “match” with other residents and a judgement on the ability of the home to meet their needs within the terms of the Statement of Purpose, and the prevailing circumstances at the time. Children’s ages will be given careful consideration due to the wide range permitted in the Statement of purpose. All discussions are focussed on how an individual’s well-being outcomes can be met.

There will be an opportunity for an introductory visit by the young person, parents, carer and social worker, to consider whether this is a viable placement. Where a placement is offered, a pre-admission planning meeting will determine the placement plan for the young person.

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

Young people and their families (where possible and appropriate) will be encouraged to visit prior to admission. Staff will provide visitors with verbal and written information about the service available, the expectations of the young person and the obligations and responsibilities of staff. After an informal visit, should the social worker, young person and/or parent/carers wish to pursue a placement the social worker will provide Sunny Bank with the necessary pre admission documents.

During the time spent at Sunny Bank, staff will work with the young person and others to achieve the well-being outcomes identified in the plan. A formal review of the care and support plan will take place in line with the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Part 6 Code of Practice Looked After and Accommodated Children).

Standard of Care and Support provided at Sunny Bank

The home will work in partnership with the child/young person and their parents or persons with parental responsibility.

Each child/young person will have a personal plan, based on general and specific needs and this plan will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Children/young people will be treated in as ‘ordinary’ a way as possible and be encouraged to take a full part in local community life.

Children/young people will be treated in such a way that ensures their race, gender, religious and cultural needs are taken into account.

Children / Young People will be supported to access advocacy services provided by an independent service offering impartial advice and guidance.

Staff will access other professional networks where available and appropriate in order to meet the child's/young person's needs as comprehensively as possible. These include social workers, the child's/young person's school and the Vulnerable Groups service, representatives of the Health Service and the Looked After Children Nurse / Health Visitor, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and the Youth Offending Service.

The service is committed to providing an environment which promotes the child's/young person's growth, maturation, self-respect and personal dignity.

A primary function of the service is to look after children/young people who present with varying needs, which may include challenging behaviour. Each young person will have an individual plan to help them modify their behaviour.

A variety of approaches will be used to enable this to be achieved: The child/young person will:-

- Be encouraged and assisted to set their own limits and boundaries.
- Be encouraged and assisted to consider the consequences of their actions with maximum staff support.
- Be cared for through a programme, which attempts to modify some aspects of their behaviour where appropriate.
- Be offered every support and encouragement to value and benefit from all educational opportunities.
- Be assisted to resolve issues with families and attempt successful rehabilitation home.
- Be encouraged and assisted to learn respect for and co-operate with others by purposeful involvement in decision making in the life of the home through children's/young people's meetings.

Behaviour Management

Staff at Sunny Bank will assist young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour by responding constructively to unacceptable behaviour and using relationships with young people to nurture respect.

Children and young people will be faced with the consequences of their actions within a climate of maximum staff support. A safe environment will be maintained on the basis of good personal and professional relationships between the staff and the children /young people. It is not seen as a negative concept but as a way of enabling the children /young people to self-regulate their emotions and develop self-control and self-discipline.

Children and young people will be provided with intensive staff engagement and support through key working and access to other support networks. Staff will utilise a variety of approaches and tools to work with the children and young people.

Where appropriate the children / young people will work through an individually designed programme to help them develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Integrated working arrangements between Maple Tree House and Sunny Bank are in place to provide an enhanced service that will address problems and issues with children/young people. To achieve this:

- There is a single point of contact in both services.
- Access to professional advice and guidance.
- Quick respond to crisis situations.
- Have a reciprocal understanding of intervention techniques and roles of other professions.
- Work together to address the complex issues of children/young people within this service.
- Be open with colleagues and exercise discretion, trust and sensitivity in establishing and operating within multi -agency teams.
- Provide help and support closer to the point of contact.

Promotion of Health Needs

On admission each young person has a health assessment undertaken by the Health Visitor supporting the Safeguarding teams and is registered with one of the local Doctors, Dentists and Opticians, unless there is a preference to remain registered with their existing practice. All young persons have an annual statutory health review and also a six monthly dental check as well as any immunisation needs. They are assisted to develop a well-balanced diet and encouraged appropriately and sensitively in the importance of personal hygiene if this is neglected. Where appropriate, use is made of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Each young person follows a health education programme, which deals with HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and sex and sexuality.

There is a 'No Smoking' policy in accordance with current legislation and in line with Bridgend County Borough Council's policy. The young people are actively discouraged from smoking; there is no facility for smoking in Sunny Bank for young people, visitors or staff.

Education

Sunny Bank strives to ensure that all the young people cared for are aware of the benefits of receiving a full education, training or employment package.

We endeavour to promote this, by establishing good professional relationships with the schools, colleges and training providers our young people attend. Alternatively, we

will assist young people to access work experience opportunities and support them in their career choices.

Homework can be completed in the young person's own bedroom, or, if preferred, in a room set aside for the use of the young people. Sunny Bank has Wi-Fi and there is access to computers or a laptop and a range of books (both reference and leisure). Staff will be available to assist with homework and revision.



Additional assistance to support young people's educational achievement is sought from the Vulnerable Groups service.

Leisure and Activities

We encourage all the young people in our care to pursue individual activities, as well as organising group recreation and leisure programmes. Halo cards for use of the facilities in the local recreation centre are offered to all the young people.

Opportunities will be provided for young people to identify and organise trips/activities independently and with staff. Staff will ensure activities are safely organised and trips are suitable for all age groups and abilities.

There is an independence programme available for the young people which has been developed by staff, a cultural based programme with the aim of developing positive experiences that young people can take with them, inclusive of educational experiences.

Staff at Sunny Bank will assist young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour by responding constructively to unacceptable behaviour and using relationships with young people to nurture respect.

When a sanction is required, staff will discuss it with the young person where their views are acknowledged and recorded.

Sanctions that will not in any circumstances be used are:-

- Withdrawal 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.

The use of restraint at Sunny Bank is limited to extreme circumstances and only used to prevent likely injury to the young person or others, or likely serious damage to property. In this case physical restraint will follow the Bridgend County Borough Council Policy and Guidance, and be in accordance with a specially developed individual plan. The minimum of force necessary will be used and all cases of restraint will be formally recorded.

Staff will use a restorative approach with young people when the timing is perceived as beneficial to discuss the behaviour and its effects on others.

Safeguarding Children at Risk

Putting the wishes, needs and wellbeing of the child / young person first, is our primary consideration. This includes staff being alert to any potential or suspected abuse or risk of abuse or harm.

Sunny Bank aims to actively involve children and young people in decisions about the care and support they receive and is committed to promoting the rights of the children and young people as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Staff members at Sunny Bank are provided with training in safeguarding children at risk.

Bridgend CBC has a Corporate Safeguarding Policy which is updated in line with changes to legislation and guidance.

Staff are made aware of their responsibilities to report children at risk and follow legislation statutory guidance: Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard People and the Children Act 1989.

Where concerns are suspected staff will follow internal safeguarding procedures. Where the child / young person has a Care and Support Protection Plan, staff will follow any agreed action and support the child / young person to achieve their personal outcomes

Staff will continually liaise with other professionals to meet the welfare of the young person. The young person's social worker and personal advisor are expected to attend monthly review meetings to provide updates regarding the young person's wellbeing, progression of independence and the transitional process.

Anti-bullying

Sunny Bank recognises and affirms the right of all children and young people to live in an environment free from bullying and harassment. Sunny Bank aims to provide a culture that positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying taking place.

Any risk assessments undertaken as part of the admissions process should highlight whether the child / young person may be a victim of perpetrator of bullying.

On admission the child/ young person receives an induction pack, a member of staff will explain our zero tolerance to bullying and Sunny Bank's complaints procedure. All young people are expected to sign up to the anti-bullying policy and abide by the contract. All reported incidents will be fully investigated. Staff will offer appropriate support and reassurance to a child/young person who has been bullied. And will respond in ways that seek to influence the behaviour of the perpetrator of the bullying.

Staff will use a restorative justice approach and any conflict or confrontation between residents and staff will be resolved using these mediation skills.

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. They are also aware that bullying may constitute a significant risk of harm and if so that safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Contact with Parents, Persons with Parental Responsibility, Relatives or Friends

Parents and other relatives are welcome to visit Sunny Bank at any time unless legal restrictions make this impossible. Friends are welcome to Sunny Bank during the evenings weekends and holidays, but are not allowed to stay overnight.

Undesirable friendships would be discouraged or managed; discussions will be held at a planning meeting when the suitability of these relationships would be considered.

