

# Auton Residential Children's Homes

Newcastle • Sunderland • Darlington



## Auton Villa Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Function and Purpose is a document that describes how the home works and is managed, the content is governed by the 'Quality Standards' and information to be included is as follows-

## **CONTENTS**

### **Quality and Purpose of Care**

1. A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the Children's home is to provide care.
2. Details of the children's homes ethos, and the outcomes that the children's home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.
3. A description of the accommodation offered by the children's home including-
  - a) how accommodation has been adapted to the needs of the children cared for by the children's home;
  - b) the age range, number and sex of the children for whom it is intended that accommodation is to be provided;
  - c) the type of accommodation including sleeping accommodation.
4. A description of the location of the home
5. The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children accommodated in the children's home.
6. The arrangements for dealing with complaints.
7. Details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the home's safeguarding policies or the behaviour management policy.

### **Views Wishes and Feelings**

8. A description of the children's homes approach to consulting children about the quality of their care.
9. A description of the children's home's policy and approach in relation to—
  - (a) Anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families; and
  - (b) Children's rights.

### **Education**

10. Details of provision to support the children with special educational needs.
11. If the home is registered as a school, details of the curriculum provided by the home and the management and structure of the arrangements for education.

12. Where the children's home is not registered as a school, the arrangements for children to attend local schools and the provision made by the children's home to promote the educational attainment of children.

### **Enjoyment and achievement**

13. The arrangements for children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.

### **Health**

14. Details of any health care or therapy provided, including—  
(a) details of the qualifications and clinical supervision of the staff involved;  
(b) information about—  
(i) how the children's home measures the effectiveness of its approach; and  
(ii) the evidence referred to by the children's home to demonstrate the effectiveness of its approach, and how this information can be accessed.

### **Positive Relationships**

15. The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their family and friends

### **Protection of Children**

16. A description of the children's home's approach to the surveillance and monitoring of children accommodated there.

17. Details of the children's home's approach to behavioural support, including information about –

- (a) the home's approach to restraint with respect to children accommodated there; and
- (b) how persons working in the children's home are trained in the use of restraint and how their competence is assessed

### **Leadership and Management**

**18.** The name and work address of—

- (a) the registered provider (including details of the company owning the children's home);
- (b) if nominated, the responsible individual;
- (c) if applicable, the manager.

**19.** Details of the experience and qualifications of staff working at the children's home, including any staff commissioned to provide education and health care.

**20.** Details of the management and staffing structure of the children's home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff employed at the children's home, including staff that provide education or health care.

**21.** If the staff working at the children's home are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the children's home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes.

### **Care Planning**

**22.** Any criteria used for the admission of children to the children's home including any policies and procedures for emergency admission.

**23.** Additional matter

## **Auton Villa Children's Residential Home** **Statement of Purpose**

### **Quality and Purpose of Care**

#### **1. A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the Children's home is to provide care.**

Auton Villa provides a safe and secure therapeutic living experience for up to six children of either gender, aged from 7 to 17 years old on admission, where they can learn constructive and adaptive methods of dealing with negative experiences and emotions. We are registered with OFSTED as a children's residential home that may provide care and accommodation for children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (EBD).

We offer permanent placements that provide a period of stability and support to children and young people, assisting them to move into independent living, move back home or into a foster placement. It is unusual for a young person to remain at Auton villa post 18 however in exceptional circumstances and if in the best interest of the young person this is possible, this would be for a limited time.

Each individual placement is carefully assessed during our referral procedures, to ensure that the needs and outcomes of the individual child or young person can be successfully met, should they be placed with us. Special consideration is also given to the children currently being cared for at Auton Villa to ensure that their care is not compromised and that the needs of all young people currently placed can be met.

#### **2. Details of the children's homes ethos, and the outcomes that the children's home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.**

Auton Villa Children's Residential Home aims to provide a safe, nurturing living environment where children and young people can feel valued as individuals with individual talents, strengths and capabilities. We seek to provide care and support that is ambitious and stimulating to encourage each child or young person to develop, thrive and fulfil their personal potential. We place the needs of the young people at the centre of all we do; promoting choice and independence in an environment that respects privacy, rights and dignity.

We seek to provide residential care that is outward facing and is committed to working with families and wider systems of professionals in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people in our care. We deliver a flexible, imaginative and individually tailored service that promotes equality and individuality.

We have an experienced and suitably trained staff team that is fully committed to meeting the needs of the young people. Our comprehensive range of policies and procedures ensure that all staff adheres to practices that safeguard the welfare of the young people and meet all legislative requirements.

### **The Aims of Auton Villa**

- To provide a non-institutional therapeutic environment based on an atmosphere of approval and acceptance of the individual as a unique person with a background, personality and choices of their own.
- To create an atmosphere where young people can learn to value and develop personal

relationships by providing situations and experiences that develop trust, self-esteem and mutual respect.