Procedures for dealing with unauthorised absence

Children and young people must have the opportunity to feel cared for and protected at all times. As a Corporate Parent, the Local Authority has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of any child/young person, taking appropriate action as/when necessary. South Wales Police will respond immediately to any referral made by a statutory or voluntary agency that follows Joint Protocol for children absent without authority who are looked after and the All Wales Protocol for children who run away or go missing from home or care.

Children and young people absent themselves for a variety of reasons - in response or reaction to their personal situations or other contributing circumstances.

A child/young person under 18 years of age is absent without authority whenever they have left the placement without agreement or failed to return at a previously agreed time. In the event of a child/young person being absent from the home without authority, staff will use the pre placement risk assessment and the current risk assessment to establish the level of concern. The following categories of absence will be assigned to the situation.

Absent without authority (low level of concern)

Some children/young people absent themselves for a short period and then return. Such children/young people may be testing boundaries and are not necessarily considered to be at a high level of risk. Young people who fall within the category of “absent without authority” will be the subject of continuous risk assessment whilst they remain absent. The outcome of this risk assessment will determine the reporting to the police, however, for this level the child/young person will not be reported as missing to the police.

During their absence, circumstances may change and staff will need to be in a position to respond accordingly and effectively. Staff at the service will take all reasonable and practical steps to establish the whereabouts or destination of the child/young person or persons with whom they may associate. If the location of the child/young person is known, the staff from the service will collect them if safe to do so. However, there may be occasions where it thought that there are specific issues of safety or public order difficulties in returning the child/young person back to the unit that assistance from the Police may be sought.

Missing children (medium to high level of concern)

As detailed above a child/young person may be categorised as “missing” when they are absent from Sunny Bank residential home and

(a) the child/young person’s location is not known and the reason for the absence is not known and/or

(b) there is cause for concern because of their vulnerability and/or

(c) there is potential danger to the public and/or

(d) the child/young person is looked after as a result of direction by the Court or is subject to police protection.

Action to be taken in the event of an absence:

If a child/young person fails to return to the Home at the agreed time, a risk assessment is undertaken in conjunction with the Emergency Duty Team and if

appropriate the child/young person will be either deemed absent without authority or missing.

Required documentation will be completed and sent to the Responsible Individual, one sent to the relevant senior manager within Children's Social Care at Bridgend County Borough Council and the other placed on the child/young person's personal file.

If the child/young person remains missing after forty-eight hours consultation with take place with a relevant senior manager as to further action. This could entail a request to the police to use publicity. This situation will be monitored and reviewed on a daily basis for as long as the child/young person is missing. All unauthorised absences are recorded in the child/young person's file.

Religious Observance

Children/young people have the choice to follow their own particular beliefs and can be supported to attend places of worship locally or in the closest provision that meets their needs.

Language and communication needs for people using the service

Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to treating Welsh and English on an equal basis when carrying out its public business and to meeting the requirements of The Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017.

Language is at the heart of safe care and to achieving good quality care outcomes. The service is committed to meeting the language and communication needs of the children who access Sunny Bank. We ensure the methods used to engage with and gain the views of individuals using the service are appropriate to their age, level of understanding and take into account any specific condition or communication need (in line with Regulation 76).

Our statement of purpose is available in Welsh and English. Personal documentation and general information about Sunny Bank can be provided in Welsh. Language preference is identified and recorded on the child's care and support plan and Sunny Bank endeavours to provide services that reflect the child's language needs.

Staff are supported to take up opportunities provided by the Local Authority to develop their Welsh language skills. Staff are encouraged to use Welsh with the children and family members who need to communicate in Welsh.

Section 4: Staffing Arrangements

Sunny Bank has a team of care staff providing 24 hr support 7 days a week. There are always a minimum of two staff on duty and two staff sleep in.

Staff at Sunny Bank either hold or are working towards the required qualification to practise within a regulated service and to register as a Social Care Worker with Social Care Wales. These requirements are set out within the Social Care Wales document: 'Qualification framework for social care and regulated childcare in Wales'. The qualifications detailed below are limited to those required, although many staff members hold other qualifications in addition.

The Staff Team

a) Numbers & Qualifications of Staff

One Residential Manager

NVQ Level 4 Caring for Children & Young People

NVQ Level 4 Management

2 Senior Residential Workers

Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Advanced Practice) Wales and Northern Ireland

2 Shift Leaders

Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

1 shift leader with QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Advanced Practice) Wales and Northern Ireland

6 Residential Workers

All Qualified to Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

1 residential worker with QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Advanced Practice) Wales and Northern Ireland

1 Business Support Officer

Vacant at the present time

b) Staff Levels

The Residential Manager works Monday to Friday, with the two Senior Residential Workers 37 hrs per week working as part of a rota which includes weekend working.

The staffing structure is as follows:-

- 1x Residential Manager working 37 hours a week Monday to Friday
- 2x Senior Residential Workers working 37 hours a week on average on a rota basis
- 2x Shift Leaders working 37 hours a week on average on a rota basis
- 6x part-time Residential Workers 2x 24 hours per week and 4x 27per week on average on a rota basis
- 1x part time Business support officer working 18.5 hours per week

The Manager works at Sunny Bank throughout the week and in the managers absence there are arrangements for a senior residential worker to complete office hours and deputise as required. All staff are aware that the manager, Group Manager and the Responsible Individual will be available by phone for support and can attend Sunny Bank if needed.

c) Specialist Staff

Sunny Bank have access if required to the two Vocational Outreach Workers (VOW) who are based at Maple Tree House.

The Vocational Outreach Workers (VOW) offer skill development, learning opportunities and activities to children and young people who have a range of complex needs, on an individual or group basis. This includes developing educational and therapeutic packages; supporting children and young people to develop personal relationships and positive self-image; integrating children and young people into the community and promoting access to community based services.

Sunny Bank can where appropriate seek consultation and advice from the Behaviour Analyst who is based at Maple Tree House.

d) Deployment of staff at service

The staff team work on a rolling eight and six week rota (depending on roles), with a minimum of two staff and a maximum of three staff on duty at all times. The rota also accommodates for the provision of sleeping in duties.

All Staff have appropriate checks undertaken by Human resources.

Arrangements for Supervision, training and development of employees

The Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate of the Local Authority is committed to the supervisory process and sees the quality of supervision as directly supporting the focus of frontline practice and service provision on what matters to people and the outcomes they would like to gain from a range of interventions.

Supervision has an essential role in the effective management of staff performance and practice and is a primary means by which staff are supported to evidence accountable practice.

Regular, planned and competent supervision is both a right and a requirement for all members of staff. The Social Services and Well-being Directorate has developed a Supervision Policy and Guidelines. Supervision usually takes place once every 4-6 weeks for most staff groups in line with the policy.

Staff participate in annual appraisals which provides them with the opportunity to review and discuss previous and current performance as well as their views and future development needs. There is an expectation that actions identified and agreed in appraisal are reviewed in supervision.

Staff Training

Training is an essential part of developing the practice of our staff and to support the delivery of good quality care. All staff receive ongoing training appropriate to their role. All staff will complete an induction. Our induction follows the All Wales induction framework for health and social care. Staff will also complete the Corporate Induction Framework. Once staff will have completed their induction they are put forward for the required Health and Social Care Award.

Staff have access to a programme of training provided by Bridgend CBC which may include areas such as Safeguarding Children at risk, Neglect, Paediatric First Aid, Manual Handling, Medication Awareness and Administration, Managing Behaviour, and Recording skills.

Other training is available provided by Bridgend CBC to meet identified development and service needs and may include, for example; Child Sexual Exploitation, Life Journey work, Attachment, Child Development.

Managers have access to a programme of training focusing on the development of leadership and management skills. The programme is co-ordinated on an annual basis, based on an analysis of training and development needs. Bridgend CBC is fostering a coaching and mentoring approach to management and this is a key focus of the programme.

Section 5: Facilities & Services

a) Number of single and shared rooms

Four single rooms used by the young people and two staff bedrooms rooms which are shared amongst the team. No en-suite rooms.