- To provide a child-centred environment to enable young people to receive positive role modelling and guidance, through continuity of reliable relationships and consistent nurturing care.
- To assess strengths and needs to create an individual placement care plan, which secures optimal outcomes for the young person in line with current legislation
- To provide a safe, non-judgmental environment to encourage age-appropriate development and a positive future.
- To maintain an effective staff rota to meet the individual needs of the children placed at the home.
- To work in close partnership with other agencies, in order to ensure the stability and well-being of the placement, along with optimal opportunities for the young person.
- To provide outreach support to the young person and their family members through contact with significant staff members.
- To offer support for a move to independent or supported living if deemed appropriate.

### **The Objectives of Auton Villa**

To have in place a staff team:

- Who practice with an anti-oppressive approach
- Who provide a strong ethos of unconditional positive regard
- Who can nurture, care and offer a non-judgmental environment
- Who are aware of professional boundaries and have a good knowledge of child development
- Who offer a home environment, where children feel safe with boundaries and protection
- Who will act as role models, will be honest and open and who will offer the child and young people alternative methods of coping
- Who will act as advocates to ensure and promote the rights of the children and young people and to ensure that they are involved in discussions and decisions relating to their lives
- Who will positively encourage anti-discriminatory behaviours and attitudes
- Who will encourage acceptable behaviour enabling the children and young people to understand the issues of equality and diversity through house meetings, key worker sessions and daily living situations

### **Achieving Positive Outcomes**

At Auton Villa, a high priority is placed on achieving positive outcomes for children and young people in our care. We strive to make a difference to the lives of our children and young people and wish to support the young person in maximising their potential.

Auton Villa works closely with the child, family/significant others and care team in identifying appropriate long term goals for the young person through the review and consultation process. These goals or targets are then incorporated into the young person's individual placement plan and monitored closely via the young persons individual placement care plans. The young people are encouraged to participate in the development and review of their individual care plans, and are central to this process. The areas monitored are based on the quality care standards.

Auton Villa measures the effectiveness of the targets set within the young persons care plans on a monthly basis. Care plan monitoring allows for the young persons outcomes to be measured numerically and analysis to take place to establish how the young person's outcomes are being met and whether the young person is on target for achieving their goals. This process allows us to identify strengths and highlight these to the young people, building on confidence and self esteem and celebrating success through appropriate rewards and positive consequences. Areas identified as not being achieved are considered carefully and highlighted within multi agency reviews and reports to identify how this can be achieved in the future, again keeping the young person central to this process.

Auton Villa is proud of the progress made by the young people in our care and the excellent outcomes they have achieved. We feel keeping the young person central to this process allows for them to take ownership of the targets set, a clear voice in how they are cared for and the outcomes they want to achieve and pride in their successes.

**3. A description of the accommodation offered by the children's home, including—  
(a) how accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children cared for by the children's home;**

Auton Villa is a large detached house with a small front garden that looks onto the street and an enclosed yard at the rear.

The interior of the house is warm and spacious allowing for good individual provision. The young people have chosen the décor of the home and have personalised all communal areas. There is a large comfortable living room/dining room.

There is a homework room which offers a child friendly environment with soft furnishings, games, games console, craft facilities and books. Computer with internet access and relevant educational books are available for educational activities.

Young people have the ability for their smaller meetings to be held at their home should they wish to do so or should they wish to meet elsewhere office facilities are available for use at St Cuthberts House which is a small distance from Auton Villa.

**(b) the age range, number and sex of children for whom it is intended that accommodation is to be provided;**

Auton Villa can accommodate six children of either gender aged from 7 years to 17 years upon admittance.

**(c) the type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation.**

All children and young people have their own lockable bedroom. There are five young people's bedrooms with one interchangeable from a staff sleep in room to a young person's bedroom. 4 bedrooms are located on the first floor of the home and 2 on the second floor. Young people are able to choose their bedrooms where possible taking into account individual risk assessments and needs. The children are able to decorate and personalise their rooms. Young people have a lockable cupboard in their rooms to keep their valuables safe. Those young people who have medication needs, if it is assessed as safe and appropriate to self medicate they are able to do this by having a lockable medication cabinet in their rooms and/or access to a lockable container in the fridge should they need this facility.

#### **4. A description of the location of the children's home.**

Auton Villa is located on Wingrove Road in Fenham area of Newcastle. This area contains a mixture of residential properties, schools, shops and Churches. Wingrove Road is within close proximity to the Newcastle city centre and all local amenities. This includes local shopping centres, supermarkets, schools, parks, swimming pools. Sports centres, youth groups, leisure facilities such as cinema and bowling and also a range of local services to promote the well-being and development of our children, such as a variety of health providers.

The home is situated near a variety of transport facilities. The home has bus stops immediately outside the property and is within 15 minute walk to the City Centre. The local train station is within 20 minute walk from the home. The proximity of the home to the main transport systems within Newcastle allows for the children to be able to access other local areas within the North East such as Metrocentre, Sunderland, South Shields and Durham for example.

There are a number of churches and places to practice/worship a variety of religions and faiths in the local area. These also provide a wide variety of youth groups and services for children and young people in the area.

The area of Fenham thrives on diversity and multi-cultural development.

The home has developed a comprehensive risk assessment of the immediate local area in which the home is placed to ensure the suitability of its location. This is developed in consultation with a variety of professional bodies such as Newcastle placing authority, local police responsible for the area in which Auton Villa resides, police responsible for local investigations regarding CSE and also considers present day statistics regarding the local area. This risk assessment has been shared with all whom gave input and relevant parenting bodies for the young people at Auton Villa. A copy of this risk assessment can be provided on request.

#### **5. The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children accommodated in the children's home.**

The cultural, linguistic and religious needs of young people will be identified during our thorough referral procedure. There are places of worship locally for all faiths and religions and the young people will be actively supported and encouraged to continue any religious or cultural belief system they may have. We recognise and respect each of our individuals' dignity, privacy, diversity and independence needs. Any linguistic needs will be identified at the referral stage and the home will ensure that the skills, language and understanding of the staff will meet the needs of the young person. Staff will support young people to seek information and advice on all cultures and religions if required.

#### **6. Details of who to contact if a person has a complaint about the home and how that person can access the home's complaints policy.**

Every child and young person has the right to complain about their care or any other issues affecting them while they are at Auton Villa.

Copies of our leaflet "How to Complain" are kept in the home; each young person is made aware of his/her rights and the procedures involved in both informal and formal complaints on their admission to Auton Villa. This is again revisited during keyworker sessions and children's meetings.

The young people are provided with information and resources to complain to an external organisation should they choose to do so. This includes how to contact Ofsted, Nyas, the Children's rights commissioner, social worker and IRO.

Free telephone numbers are programmed into the house phone to allow access without the need of finances or support from staff. Should the young person request staff support this will be given and where possible the preferred staff member will fulfil this task.

St Cuthberts Care has a procedure for all Comments, Concerns and Complaints. This procedure is shared with a child's family and care team upon admittance and a copy of the procedure is sent to significant persons if it has been amended. A copy of this document is available on request.

All complaints will be responded to immediately in line with the complaints policy and procedure. The level of complaints will be monitored on a regular basis by the home manager.

NYAS, an independent agency, will visit the home to carry out visits by an independent person on a monthly basis. The young people will be able to talk and give their views on any issues that may be concerning them through this process.

## **7. Details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the home's safeguarding policies or the behaviour management policy.**

Auton Villa is committed to working in partnership with external agencies and significant stakeholders to ensure that our safeguarding policies are robust, transparent and developed in line with local and national policy and current legislation. Auton Villa works closely with Newcastle's safeguarding board, relevant police bodies and local authorities to ensure a 'working together' ethos.

The homes Safeguarding Policies are submitted to all significant stakeholders on admittance of a young person and again on any review made to the document. Staff regularly consult with professionals/parents involved in the care and protection of the young people and invite them to request the documentation.

### **Auton Villa Safeguarding Policy**

Auton Villa recognises and is committed to fulfilling its statutory and moral responsibilities with regard to the protection of children and young people from harm.

Auton Villa adheres to the following documentation:

- The St Cuthberts Care Safeguarding Children Policy
- The Auton Villa Safeguarding Policy and procedure
- The Auton Villa Sexual Exploitation Policy
- The Auton Villa Bullying and E-Safeguarding Policy
- The Auton Villa Children's Complaints Policy
- Newcastle Safeguarding Children Procedures
- LSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures of those children placed outside of Newcastle
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The DfE publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2015

The St Cuthberts Care procedures are underpinned by fundamental values that are central to the work of the agency.

1. Respect for all persons
2. Confidentiality
3. Non-judgmental attitudes
4. Individual rights to self-determination
5. Non-discrimination

Auton Villa is committed to working in partnership with local authorities to promote the safety of all young people in their care.

The children and young people will be encouraged to respect the safety of all members of the group.

The staff team will act as role models and will actively discourage behaviour, which may cause harm emotionally, physically and/or sexually.

All young people will have individual risk assessments that are regularly reviewed. It is standard practice for all bedroom doors at Auton Villa to have alarms attached. This is an effective risk management strategy for all of the young people placed in the home however should it not be required it can be removed.

Safeguarding incidents will be reported to the appropriate people concerned. The process of such reporting will strictly follow Safeguarding Procedures and will reflect the seriousness of the incident.

### **Safeguarding Children from Abuse by Sexual Exploitation**

Auton Villa believes it is important all children and young people develop the knowledge and skills to make safe and healthy choices about relationships and sexual health to avoid situations that place them at risk of sexual exploitation. Children and young people who are sexually exploited are the victims of child abuse and should be safeguarded from further harm.

Due to the nature of sexual exploitation it is very common for children and young people not to recognise that they are being abused or coerced. Exploitation can involve varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyber bullying) and grooming for sexual activity via introduction into 'party' lifestyles forming 'casual' social relationships.