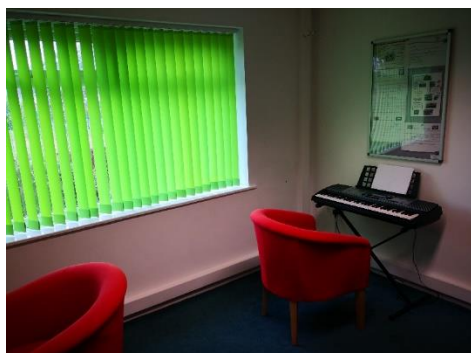
b) Number of dining areas

One x dining areas



c) Number of communal areas

Three communal areas



d) Specialist bathing facilities

None

e) Specialist equipment

None

f) Security arrangements in place and use of CCTV

There are no facilities available at Sunny Bank for the surveillance of the young people other than through the daily supervision by the staff team. There are alarms on interior doors upstairs in-case of movement throughout the night. There is no CCTV.

g) Access to outside space and facilities at this service

Sunny Bank offers a comprehensive range of services to young people. The facilities offered are in line with the service provided, the home is situated close to the coast so has access to beaches and coastal paths, there are also small lakes near the home with a wide range of wild fowl and fish, the environment supports outdoor activities.



The facilities within the home and services at Sunny Bank consist of:

- A TV and DVD.
- A varied assortment of sports equipment, board and table games and books and a selection of DVD's, an X-Box and games
- A large garden and lawn.
- Computers with internet access.
- Laundry facilities.
- Room for access visits.
- Newspapers and magazines are purchased for the young people upon request, representing their individual interests.

Section 6: Governance and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Quality Assurance

The Responsible Individual for the service reports directly to the Statutory Director of Social Services. The Responsible Individual will visit the service at least once every quarter and will ensure the quality, safety and standard of service is maintained at all times and meets regulatory requirements in line with the Statutory Guidance for service providers and responsible individuals on meeting service standard regulations relating to

Parts 3 to 20 of the Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

The Responsible Individual will establish and maintain arrangements for monitoring, reviewing and, where necessary, improving the quality of care and support provided by the service. This will include a system for reviewing the quality of care and support at least every six months, resulting in the preparation of a report to the service provider, which will inform the statement of compliance and service provider's annual return.

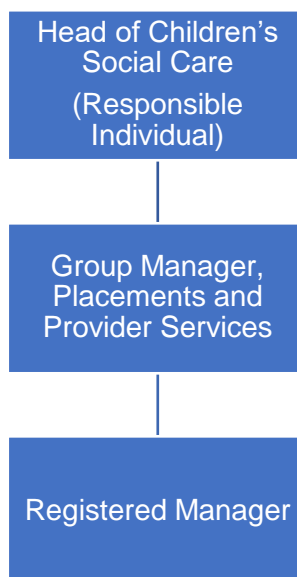
During the visit the Responsible Individual will speak with the manager, other staff members, young people and their families and other visitors or professionals, as available and appropriate.

The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services is responsible for the line management of the Registered Manager. The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services, reports directly to the Responsible Individual.

Visits are also carried out on a monthly basis by a manager from within Children's Social Care. The manager shall interview, with their consent and in private, the children and young people accommodated, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home.

They will inspect the premises of the home, its daily log of events and records of any complaints; and prepare a written report on the conduct of the home. The visiting officer will provide a copy of the report which will be stored at the home, a copy will also be provided to the Responsible Individual.

Management Structure



A range of policies and procedures are available to staff and reviewed to ensure currency. All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care.

Records are kept in line with data protection legislation and all data is handled subject to the directorate Fair Processing/ Privacy statement

(<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3891/fair-processing-statement-social-services-and-wellbeing.pdf>).

Any individual with concerns over the way BCBC handles their personal data may contact the Data Protection Officer at the Council or the Information Commissioner.

Data Protection Officer, Bridgend County Borough Council, Information Office, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB. E-mail foi@bridgend.gov.uk . Telephone 01656 643565

Information Commissioner's Office – Wales, 2nd Floor Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff CF10 2HH Telephone: 02920 678400 Fax: 02920 678399 Email: wales@ico.org.uk Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Staff working in the service are supported to raise any concerns that they may have in relation to service provision. Any concerns will be thoroughly investigated and acted upon as necessary. Bridgend County Borough Council has in place a Whistleblowing Policy to afford staff the necessary protection to report malpractice or other concerns.

Complaints

Ideally, any complaints should initially be raised directly with the service in the first instance, where the registered manager or senior staff member will try to resolve it immediately. However, if this is not possible, there are two stages to the complaints process:

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

We will acknowledge complaints within 2 working days of its receipt. The complainant will be contacted within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement by the person looking into the complaint and they will offer to meet with the complainant face-to-face or can discuss the complaint over the telephone. The discussion will ensure that we understand the complaint and what the complainant would like to happen.

When the complaint has been resolved, we will write to the complainant within 5 working days of the date that the complaint was resolved.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

If the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 1, the complainant can request that the complaint be investigated by a person who is independent of the Council.

If the request is granted, we will write to the complainant with a formal written record of the complaint (as we understand it) within 5 working days of the date of the request.

Before the investigation can start, the complainant will be asked to confirm that our understanding is correct and also to confirm what they would like to happen. The date on which the detail of the complaint is agreed will be the 'start date' for the complaint investigation.

A response to the complaint investigation should be sent to the complainant within 25 working days of the 'start date'. If this is not possible, we will write to them and tell them why there is a delay and when they are likely to receive the response. This will be as soon as possible after the 25 working day deadline and no later than 6 months from the date we received the complaint.

In our response we will:

- Summarise the complaint;
- Describe the investigation undertaken;
- State whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld;
- Explain what action will be taken (if any);

- Apologise where appropriate;
- Enclose a copy of the Independent Investigator's Report. (If there is a specific reason why we do not provide this, we will why);
- Offer the complainant an opportunity to meet with us to discuss the response and the Independent Investigator's Report.
- Advise how the complainant can refer the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales if they are still not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Complainants may also contact Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) directly to make a complaint. Please note CIW are unable to investigate complaints or resolve disagreements between people and their service providers, but, where the above complaints process has been exhausted, CIW may consider the issues and look at them during the inspection process.

Feedback from Complainants: we want to hear from complainants about their experience of using our complaints procedure. They can do this by completing and returning our feedback questionnaire. This will only take a few minutes of their time and will provide us with valuable information to ensure that we handle complaints as effectively as possible.

Useful Contacts

Complaints Office,
Bridgend County Borough Council
Directorate of Wellbeing
Civic Offices
Bridgend. CF31 4WB.

Tel: 01656 642253
E:mail:social.services@bridgend.gov.uk

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

Tel: 0808 801 1000
Fax: 01792 765601
Email: post@childcomwales.org.uk

Care Inspectorate Wales (South West Wales)
Government Buildings
Picton Terrace
Carmarthen, SA31 3BT

Tel: 0300 7900 126
Email: CIW.Carmarthen@.gov.wales

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Staff at Sunny Bank 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 Sunny Bank, including exercising appropriate control over young people 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's wishes and preferences
- The needs of individual young people
- The needs of the group of young people 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. 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.

Sunny Bank has a manual of policy and procedures which can be accessed upon request. It is revised and updated as required.

Consultation

Sunny Bank is committed to working in partnership with young people and parents to maximise the opportunities and outcomes for the young person.

The consultation process begins at the earliest opportunity and takes place through:

- a. Pre-admission planning and visits to Sunny Bank by the young person and parents / carers and social worker.
- b. Formal planning and review via the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) 2014 statutory review framework for Looked After and

Accommodated Children. Key working, young people's meetings and evaluation exercises.

- c. Informally through daily interaction with staff where important views and opinions are noted within the personal recording sheets.

Sunny Bank promotes the involvement of parents/carers where possible and is proactive in maintaining telephone contact to inform parents of significant events and to involve them in decision making.

Sunny Bank empowers young people to express their views and opinions and make personal choices through:

1. Provisions as detailed in Part 6 Code of Practice (Looked After and Accommodated Children) Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
2. Young people's meetings.
3. Key working sessions.
4. Daily interactions with staff members.

Health and safety

Health and safety checks are carried out within set guidelines, this includes:

- Fire safety checks
- Environmental checks
- Legionella management checks

There is also a schedule of maintenance undertaken which covers:

- The heating system
- Electrical wiring
- Water storage tanks
- PAT testing

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**MAPLE TREE HOUSE
LOCAL AUTHORITY
CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOME**



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Maple Tree House

TEL: 01656 815666

Responsible Individual: Laura Kinsey
Registered Manager: Kathryn Brand

The Responsible Individual is a senior officer at Bridgend County Borough and has been designated to undertake this role by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing.

The manager of Maple Tree House is registered with Social Care Wales.

Section 1: Location and description of the service

Maple Tree House is a one-storey building within a residential area, close to the town centre of Bridgend.