There are noticeable links between young people involved in sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home or care, bullying, self-harm, drug and alcohol misuse. In addition some children might be particularly vulnerable to exploitation because of factors such as difficult or abusive childhood experiences or educational under achievement.

Auton Villa is committed to working with other agencies such as SCARPA and Barnardos, and our local safeguarding children's board, to ensure robust policies and procedures are in place at Auton Villa, to reduce the risk of sexual exploitation. This includes ensuring the home has an appropriate identified link with the local police in ensuring the homes procedures and responses are appropriate to the needs of the local areas in safeguarding our children and ensuring a police protocol is in place.

Auton Villa liaise with the CSE managers for the area of Newcastle and other local areas our children may frequent to ensure that our knowledge of risk and risk areas remains current and up to date and ensure any intelligence gathered through our work is shared appropriately with those agencies responsible for safeguarding children at a local level.

Auton Villa adheres to the following documentation:

- Auton Villa Sexual Exploitation Policy
- Auton Villa Safeguarding against Sexual Exploitation Procedures
- Auton Children Missing from Care policy
- Auton Villa Missing from Home Return Keyworking Session Policy and Procedure
- Auton Villa Agreed Police Protocol

Those children and young people identified as being at risk from Child Sexual Exploitation will have this risk clearly identified throughout their care planning to ensure appropriate measures are in place to safeguard. This includes a specific risk assessment, and risk of abuse through sexual exploitation, for Children. This is developed as a multi agency response and strategies outlined are reviewed regularly.

All staff at Auton Villa will receive training in Safeguarding Children against Abuse by Sexual Exploitation.

### **Missing from Home Procedures**

Residential childcare practitioners can be faced with situations where a child or young person may be missing from home for a variety of reasons. If staff members are aware that there is a likelihood that a young person may go missing from home they would talk to the child in order to gain a stronger understanding of their thoughts, wishes and feelings. In such situations responses will be made in accordance with the young person's Risk Assessment.

All children and young people should be aware that missing from home is not a positive measure for dealing with any difficulty. It is the role of the staff team to make the children/young people aware that missing from home is dangerous and places them at significant risk. Staff will be proactive in their approach and use their relationships with individual children/young people as a tool to support a learning process towards choosing alternative measures to deal with difficult situations.

At Auton Villa, an emphasis is placed on reducing the risk of harm through this behaviour by appropriate staff support during these incidents. For those young people where missing from home is an identified risk taking behaviour, this risk is clearly identified within their individual risk management plans and appropriate strategies identified. These are individualised however for those children deemed at higher risk, should they attempt to go missing, the ethos within the home is to prevent this through intensive staff support. This includes observing the young person, to prevent leaving adult sight when they have left home without permission, with aim of being able to intervene to prevent harm should this be required. This has been a proven effective strategy and reduced incidents of missing from home significantly. This technique has allowed our young people to be given the clear message that staff care and will safeguard them.

Missing from home is discussed at regular children's meetings to allow children to gain a strong understanding of the dangers. Staff members will use their professional judgement as a corporate parent to enable children/young people to understand the use of police in such circumstances and the outcome of high profile cases where children/young people have "run away".

Young people are encouraged to access independent advocates to discuss their worries and concerns when considering running away from home or upon return from running away. This forms part of our return home procedure. Auton Villa recognises that young people do not run away for no reason.

Auton Villa have developed their own Missing from Home Return Keyworking Session procedure. This is to be carried out when the young person has safely returned, has been warmly welcomed home and is calm and able to reflect on the behaviour. The aim of this procedure is to provide a learning outcome and to identify pull/push factors for the use of this behaviour as a coping strategy. It is primarily a safeguarding tool to establish risk of harm when missing.

The main aims of this procedure are;

- To seek an understanding of the young person's motivation for going missing
- To assess the risks to which they may have been exposed whilst missing
- To explore and advocate for the young person's current and future wishes and to access independent advocate on their behalf should they wish to.
- To explore with the young person positive alternative options to going missing in the future, so that if the same motivation/situation arises they have considered what action to take instead of leaving the home.
- Reduce risk taking behaviour

### **Bullying**

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else putting him/her under stress. Bullying is aggression, physical, verbal or psychological, although not all aggression is necessarily bullying.

St. Cuthberts Care acknowledges the serious and often devastating nature of bullying and recognises it as a form of abuse. St Cuthberts Care therefore views bullying as unacceptable and seeks to combat it within its safeguarding responsibilities. The agency is committed to combating this form of abuse by raising awareness of it among our staff and the children and young people in our care. This is in support of our core values, in line with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and is stated within our Safeguarding Procedures, that "all children have the right to protection from exploitation, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse".

Bullying can take place on a number of grounds including race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and can take many forms including:

- Name calling
- Being physically hit
- Gestures
- Extortion
- Coercing the victim into acts they do not wish to do
- Exclusion from friendships or peer groups
- Stealing property
- Malicious gossip
- Watching and encouraging bullying behaviour
- Sexual Bullying
- Cyber Bullying

## **The Auton Villa Bullying policy provides detailed procedural guidance on countering bullying.**

Auton Villa has worked closely with the Bullying Intervention Group; the 'B.I.G' award is a recognisable award which demonstrates that a school or service takes bullying seriously enough to work towards accepted good practice. It gives parents and children/young people confidence in our approach to bullying and helps to improve outcomes. Auton Villa are presently working towards accreditation with this group.

### **Views, Wishes and Feelings**

#### **8. A description of the children's home's approach to consulting children about the quality of their care.**

Auton Villa is committed to enabling children to develop their personal potential by providing a staff team who are dedicated to using a child-centred approach in all aspects of their work. We encourage young people at Auton Villa to recognise their own strengths, individuality and potential for development and independence. All individuals working with the children have adopted an **empowerment model of practice**, which aims to support them to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way Auton Villa is run. The young people are central to the decision making of the home and this is evidenced by achieving the 'Investing in Children' award.

#### **Practical measures towards ensuring consultation**

- **Communication**

Auton Villa will never assume a child is unable to communicate their views and will ensure the necessary means are provided to enable children to express their wishes and feelings. The care team is committed to minimising barriers to communication in all areas of practice. This includes providing a comprehensive service which can adequately meet the needs of children where English is not their first language, or where a learning disability may impact upon their level of understanding and participation.

- **LAC review process**

Auton Villa is committed to working in partnership with local authorities in order to ensure that all formal documentation is complete, in a timely fashion on a 6 monthly basis including care plan records and review consultation papers. The care team recognise the challenge of enabling young people to actively participate in these processes and will work creatively in meeting the needs of individual children.

- **Children's meetings**

Auton Villa supports young people to participate in a children's meeting on a regular basis. This is a forum to facilitate consultation about the running of the home. Staff record the contents of the meeting, and actively encourage the children to make their own record of the meeting. Both young people and staff provide agenda items to be explored within the group. This time is also used to plan events and celebrations in the household e.g. birthdays and religious festivals. Staff ensure that any actions are taken forward and feedback given to the young people about the outcomes of any request. This is recorded within the house meeting file. Key workers also ensure they seek consultation with the young people to enable them to participate in staff meetings and add items on the agenda for consideration. This encourages partnership working.

- **Key worker sessions**  
The key worker or a significant other staff member will facilitate a one-to-one session on a frequent basis with the children. This enables children to give their views throughout the placement and promotes consultation. All sessions are recorded and available in a format the child will understand.
- **Care Planning**  
Auton Villa supports the young person to participate in their care planning by giving regular input into their monthly care plans and receiving feedback on a monthly basis on the achievement of their outcomes. This is individualised ensuring a child centred approach is taken and the young person is consulted on how and when they would like to give input into their care plans. This enables the child to be central to the planning of their care and gives them a voice on the outcomes they wish to achieve and an opportunity to celebrate achievement.
- **Contracts**  
Any contract to support the placement will be written in collaboration with the young person
- **Advocates**  
All young people at Auton Villa will have access to an independent advocate who can be accessed through each placing authority. Auton Villa also work closely with NYAS and young people are encouraged to access this service for independent advocates which has proved successful in the past.
- **Independent visitors**  
Auton Villa will actively encourage and support the allocation of independent visitors, when children have limited contact with parents or family members.
- **Managers consultation**  
The manager seeks to gain the children's views of the home and the quality of care offered on a regular basis. When a young person gives feedback or makes suggestions to improve their experience of Auton Villa, we ensure that they are listened to and where possible, changes made to support that young person.

Consultation takes place with the child, their family and care team on a regular basis to ensure that the quality of care offered by Auton Villa remains to a high standard. This information is recorded within the managers monitoring reports along with the outcome

## **9. A description of the children's home's policy and approach in relation to— (a) anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families;**

Auton Villa recognises and values the diversity and the uniqueness of the individual. Not only the obvious differences we can see with our eye such as age, gender identity, race or disability but also the differences that we cannot see such as personality, socio-economic status, background, health, previous health experiences, education, social groups, sexual orientation, cultural beliefs, faith beliefs, expectations, behaviours and morals.

These unique characteristics are important factors in the process of identifying need. Consideration will always be given to each young person's racial, cultural and religious needs. The staff at Auton Villa will actively seek to support the process of meeting such needs by facilitating visits to local places of worship and providing for any specific dietary needs, seeking to enhance understanding of significant cultures and support any appropriate cultural links with the community. Auton Villa promotes equality of opportunity for all regardless of our differences. We recognise that equality is not about treating everyone in the same way; it is about treating everyone fairly, with respect and recognising that children and young people from different backgrounds may have needs that are met in different ways.