Maple Tree House is centrally located within the Bridgend County Borough, which allows for ease of access to resources the Borough has to offer such as education provision, leisure centres, parks and beaches. The central bus and train station are within walking distance.

Examples of facilities and resources include:

- Education provision – ten comprehensive schools and a Further Education College.
- Employment – Careers Wales, Job Centre Plus, employment agencies.
- Health provision – Cwm Taf Morgannwg health services, hospital and GP provision and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Dental and Optical services. Third sector support organisations e.g. DASH (Drug & Alcohol Self-Help).
- Maple Tree House makes use of local GP practices, where possible, young people stay registered with their own GP and Dentist.
- Youth Services. Young people can access Local Authority youth support services, workers offer support with mental and emotional health, housing and educational all tailored to individual need.
- Leisure provision – HALO leisure centres, swimming pools and libraries. YMCA, Scouts and Guides, Armed Forces Cadets and many clubs and groups e.g. marital arts, gymnastics.
- Housing – Local Authority Housing Services and Housing Associations.

Maple Tree House consists of a four-bedroom assessment facility with a separate two bedroom emergency provision. The emergency service is located at the front of the building and has a separate entrance. The door has a coded lock that releases automatically if the fire alarm is activated. In addition to the bedrooms, there is a shared

bathroom, lounge/kitchen area, plus a staff bedroom. The assessment facility has a shared lounge, kitchen/ dining room and bathroom facilities, the four bedrooms and a staff bedroom.



The main entrance is at the side of the building where visitors can access the designated office area. Maple Tree House has a driveway with parking at the front and lawn areas surrounding the building.

Section 2: About the service provided

Service Aims

Maple Tree House provides care and support for up to six children / young people within the age range 8 – 17 years (mixed gender) at any one time. This consists of four placements within the assessment facility and two within the emergency provision.

Young people moving into adult services / independent living may remain at Maple Tree house post 18 for up to 7 days to support their transition plan. This will be limited to one young person at any one time and further admissions to Maple Tree House will be temporarily suspended.

Admissions to Maple Tree House are made via referrals from the Councils social care teams. The Placements team co-ordinate planned admissions during office hours, out of hours placements are managed by senior staff and the Emergency Duty Team.

Objectives

- To undertake assessment and provide therapeutic intervention by appropriately qualified staff. Models of intervention will assist to stabilise the child's / young person's behaviour to facilitate a return home or where this is not possible to a suitable alternative long-term placement.
- To have in place for each child / young person a care and support plan and a behaviour management plan so that any challenging behaviour is consistently managed. Wherever possible, unless there is risk of harm, staff will use de-escalation techniques providing trauma informed care and support.
- To support young people's education, training or employment, to maximise opportunities.
- Vocational outreach workers will support young people who are not in full time education or employment, working in line with the young person's education plan.
- Staff will work in partnership with young people, carers and parents/persons with parental responsibility.
- To provide outreach support to children / young people, families and foster carers.

Section 3: How the Service is provided

Maple Tree House has a staff team who are dedicated to providing a supportive experience for children and young people.

Maple Tree House offers a therapeutic environment for children and young people, using a trauma informed approach to provide the most effective support possible. Enabling them to understand their individual circumstances, develop resilience and self-care skills.

The emergency provision offers short-term specialist support for children / young people who are experiencing difficult circumstances and who are in immediate need of care and support, for a period of up to 28 days. During their stay an assessment will be carried out which will inform decisions with regard to suitable move on options. These could include potential reunification with family members, or a placement in the assessment unit for those who have more complex needs that need to be explored further.

Maple Tree assessment service can provide children / young people aged 8-17 years with intensive placements up to a period of 6 months.

In extenuating circumstances, with the authorisation of the Responsible Individual, these periods of stay can be extended to achieve a child or young person's personal outcomes e.g. when individual therapeutic/specialist assessments or transition plans require longer timescales.

The service will focus on assessments and therapeutic interventions to stabilise the child's / young person's behaviour, work on improving any risk taking behaviours, re-integrate to education, training or employment where necessary and identify the most suitable long-term move on placements.

Young people aged 16+ will be supported to prepare for independence and during their transition to their identified long term placement. In addition leaving care services are provided by the Local Authority 16+ team who will work with young people who are eligible for leaving care provision to support them in the transition to adulthood this includes, for example housing, education, employment and financial supports.

Maple Tree House offers outreach service to those young people living in the community having moved into a long term placements or accommodation and whom still require further support. Staff will also offer support to young people, families or foster carers where there is disruption, the aim will be to stabilise placements to prevent breakdown. Assistance will be provided by outreach workers to young people living independently, workers will be flexible with times to cater for the young people's emotional and physical needs.

Service provision includes:

- Provision for assessments and therapeutic interventions.
- Access to advice from the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- Provision of a package of support to promote the best possible outcomes for children/young people within their educational and training setting.
- Implement approaches for children / young people who are not in education, training or employment to support them towards and into education, training or employment, including the direct provision of Agored Cymru validated qualifications.
- A vocational outreach service which offers emotional support and assistance in the physical move on and settling period into independent living.
- Key worker (residential child care workers) allocated to all children / young person.
- Access to a Health Visitor who can provide direct services to young people and advice to staff.
- Supporting access to advocacy services provided by an independent service offering impartial advice and guidance.

- Provision of Outreach Support.

Outreach support

Residential Care Workers offer an outreach service for children / young people and their families at home or in foster placements to encourage stability within placements. The outreach service can also be utilised to offer young people who have recently moved into independent living, providing emotional and physical support.

Maple Tree House has a team of staff who bring their own learned experiences to the service, such as teaching and counselling skills, art therapy and mindfulness work. This is integrated into the work we undertake with the young people.

Vocational Outreach Workers (VOW) based at Maple Tree House offer skill development, learning opportunities and activities to children and young people who have a range of complex needs, on an individual or group basis. This includes developing educational and therapeutic packages; supporting children and young people to develop personal relationships and positive self-image; integrating children and young people into the community and enabling access to community based services.

Admission, care and support planning and review

Admissions to Maple Tree House are made via referrals from the Councils social care teams and in the case of planned admissions social workers are required to present a request for a child/young person to be placed to the Accommodation and Permanence Panel, who will assess whether it is appropriate to make a referral. The Placements team co-ordinate planned admissions during office hours, out of hours placements are managed by senior staff and the Emergency Duty Team.

All referrals are considered by the manager or a senior residential worker. They will complete an impact assessment specifically looking at the suitability of the referral in relation to the personal details (age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation) and the care and support needs of children/young people already living in the home.

Decisions to provide a placement are based on a thorough consideration of the needs of the child/young person, their “match” with the other children and young people living at Maple Tree House, and a judgement on the ability of the home to meet their needs within the terms of the Statement of Purpose, and the prevailing circumstances at the time. Age will be given careful consideration due to the range of ages permitted in the Statement of purpose.

There will be an opportunity for an introductory visit by the young person, parents, carer and social worker, to consider whether this is a viable placement. Where a placement is offered, a pre-admission planning meeting will determine the placement plan for the young person.

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

Young people and their families (where possible and appropriate) will be encouraged to visit Maple Tree House prior to admission. Staff will provide visitors with verbal and written information about the service available, the expectations of the young person and the obligations and responsibilities of staff. After an informal visit, should the social worker, young person and/or parent/carers wish to pursue a placement the social worker will provide Maple Tree House with the required pre admission documents.

During the time spent at Maple Tree House, staff will work with the young person and others to achieve the well-being outcomes identified in the plan. A formal review of the care and support plan will take place in line with the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Part 6 Code of Practice (Looked After and Accommodated Children)).

Staff will prepare and support the young person for their discharge from Maple Tree House and to move into their identified placement. This is managed through a transition process which is individually tailored for each young person.

Standard of Care and Support children and young people will receive and experience at Maple Tree House

Maple Tree House has a suitably qualified, experienced and skilled staff team dedicated to providing an excellent experience for children / young people during their stays. There is a good ratio of staff to children/young people so that individual attention can be given to each child/young person whilst they are living at Maple Tree House.

The service will provide a therapeutic environment for children and young people, enabling them to deal with their individual circumstances, developing their resilience and self-care skills, support post 16 year olds who are preparing for independence and supporting their transition to their identified long term placement. This work will be underpinned by the young person's care and support plan and pathway plan.

Maple Tree House will provide an outreach service to those young people living in the community having moved into a long term placements or accommodation and still require further support. Staff will also offer support to young people, families or foster carers where there is disruption, the aim will be to stabilise placements to prevent breakdown.