Through our Anti-discriminatory practice we promote the diversity and value of all our differences, promote self-esteem and positive group identity and promote the fulfilment of individual potential. This is central to our practice and ethos at Auton Villa.

### **(b) children's rights.**

All Auton Villa staff ensure that children's rights are promoted through all areas of practice, in line with present legislation within the 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child', principally:

- That the child will be treated in a non-discriminatory way
- That the views and wishes of the child will be respected
- That the child will always have the right to dignity, privacy and humane care

With rights come responsibilities and children will be encouraged to take as much responsibility for their behaviour as they are able. Behaviour that creates, or is likely to create, victims will not be condoned and will be managed in an appropriate manner

## **Education**

### **10. Details of provision to support children with special educational needs.**

Auton Villa recognise that a significant proportion of looked after children residing in children's homes have special educational needs or have faced significant barriers to learning due to experiencing severe trauma, have mental health difficulties or have been excluded or out of education for significant periods of time. It may be necessary to address and work through past experiences and present needs before they can positively participate in learning activities and formal education.

All young people have an education care plan when accommodated at Auton Villa. This plan will identify those young people who have a SEN or EHC plan. Auton Villa will ensure that any targets and support plans identified within the child's EHC plan are incorporated into their education placement plan. This will support both the child and staff team to identify how they can offer individual support to the young person and what areas are to be monitored to measure effectiveness of support. This information is included in the child's placement reports for Looked After Reviews.

The child's keyworker will ensure there is good attendance at all education reviews including PEP reviews and EHC plan reviews. They will ensure they prepare for reviews by completing any required reports and consulting the child about their views and wishes prior to the meeting. Any changes to the child's education plan will be incorporated into the child's education care plans.

Auton Villa work in close partnership with external professionals and agencies in providing tailored support for each child or young person. This includes the school SENCO, VSH, educational psychologists, Teachers and mentoring staff.

**11. If the children's home is registered as a school, details of the curriculum provided by the children's home and the management and structure of the arrangements for education.**

Auton Villa is not registered as a school.

**12. Where the children's home is not registered as a school, the arrangements for children to attend local schools and the provision made by the children's home to promote the educational attainment of children.**

Auton Villa is fully committed to valuing and supporting the education of our young people. Currently, we are working in close partnership with LEAs and SSDs in order to successfully implement the key measures outlined in the guidance on 'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children' (July 2014).

- We have developed an education policy, which clearly outlines the manner in which we intend to promote and safeguard the education of our young people
- Each of our young people has a detailed educational plan which highlights their educational history, specific needs and aspirations
- We will create an ethos conducive to educational success, both through raising the expectations of staff and young people and through the more tangible conduits, such as buying books and developing reward packages
- Each child has an education care plan which ensures access and stability with regard to education, acts as a formal mechanism to ensure regular, effective liaison between all key stakeholders, signals any particular need and establishes clear goals
- Key workers are charged with: taking an active interest in young people's educational progress, championing their educational needs, celebrating their successes and ensuring that they have access to the full range of educational opportunities
- Wherever possible children at Auton Villa will attend local schools or alternative provision made by Newcastle LEA. Staff at Auton Villa will provide "in-school" support wherever possible and appropriate. If a child is excluded, an educational package will be provided and implemented by Auton Villa staff with the support of their previous school placement.
- Auton Villa work closely with the virtual schools and have linked with the 'Virtual Heads' for the Newcastle local authority and also for other placing authorities. This allows for effective partnership working promoting positive outcomes for our children and young people.
- Attend all multi agency meetings and act as an advocate on behalf of the child where necessary. Complete any required reports in preparation of education meetings.
- If a child's progress is not in line with their agreed goals and their next steps, staff should seek expert advice from education professionals such as the VSH, SENCO, learning mentor or teacher.
- The home will challenge a child's education or training provider if we do not receive sufficient support for the child to progress, as outlined in their relevant plans.
- We have a 'chill out' room at Auton Villa that incorporates facilities for private study
- Staff support and encourage extra-curricular activities and hobbies to promote enjoyment and achievement outside school hours. There are many local clubs and youth groups our young people access within the local community. These help build young people's self-esteem and confidence and provide opportunity to help them meet friends of similar age and interests.

## **Enjoyment and Achievement**

### **13. The arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.**

Auton Villa believe that each child deserves a fulfilling childhood with a variety of leisure activities, hobbies, and holidays to provide them with a range of experiences to build confidence, self-esteem and enabling positive memories. Individual talents and interests will be identified and nurtured, with children and young people selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonably possible.

All young people have access to the leisure activities available in most homes i.e. television, radio, art and craft, board games, books, games consoles, internet etc. As well as promoting a positive ethos of play we encourage participation in age appropriate hobbies for example swimming, youth groups, football clubs and sporting clubs to name but a few. Extra-curricular clubs and activities are also encouraged and supported. This may include musical instruments or sports clubs for example. This is individualised according to individual preference. Each child is unique and as such we investigate a wide variety of activities to interest, inspire and develop our young people.