Assistance will be provided by outreach workers to young people living independently, workers will be flexible with times to cater for the young people's emotional and physical needs.

Promotion of Health Needs

On admission each child / young person has a health assessment undertaken by the designated Health Visitor and is registered with one of the local Doctors, Dentists and Opticians, unless there is a preference to remain registered with their existing practice. All children / young person will have an annual statutory health review and also a six monthly dental check as well as any immunisation needs. They are assisted to develop a well-balanced diet and encouraged appropriately and sensitively in the importance of personal hygiene if this is neglected. Where appropriate, use is made of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Each young person follows a health education programme, which deals with HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and sex and sexuality.

There is a 'No Smoking' policy in accordance with current legislation and in line with Bridgend County Borough Council's policy. The young people are actively discouraged from smoking; there is no facility for smoking in Maple Tree House for young people, visitors or staff.

Education

Maple Tree House strives to ensure that all the children and young people cared for are aware of the benefits of receiving a full education, training or employment package.

We endeavour to promote this, by establishing good professional relationships with the schools, colleges and training providers our young people attend. Alternatively, we will assist young people to access work experience opportunities and support them in their career choices.

Homework can be completed in the young person's own bedroom, or, if preferred, in a room set aside for the use of the young people. Maple Tree House contains WiFi and there is access to a computer or laptop and a range of books (both reference and leisure). Staff will be available to assist with homework and revision.

Maple Tree House offers Agored Cymru qualifications for young people. The units follow the format of the independent programme and allow young people to improve their CV's for the future.

Additional assistance to support young people's educational achievement is sought from the Council's Education & Family Support Vulnerable Groups service.

Leisure and Activities

We encourage all the young people to pursue individual activities, as well as organised group recreation and leisure programmes. Halo cards for use of the Leisure centres are offered to all the young people.

Opportunities will be provided for young people to identify and organise trips/activities independently and with staff. Staff will ensure activities are safely organised and trips are suitable for all age groups and abilities.

There is an independence programme available for the young people which has been developed by staff, a cultural based programme with the aim of developing positive experiences that young people can take with them, inclusive of educational experiences.

Safeguarding Children at Risk

Putting the wishes, needs and well-being of the child / young person first, is our primary consideration. This includes staff being alert to any potential or suspected abuse or risk of abuse or harm.

Maple Tree House aims to actively involve children and young people in decisions about the care and support they receive and is committed to promoting the rights of the children and young people as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Staff members at Maple Tree are provided with training in safeguarding children at risk.

Bridgend CBC has a Corporate Safeguarding Policy which is updated in line with changes to legislation and guidance.

Staff are made aware of their responsibilities to report children / young people where there is a safeguarding risk and follow legislation statutory guidance: Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard People and the Children Act 1989.

Where concerns are suspected staff will follow internal safeguarding procedures. Where the child / young person has a Care and Support Protection Plan, staff will follow any agreed actions and support the child / young person to achieve their personal outcomes.

Staff will continually liaise with other professionals to meet child's / young person's well-being outcomes the young person. The young person's social worker and personal advisor are expected to attend monthly review meetings to provide updates regarding the young person's wellbeing, progression towards independence and the transitional process.

Contact with Parents, Persons with Parental Responsibility, Relatives or Friends

Parents / carers and other relatives are welcome to visit Maple Tree House at any time unless legal restrictions are in place. Friends are welcome to come to Maple Tree House during the evenings weekends and holidays, but are not allowed to stay overnight.

Undesirable friendships would be discouraged or managed; discussions will be held at a planning meeting when the suitability of these relationships would be considered.

Children and young people can use their own rooms, the meeting room, the lounge or the garden for visitors, depending on choice, suitability and availability.

Behaviour management

Staff at Maple Tree House will assist young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour by responding constructively to unacceptable behaviour and using relationships with young people to nurture respect.

Children and young people will be faced with the consequences of their actions within a climate of maximum staff support. A safe environment will be maintained on the basis of good personal and professional relationships between the staff and the children /young people. It is not seen as a negative concept but as a way of enabling the children /young people to self-regulate their emotions and develop self-control and self-discipline.

Children and young people will be provided with intensive staff engagement and support through key working and access to other support networks. Staff will utilise a variety of approaches and tools to work with the children and young people.

Where appropriate the children/young people will work through an individually designed programme to help them develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Integrated working arrangements between Maple Tree House and Sunny Bank are in place to provide an enhanced service that will address problems and issues with children/young people. To achieve this:

- There is a single point of contact in both services.
- Access to professional advice and guidance.
- Quick response to crisis situations.
- Have a reciprocal understanding of intervention techniques and roles of other professions.
- Work together to address the complex issues of children/young people within this service.
- Be open with colleagues and exercise discretion, trust and sensitivity in establishing and operating within multi -agency teams.
- Provide help and support closer to the point of contact.

When children/young people display behaviour that in any family or group environment would be considered undesirable some form of relative sanction may be needed.

When a sanction is required, staff will discuss it with the child / young person where their views are acknowledged and recorded.

Sanctions that will not in any circumstances be used are:-

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

The use of restraint at Maple Tree House is limited to extreme circumstances and only used to prevent likely injury to the young person or others, or likely serious damage to property. In this case physical restraint will follow the Bridgend County Borough Council Policy and Guidance, and be in accordance with a specially developed plan. The minimum of force necessary will be used and all cases of restraint will be formally recorded.

Staff will use a restorative approach with young people when the timing is perceived as beneficial to discuss the behaviour and its effects on others.

Anti-bullying

Maple Tree House recognises and affirms the right of all children and young people to live in an environment free from bullying and harassment. We aim to provide a culture that positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying taking place.

Any risk assessments undertaken as part of the admissions process will highlight whether the child / young person may be a victim or perpetrator of bullying.

On admission the child/ young person receives an induction pack, a member of staff will explain our zero tolerance to bullying and our complaints procedure. All children / young people are expected to sign up to the anti-bullying policy and abide by the contract. All reported incidents will be fully investigated. Staff will offer appropriate support and reassurance to a child/young person who has been bullied. And will respond in ways that seek to influence the behaviour of the perpetrator of the bullying.

Staff will use a restorative justice approach and any conflict or confrontation between residents and staff will be resolved using these mediation skills.

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. They are also aware that bullying may constitute a significant risk of harm and if so safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Procedures for dealing with unauthorised absence

Children and young people must have the opportunity to feel cared for and protected at all times. As a Corporate Parent, the Local Authority has a duty to safeguard and promote the well-being of any child/young person, taking appropriate action as/when necessary. South Wales Police will respond immediately to any referral made by a statutory or voluntary agency that follows Joint Protocol for children absent without authority who are looked after and the All Wales Protocol for children who run away or go missing from home or care.

Children and young people absent themselves for a variety of reasons - in response or reaction to their personal situations or other contributing circumstances.

A child/young person under 18 years of age is absent without authority whenever they have left the placement without agreement or failed to return at a previously agreed time. In the event of a child/young person being absent from the home without authority, staff will use the pre placement risk assessment and the current risk assessment to establish the level of concern. The following categories of absence will be assigned to the situation.

Absent without authority (low level of concern)

Some children/young people absent themselves for a short period and then return. Such children/young people may be testing boundaries and are not necessarily considered to be at a high level of risk. Young people who fall within the category of "absent without authority" will be the subject of continuous risk assessment whilst they

remain absent. The outcome of this risk assessment will determine the reporting to the police, however, for this level the child/young person will not be reported as missing to the police.

During their absence, circumstances may change and staff will need to be in a position to respond accordingly and effectively. Staff at the service will take all reasonable and practical steps to establish the whereabouts or destination of the child/young person or persons with whom they may associate. If the location of the child/young person is known, the staff from the service will collect them if safe to do so. However, there may be occasions where it is thought that there are specific issues of safety or public order difficulties in returning the child/young person back to the unit that assistance from the Police may be sought.

Missing children (medium to high level of concern)

As detailed above a child/young person may be categorised as “missing” when they are absent from Maple Tree House residential service and

(a). the child/young person’s location is not known and the reason for the absence is not known and/or

(b) there is cause for concern because of their vulnerability and/or

(c) there is potential danger to the public and/or

(d) the child/young person is looked after as a result of direction by the Court or is subject to police protection.

Action to be taken in the event of an absence:

If a child/young person fails to return to Maple Tree at the agreed time, a risk assessment is undertaken in conjunction with the Emergency Duty Team and if appropriate the child/young person will be either deemed absent without authority or missing.