Children and young people are able to enjoy day trips and holidays throughout the school holidays. This has included museums, amusement parks throughout the country, football matches and city visits. House meetings are used to plan holidays and day trips to ensure the young people are fully consulted.

We have a member of staff at Auton Villa who takes responsibility for co-ordinating activities, accessing material for holidays, calendar events, and accessing the local community.

Upon admittance, Auton Villa will seek to clarify the homes delegated authority to give consent to school trips, sleep-overs or the child's involvement in sporting, leisure and cultural activities. This information will be identified within the child's placement plan.

We believe in celebrating individual and group achievements along with any significant events that interest our children and young people. Our children and young people are central to the decision making of the home and are able to request specific celebrations central to their interests, views, cultural and religious beliefs.

## **Health**

### **14. Details of any health care or therapy provided, including—**

#### **(a) details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing any health care or therapy;**

Auton Villa currently does not employ any individuals whose role is to provide specific health care for our children in our home. Auton Villa is committed to working with local services and health agencies in sourcing required identified support our children and young people may need. This includes; 'Drugs and Alcohol' service, WEYES sexual health service, CYPS mental health service, SCARPA (MFH/Risk taking behaviour service). This list is not exhaustive. Auton Villa does have designated staff responsible for overseeing 'health and wellbeing', 'sexual health' and 'Drugs and alcohol', these staff work closely with related professionals to disseminate information to staff and young people to encourage optimum outcomes.

**b) information about— how the effectiveness of any healthcare of therapy provided is measured, the evidence demonstrating its effectiveness and details of how the information or the evidence can be accessed.**

Auton Villa will actively promote the health needs of the children and young people. All children and young people will be registered with a GP and dentist unless otherwise requested from those with parental responsibility. It is an expectation that all children and young people will undergo an annual medical as requested by *Regulation 7 of the Children Act 1989*. They will also undergo regular dental checks and eye tests.

The staff team will adopt a positive approach to health issues. We will provide a healthy and balanced diet, encourage, create and take part in regular leisure activities and advice in risks such as drug abuse, solvent misuse, smoking and sexual health matters.

All young people are offered the opportunity to become members at the local gym and swimming pool to encourage regular exercise and promote healthy living. Gym induction will take place to ensure the young people exercise in a safe way.

Where young people are admitted to Auton Villa with specific health needs, we work closely with the young person's identified health care team in ensuring that the young person's health needs are met to the highest standards possible. Advice is sought from health in drawing the child's risk management plan and monthly care plans to ensure health is appropriately reflected. Training may also be identified and sourced in meeting specific health needs of a child.

The health needs and outcomes of our children are closely monitored through the young person individual health care plan targets. Staff monitor achievement of agreed targets daily and record this. This information is then evaluated monthly and measured for effectiveness through the homes care planning and monitoring procedures, as discussed in promoting positive outcomes. The young people give input into their health care plans and their views are clearly recorded. Once effectiveness has been measured staff will then review whether target is on goal to be achieved. Where there is concern that the young person is not achieving their health care plan targets, staff will seek support from relevant health provisional and work closely with the child to achieve future outcomes.

The homes effectiveness of its approach to health is measured using individual health care plans/outcomes and monthly care plan monitoring reports. This information is included on the child's monthly summary reports which are sent to all significant care team members and family, as agreed during the child's admittance to the home. It is also included in the child's Looked After Reports to ensure complete transparency when meeting to review the health care of the child and agreeing future plans.

Additionally, effectiveness of the homes approach to health is monitored closely by the manager on a monthly basis when reviewing the quality of care for the home. The manager also consults significant stakeholders at regular intervals to seek their views and opinions on how Auton Villa performs in its quality of care, including its approach to health. This information is included in the managers' regulation 45 monitoring reports. This information can be accessed on request.

## **Promoting positive relationships**

### **15. The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their family and friends.**

It is recognised that whenever possible, children and young people need regular constructive contact with family, friends and significant others.

Building and maintaining positive friendships is important to our young people and as such, this is encouraged and supported at Auton Villa. We encourage young people to have friends to visit/visit friends for planned activities, tea, celebrations and sleep-overs.

The arrangements and conditions surrounding each child's contact are incorporated into the child's placement plans and the conditions are reviewed at regular intervals. Any contact restrictions will be clarified to ensure the protection of the child.

Children will be given appropriate practical support to facilitate all constructive contact, whether by visits, telephone, letter or email. Auton Villa has a telephone available to the young people that enables them to make confidential and private phone calls to their placing social workers, IROs, Ofsted and various other support agencies without the need to consult or refer to staff.

After consultation with the child's social worker, and other appropriate professionals, written guidance will be available for staff in order to define children's and parent's rights and the right of significant others with regards to maintaining contact.

If visits or telephone calls are to be supervised to ensure safety to the young person or to other children, then this will be done in a discreet but professional manner.

If letters or emails need to be intercepted for the safety of the child, a written agreement will have to be in place between the home, child, parents and local authority.