Required documentation will be completed and sent to the Responsible Individual, one sent to the relevant senior manager within Children’s Social Care at Bridgend County Borough Council and the other placed on the child/young person’s personal file.

If the child/young person remains missing after forty-eight hours consultation will take place with a relevant senior manager as to further action. This could entail a request to the police to use publicity. This situation will be monitored and reviewed on a daily basis for as long as the child/young person is missing. All unauthorised absences are recorded in the child/young person’s file.

Religious Observance

Children/young people have the choice to follow their own particular beliefs and can be supported to attend places of worship locally or in the closest provision that meets their needs.

Language and communication needs for people using the service

Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to treating Welsh and English on an equal basis when carrying out its public business and to meeting the requirements of The Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017.

Language is at the heart of safe care and to achieving good quality care outcomes. The service is committed to meeting the language and communication needs of the children and young people who access Maple Tree House. We ensure the methods used to engage with and gain the views of individuals using the service are appropriate to their age, level of understanding and take into account any specific condition or communication need (in line with Regulation 76)

Our statement of purpose is available in Welsh and English. Personal documentation and general information about Maple Tree House can be provided in Welsh. Language preference is identified and recorded on the child's care and support plan and Maple Tree House endeavours to provide services that reflect the child's language needs.

Staff are supported to take up opportunities provided by the Local Authority to develop their Welsh language skills. Staff are encouraged to use Welsh with the children / young people and family members who wish to communicate in Welsh.

Section 4: Staffing Arrangements

Maple tree has a team of care staff providing 24 hr support 7 days a week. There are always two staff on duty and two staff sleep in.

Staff at Maple Tree House either hold or are working towards the required qualification to practise within a regulated service and to register as a Social Care Worker with Social Care Wales. These requirements are set out within the Social Care Wales document: 'Qualification framework for social care and regulated childcare in Wales'. The qualifications detailed below are limited to those required, although many staff members hold other qualifications in addition.

The Staff Team.

a) Numbers & Qualifications of Staff

One Registered manager

NVQ Level 4 Caring for Children & Young People

NVQ Level 4 Management

4 Senior residential care workers

Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Advanced Practice) Wales and Northern Ireland

10 Residential child care workers

Qualified or working towards Level 3 Diploma in Health Social Care Services (Children Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland (or hold past NVQ equivalent detailed in the Framework)

1 x Business support officer

Chartered Institute of Personnel Development Diploma

b) Staffing Levels

Residential Manager 37 hrs per week Mon-Friday

Senior child care workers 37 hrs per week working as part of a rota which includes weekend working.

The staffing structure is as follows:-

- Residential Manager x 37 hours
- Four senior residential workers x 148 hours
- Ten part-time Residential child care workers x 328 hours (2x 24 and 8x 35)
- One part time business support officer x 18.5 hours

The manager works at Maple Tree House throughout the week. In the managers absence there are senior residential workers completing office hours and deputising in the manager's absence. All staff are aware that the manager, Group Manager and the Responsible Individual will be available by phone for support and can attend Maple Tree House if needed.

c) Specialist Staff

1 x 30hr Behaviour Analyst is based at Maple Tree House Monday to Thursday each week. The role of the Behaviour Analyst is to develop bespoke behaviour protocols that guide staff's intervention with the children and young people. The Behaviour Analyst also undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the young person whilst at Maple Tree House (Assessment Unit) that identifies their therapeutic needs and preferred future placement options.

Two vocational outreach workers, working from Maple tree.

d) Deployment of staff at service

The staff team work on a rolling eight week rota, with a minimum of three staff and a maximum of four staff on duty at all times.

The rota also accommodates for the provision of sleeping in duties.

All Staff have appropriate checks undertaken by Human resources.

f) Supervision Arrangements

The Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate of the Local Authority is committed to the supervisory process and sees the quality of supervision as directly supporting the focus of frontline practice and service provision on what matters to people and the outcomes they would like to gain from a range of interventions.

Supervision has an essential role in the effective management of staff performance and practice and is a primary means by which staff are supported to evidence accountable practice.

Regular, planned and competent supervision is both a right and a requirement for all members of staff. The Social Services and Well-being Directorate has developed a Supervision Policy and Guidelines. Supervision usually takes place once every 4 – 6 weeks for most staff groups in line with the policy.

Staff participate in annual appraisals, which provides them with the opportunity to review and discuss previous and current performance as well as their views and future development needs. There is an expectation that actions identified and agreed in appraisal are reviewed in supervision.

g) Staff Training

Training is an essential part of developing the practice of our staff and to support the delivery of good quality care. All staff receive ongoing training appropriate to their role. All staff will complete an induction. Our induction follows the All Wales Induction Framework for Health and Social Care. Staff will also complete the Corporate Induction Framework. Once staff have completed their induction, they are put forward for the required Health and Social Care Award.

Staff have access to a programme of training provided by Bridgend CBC which may include areas such as Safeguarding Children at risk, Neglect, Paediatric First Aid, Manual Handling, Medication Awareness and Administration, Managing Behaviour, and Recording skills.

Other training is available provided by Bridgend CBC to meet identified development and service needs and may include, for example; Child Sexual Exploitation, Life Journey work, Attachment, Child Development.

Managers have access to a programme of training focusing on the development of leadership and management skills. The programme is co-ordinated on an annual basis, based on an analysis of training and development needs. Bridgend CBC is fostering a coaching and mentoring approach to management and this is a key focus of the programme.

Section 5: Facilities & Services

a) Number of single and shared rooms

Six single rooms used by the young people and three staff bedrooms rooms. No ensuite rooms.



b) Number of dining areas two x communal dining areas



c) Number of communal areas = 5



d) Specialist bathing facilities

None

e) Specialist equipment

None

f) Security arrangements in place and use of CCTV

There are no facilities available at Maple Tree House for the surveillance of the young people other than through the daily supervision by the staff team. Should there be any issues of risk shown by a young person to themselves or others, Maple Tree

House will provide a wakeful cover throughout the night. There are alarms on all exterior doors in-case of movement throughout the night. There is no CCTV.

h) Access to outside space and facilities at this service

Children and Young People have access to a garden which has a lawned area.

Maple Tree House offers a comprehensive range of services to young people. The facilities offered are in line with the service provided but limited to some extent by the structure of the building and the fact that the young people are encouraged to use the facilities in the community as part of their independence programmes.

Within Maple Tree House children have access to:

- TV's DVD, computer with internet access and electronic gaming equipment.
- A varied assortment of sports equipment, board and table games and books.
- Laundry facilities.
- Newspapers and magazines are purchased for the young people upon request, representing their individual interests.

Section 6: Governance and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Quality Assurance

The Responsible Individual for the service reports directly to the Statutory Director of Social Services. The Responsible Individual will visit the service at least once every quarter and will ensure the quality, safety and standard of service is maintained at all times and meets regulatory requirements in line with the Statutory Guidance for service providers and responsible individuals on meeting service standard regulations relating to Parts 3 to 20 of the Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

The Responsible Individual will establish and maintain arrangements for monitoring, reviewing and, where necessary, improving the quality of care and support provided by the service. This will include a system for reviewing the quality of care and support at least every six months, resulting in the preparation of a report to the service provider, which will inform the statement of compliance and service provider's annual return.

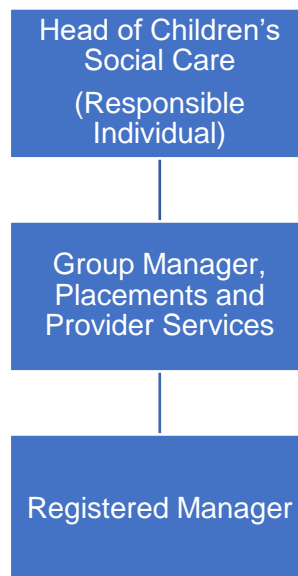
During the visit, the Responsible Individual will speak with the manager, other staff members, young people and their families and other visitors or professionals, as available and appropriate.

The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services is responsible for the line management of the Registered Manager. The Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services, reports directly to the Responsible Individual.

Visits are also carried out on a monthly basis by a manager from within Children's Social Care. The manager shall interview, with their consent and in private, the children and young people accommodated, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home.

They will inspect the premises of the home, its daily log of events and records of any complaints; and prepare a written report on the conduct of the home. The visiting officer will provide a copy of the report which will be stored at the Maple Tree House, a copy will also be provided to the Responsible Individual.

Management Structure



A full range of policies and procedures are available to staff. All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care.

Records are kept in line with data protection legislation and all data is handled subject to the Directorate Fair Processing/Privacy statement:

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3891/fair-processing-statement-social-services-and-wellbeing.pdf>).

Any individual with concerns over the way BCBC handles their personal data may contact the Data Protection Officer at the Council or the Information Commissioner.

Data Protection Officer, Bridgend County Borough Council, Information Office, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB. E-mail foi@bridgend.gov.uk . Telephone 01656 643565

Information Commissioner's Office – Wales, 2nd Floor Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff CF10 2HH Telephone: 02920 678400 Fax: 02920 678399 Email: wales@ico.org.uk Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Staff working in the service are supported to raise any concerns that they may have in relation to service provision. Any concerns will be thoroughly investigated and acted upon as necessary. Bridgend County Borough Council has in place a Whistleblowing Policy to afford staff the necessary protection to report malpractice or other concerns.

Complaints

Ideally, any complaints should initially be raised directly with the service in the first instance, where the registered manager or senior staff member will try to resolve it immediately. However, if this is not possible, there are two stages to the complaints process:

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

We will acknowledge complaints within two working days of its receipt. The complainant will be contacted within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement by the person looking into the complaint and they will offer to meet with the complainant face-to-face or can discuss the complaint over the telephone. The discussion will ensure that we understand the complaint and what the complainant would like to happen.

When the complaint has been resolved, we will write to the complainant within five working days of the date that the complaint was resolved.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

If the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 1, the complainant can request that the complaint be investigated by a person who is independent of the Council.

If the request is granted, we will write to the complainant with a formal written record of the complaint (as we understand it) within five working days of the date of the request.

Before the investigation can start, the complainant will be asked to confirm that our understanding is correct and also to confirm what they would like to happen. The date on which the detail of the complaint is agreed will be the 'start date' for the complaint investigation.

A response to the complaint investigation should be sent to the complainant within 25 working days of the 'start date'. If this is not possible, we will write to them and tell them why there is a delay and when they are likely to receive the response. This will be as soon as possible after the 25 working day deadline and no later than 6 months from the date we received the complaint.

In our response we will:

- Summarise the complaint;
- Describe the investigation undertaken;
- State whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld;
- Explain what action will be taken (if any);
- Apologise where appropriate;
- Enclose a copy of the Independent Investigator's Report. (If there is a specific reason why we do not provide this, we will why);
- Offer the complainant an opportunity to meet with us to discuss the response and the Independent Investigator's Report.
- Advise how the complainant can refer the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales if they are still not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Complainants may also contact Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) directly to make a complaint. Please note CIW are unable to investigate complaints or resolve disagreements between people and their service providers, but, where the above complaints process has been exhausted, CIW may consider the issues and look at them during the inspection process.

Feedback from Complainants: we want to hear from complainants about their experience of using our complaints procedure. They can do this by completing and

returning our feedback questionnaire. This will only take a few minutes of their time and will provide us with valuable information to ensure that we handle complaints as effectively as possible.

Useful Contacts

Complaints Office,
Bridgend County Borough Council
Directorate of Wellbeing
Civic Offices
Bridgend. CF31 4WB.

Tel: 01656 642253
E:mail:social.services@bridgend.gov.uk

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

Tel: 0808 801 1000
Fax: 01792 765601
Email: post@childcomwales.org.uk

Care Inspectorate Wales (South West Wales)
Government Buildings
Picton Terrace
Carmarthen, SA31 3BT

Tel: 0300 7900 126
Email: CIW.Carmarthen@gov.wales

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
Bridgend, CF35 5LJ

Tel: 0300 790 0203
Fax: 01656 641199
Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Staff at Maple Tree House 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 Maple Tree House including exercising appropriate control over young people 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's wishes and preferences
- The needs of individual young people

- The needs of the group of young people 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. Children's rights are respected in line with The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. 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.

Maple Tree House has a manual of policy and procedures which can be accessed upon request. It is continually being revised and updated as required.

Consultation

Maple Tree House is committed to working in partnership with young people and parents to maximise the opportunities and outcomes for the young person.

The consultation process begins at the earliest opportunity and takes place through:

- a. Pre-admission planning and visits to Maple Tree House by the young person and parents / carers and social worker.
- b. Formal planning and review via the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) 2014 statutory review framework for Looked After and Accommodated Children. Key working, young people's meetings and evaluation exercises.
- c. Informally through daily interaction with staff where important views and opinions are noted within the personal recording sheets.

Maple Tree House promotes the involvement of parents/carers where possible and is proactive in maintaining telephone contact to inform parents of significant events and to involve them in decision making.

Maple Tree House empowers young people to express their views and opinions and make personal choices through:

1. Provisions as detailed in Part 6 Code of Practice (Looked After and Accommodated Children) Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
2. Young people's meetings.
3. Key working sessions.

4. Daily interactions with staff members.

Health and safety

Health and safety checks are carried out within set guidelines, this includes:

- Fire safety checks
- Environmental checks
- Legionella management checks

There is also a schedule of maintenance undertaken which covers:

- The heating system
- Electrical wiring
- Water storage tanks
- PAT testing

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 2021

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

CARE INSPECTORATE WALES INSPECTION OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present to Committee the report and associated Action Plan following the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection of Maple Tree House in October 2020.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient**– To reduce demand through targeted early help and intervention programmes (contributing to the safe reduction of looked after children).
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Care Inspectorate Wales are responsible for inspecting all regulated care and support services, including Children's Homes, in Wales. Inspections consist of four key stages - inspection planning and preparation; the inspection visit; feedback; and reporting. During the process inspectors will make judgements as to how well the service is performing under four core themes - Well-being; Care and Support; Environment; and Leadership and Management.

- 3.2 In the case of Children's Homes, CIW will make annual inspections as part of their rolling programme. There are two main types of inspection:

- **Full Inspections:** During a full inspection CIW will check that providers are providing a service according to the law. They will also check that the service is meeting the conditions of their registration and operating in line with their Statement of Purpose.
- **Focused Inspections:** These normally happen when concerns are raised or to follow up on areas of improvements identified at previous inspections. This type of inspection may only look at some aspects of a service.

- 3.3 All CIW inspections are unannounced although, in exceptional circumstances, they may contact the service a day or so in advance to minimise disruption or distress.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 CIW undertook a focussed inspection at Maple Tree House on 28th October 2020; the full inspection report is attached at **Appendix 1**.

- 4.2 Verbal feedback was provided to Committee Members regarding the outcome of the Inspection, but at that time the final inspection report had not been received.

- 4.3 The following is an extract of the findings made by CIW following their inspection:

“CIW carried out a focussed inspection in line with our improvement and enforcement process. This was to test the outstanding non-compliance raised at the previous three inspections in September 2019, February 2020 and August 2020, relating to well-being, care and support and leadership and management of the service. The service was deemed a service of concern and a notice of decision was issued to restrict admissions.

At this inspection, we found there have been positive changes and developments to processes and structures and to some of the internal systems supporting staff to care for young people. Safeguarding systems in place are more robust with a reduction in risk taking behaviour for some young people. Personal plans include more detail to allow care staff to understand young people’s needs. Staff training has improved and there are better quality assurance systems in place. As a result the service has achieved compliance in all areas and are no longer deemed a service of concern and can now admit young people to the home.

Whilst some areas still require further improvement, the management team and Responsible Individual (RI) have fully engaged with CIW evidencing their commitment to improving the service to ensure they are compliant and continue to drive forward improvements.”

- 4.4 There were no areas identified where improvement was required.

- 4.5 A comprehensive Action Plan was developed by the Service to address identified areas of non-compliance from previous Inspections which has now been completed.

- 4.6 Development of a new placement hub remains a key element of the re-modelling of Residential Care in Children’s Services and will ensure that further improvements can be made to the service that is provided to vulnerable children and young people in Bridgend. There have been unavoidable delays to the building of the new provision but there are now plans in place to ensure that this will be delivered during Autumn 2022.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The implementation of the duties and responsibilities under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) (SSWBA) 2014, in turn, supports the promotion of two of the seven goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 within the County Borough of Bridgend. By promoting an environment that maximises people's physical and mental well-being and by supporting children, young people, adults and their carers and families to fulfil their potential no matter what their circumstances, the wellbeing goals of a healthier and more equal Bridgend and Wales are supported.
- 7.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how the Authority should work to deliver wellbeing outcomes for people. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been considered in this report:

- **Long term:** The residential provision has been assessed to meet the needs of the current and future looked after children population.
- **Prevention:** Harwood House enables children with complex needs to remain living in the county whilst Bakers Way provides respite to support disabled children and young people to remain living within their families. The statements of purpose will support the other residential provisions to run effectively meeting the needs of Looked After Children.

Maple Tree House provides accommodation which enables children with complex needs to remain in the community. The multi-disciplinary team facilitates the return of children who are currently placed outside of county. The wrap around support services assists in the prevention of long term residential care episodes and provides short term intervention to enable children to return home or to a placement with family or foster carers.

- **Integration:** Children and young people have homes in the county borough that support familial contact, attendance at local education provision as well as helping to maintain their community and ethnic links.
- **Collaboration:** All of the homes have strong links to health, education, police and other local community services to meet the holistic needs of children and young people who live in them. The homes work in close collaboration with other departments within the Local Authority as well to ensure that young people's needs are met.

- **Involvement:** Each of the residential units have independent rota visits undertaken, are inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales and review feedback from children and young people and their families through meeting or evaluation forms.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Committee note the content of the Inspection report and receive and approve the updated action plan.

Claire Marchant
Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
September 2021

Contact officer: Steven Howell
Group Manager, Placements and Provider Services

Telephone: (01656) 642330

Email: <steven.howell@bridgend.gov.uk>

Background documents:

None



Inspection Report on

Maple Tree House

Bridgend

Date Inspection Completed

28/10/2020

Final unpublished report

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About Maple Tree House

Type of care provided	Care Home Service Children's Home
Registered Provider	Bridgend County Borough Council Adults and Children's Services
Registered places	6
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	10 August 2020
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No

Summary

CIW carried out a focussed inspection in line with our improvement and enforcement process. This was to test the outstanding non-compliance raised at the previous three inspections in September 2019, February 2020 and August 2020, relating to well-being, care and support and leadership and management of the service. The service was deemed a service of concern and a notice of decision was issued to restrict admissions.

At this inspection, we found there have been positive changes and developments to processes and structures and to some of the internal systems supporting staff to care for young people. Safeguarding systems in place are more robust with a reduction in risk taking behaviour for some young people. Personal plans include more detail to allow care staff to understand young people's needs. Staff training has improved and there are better quality assurance systems in place. As a result the service has achieved compliance in all areas and are no longer deemed a service of concern and can now admit young people to the home.

Whilst some areas still require further improvement, the management team and Responsible Individual (RI) have fully engaged with CIW evidencing their commitment to improving the service to ensure they are compliant and continue to drive forward improvements.

Well-being

Young people have a voice and they make choices on a daily basis about their food, clothes and activities. Processes are in place, which enable young people to express their views, and staff support and encourage them to make sensible decisions about their free time and their safety. Independence work continues to take place regularly and allows young people to develop their skills in preparation for independence. They have not made any complaints since the last inspection but told us they know how to raise anything that is worrying them or changes they want to make. Young people have regular contact with their social workers and they have access to advocates if they choose. Young people's views were seen to be included in professional meetings regarding their future move on plans.

Young people are safeguarded. Care staff are aware of how to raise a concern if required and appropriate action was taken when safeguarding incidents occurred. Risk assessments were more detailed; outlining what is expected from care staff in relation to keeping young people safe. Following our inspection the RI gave assurances that all potential risks would be included in the assessments. The majority of care staff had completed safeguarding training and all senior staff had completed their paediatric first aid training ensuring there is always a member of staff on shift who is trained. CIW received notifications as required and there has been a considerable reduction in the number received. Direct work is undertaken with young people to focus on key areas of concern in an attempt to reduce risks and to develop their skills.

Care staff support young people to be as healthy as they can be and to engage in education and activities. Healthy food is available at the home though young people do not always choose healthy options. With staff's encouragement, young people attend health appointments and specialist services to support their emotional and physical health. Staff advocate and encourage young people to attend education with mixed results. They ensure that young people see and keep in touch with their families regularly. Attempts to create consistent routines and regular activities continues to be implemented with this being more successful for some young people than others.

The accommodation is suitable for short-term placements in line with the services model. Improvements have been made to the environment including new flooring; new furniture and parts of the home had been redecorated.

Care and Support

The service provider has made considerable changes to the way staff have the information they need to understand and meet young people's needs. Individual personal plans give staff detailed guidance on how best to meet young people's day-to-day needs and are reviewed as required. Plans could be further enhanced by more involvement from the young people and to ensure they include all the important details as outlined in young people's documents. Direct and independence work is carried out frequently to assist with developing skills and helping young people to understand their risk taking behaviour. The success of these sessions resulted in some young people's preparation for interview and going on to gain employment.

Safeguarding measures are in place to ensure appropriate action is taken. Young people told us they felt safe. The service has been proactive in reviewing their staffing arrangements and additional staff are now available when required. Handover meetings take place between each shift to allow important information to be shared. Additionally, the number of concerning incidents occurring at the home have reduced with staff acting appropriately when required. Risk taking behaviour for some young people has reduced with much more positive outcomes being achieved. The recording systems at the home have improved with better detail regarding the whereabouts and engagement with young people but although improved these are still in need of further improvement to ensure they are capturing the full detail required on the documents provided. Incident records could be further developed by providing greater detail and specific timings of such events to provide an audit trail for safeguarding purposes. There are fortnightly professional meetings in place to discuss the young people placed, their progress and a plan moving forward.

Medication management systems are better managed. The medication records at the service were improved. There was evidence of regular checks being carried out to ensure all the medication was in place. Double signatures were evident when dispensing medication to young people. Where there have been errors, the correct processes have been followed and this has been identified in a timely manner.

Environment

As this was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full.

We looked around the home as part of the inspection. The home is in a good state of repair and decoration indoors and out. All areas of the home were clean and tidy.

Final unpublished report

Leadership and Management

The responsible individual is committed to supporting staff, making the necessary improvements to meet regulations and to provide a service in line with their statement of purpose. The service has taken action to establish better systems and oversight of the service. The service is currently in the process of recruiting a new experienced manager, efforts have been made to appoint but they are awaiting a suitable candidate. In the interim, a group manager is overseeing the service alongside another temporary manager. The behaviour clinic, an assessment and therapy clinic are commissioned to be based at the service three days a week to provide assessments, therapeutic input, behaviour analysis and training for staff to provide a more consistent and engaged approach with young people. As a result, there has been a risk reduction in some instances and good investment and engagement from some young people.

Staff retention and morale is good; those we spoke with said they enjoy their work, they feel listened to and able to seek support when required. The service provider has reviewed its training across the staff team. All senior staff members now have first aid training. The majority of staff have safeguarding and team teach training and a number of staff have received Criminal Sexual Exploitation (CSE) training. Additionally, in the absence of face to face training during the pandemic, the service have introduced 30 E-learning modules applicable to the role which staff are currently undertaking and these should be prioritised by the staff team. The service provider is actively exploring training for staff on issues that are more complex and training to meet individual young people's needs. Staff supervision takes place but not at the specified timescale outlined in the service statement of purpose. Additionally, team meetings have not taken place due to difficulties since the pandemic outbreak. However, the responsible individual is committed to ensure these areas improve and is addressing the matter.

Quality assurance systems are in place and have improved but further development is required. The RI had undertaken a visit as had another manager within the service. Reports evidenced the progress the service had made and also highlighted some areas for development. Better analysis of information viewed will allow for shortfalls to be identified and rectified in a timely manner.

Areas for improvement and action at the previous inspection

Regulation 15 – Personal Plan: Personal plans were not prepared in line with statutory guidance - outcomes were not specific and measurable. They also did not include the detailed guidance to staff about how personal outcomes would be met. Risk assessments did not include specific and detailed guidance to staff to minimise risk or evidence the success or otherwise of strategies staff were to follow.

Regulation 15(1)

Achieved

Regulation 26: Safeguarding The service provider has not ensured that the service is always provided in a way which ensures that young people are protected from harm and abuse.

Regulation 26

Achieved

Regulation 36 – Supporting and developing staff: The service provider needs to ensure that staff are supported, receive regular supervision, core training appropriate to the work to be carried out and more specialist training as appropriate.

Regulation 36(2)

Achieved

Regulation 80 – Quality of care review: The service provider has not ensured suitable arrangements were in place to establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and improving the quality of care and support provided by the service.

Regulation 80(1)

Regulation 80(2)

Regulation 80(4)

Achieved

Where providers fail to improve and take action we may escalate the matter by issuing a priority action (non-compliance) notice.

Areas where immediate action is required

None

Areas where improvement is required

None

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Final unpublished report

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