Whenever possible appropriate participation in the home's activities will take place with parents, friends and significant others as long as there are no significant risks or restrictions to such participation.

A written record will be kept in the home, recording the date of contact and with whom. Contact reports can be provided to the placing social worker.

## **Protection of Children**

### **16. A description of the children's home's approach to the surveillance and monitoring of children accommodated there.**

Each child is treated as an individual within Auton Villa. It is recognised that each child will have differing levels of need and individually tailored care plans in place reflecting key controls and strategies required to safeguard the child or young person, support them to manage their behaviour in a variety of different settings and circumstances, supporting them in achieving positive outcomes. Part of this assessment will include the level of staff support required on a day to day basis. This will include the child or young person's ability to safely spend time in the community independently, the level of supervision required when spending time with peers in the home, the level of staff supervision required whilst in the home and the staffing ratio required to support the child in the community. This approach must be balanced and reflective of the child's wishes, feelings and level of risk and kept under constant review.

This information is recorded on the child's individual risk management plan, which is reviewed regularly in a multi-agency setting to adapt to personal development, age and understanding. If a child requires supervision both within the home and community consideration will be given to their age, ability and liberty and whether the placement is appropriate or a DOL is to be requested.

The home has an internal alarm system in place which can be programmed to monitor individual internal and external doors in the home. This is used as a safeguarding tool to reduce risk within the home. This includes preventing young people leaving the home without staff knowledge during the evening. Preventing young people from entering each others bedrooms without staff knowledge and reducing potential safeguarding or bullying incidents within the home. This also acts as a security alarm on external doors, as used in private properties, to dissuade people from illegal entry into the home. The alarms are used on an individual basis according to need and risk level. This is reflected in individual risk management plans. Placing social workers and/or families for children admitted to Auton Villa have the alarms explained to them during their admittance procedure and written consent is sought for the use of door alarms. For those young people who do not require high level supervision and for whom this is not a strategy within the child's risk management plan, they are able to request that this is not used on their doors. This is their choice and this will be respected. Alarms are not used in the home as a replacement for staff supervision or support and the need for use will be regularly reviewed with the child, their family and care team on a regular basis to ensure use is proportionate. Alarms are not to be used in a manner that creates an institutional environment.

#### **17. Details of the children's home's approach to behavioural support, including information about –**

- a) the home's approach to restraint in relation to children: and**
- b) how persons working in the home are trained in restraint and how their competence is assessed.**

#### **Auton Villa's approach to behavioural support**

Auton Villa's aim is to provide a safe environment through which children/young people can enjoy sound relationships, interact positively with others and behave appropriately.

The culture and ethos within Auton Villa is to place an emphasis on highlighting positive behaviours and choices through appropriate praise and reward to build our young people's self esteem and confidence. This allows opportunity to educate our children and young people on positive behaviour and expectations of society in a manner that offers unconditional acceptance and positive regard.

Auton Villa recognises that there may be occasions where a young person's behaviour does not meet expected standards and alternative strategies need to be adopted in providing appropriate learning outcomes for the young person. In these situations, Auton Villa strives to educate the young person on appropriate behaviour and highlight different ways in which the situations could be managed by the child. The young person is given opportunity to discuss the incident/behaviour with a trusted adult when calm to reflect on the incident/behaviour and explore triggers and alternative coping strategies. This information is then incorporated into the young person's individual risk management plan to support the young person in a more effective manner should similar situations arise.

Occasionally there may be a need to use more formal disciplinary measures. Auton Villa feels that although there maybe situations where this is an appropriate measure to take, it is imperative that these measures are taken after the young person has been given an opportunity to adapt their behaviour (limit setting) and used rarely.

In these cases, a 'restorative justice' approach, where possible, is preferred. It is recognised however, that positive behaviour management model is more effective at establishing a long term change in a child's behaviour.

## **Behavioural Consequences**

Within Auton Villa we promote positive behaviour by offering praise and support together with positive consequences. These can range from a chocolate bar to a reward of an activity or outing of the young person's choice. It is recognised that rewarding good behaviour promotes positive behaviour and staff will work with each child to identify individualised strategies to manage behaviour issues and promote positivity whenever possible.

It is also recognised that some form of consequence will be necessary where there are instances of behaviour which would in a family or group environment be reasonably regarded as unacceptable. Where it is felt necessary to give a consequence for this behaviour, good professional practice indicates that these should be relevant and above all, just. Formal disciplinary measures should be used sparingly and in most cases only after repeated use of informal measures have proved ineffective.

The following consequences are used at Auton Villa and young people give input into this decision making where possible and choose a consequence that is appropriate.

Consequences can include:

- Grounding – the period of grounding should be negotiated with the young person
- Loss of privileges – these will be negotiated with the young person and could involve loss of activity or individual one to one attention
- Reparation – this will usually entail the young person making a contribution for any non-accidental damage they may cause. Reparation will be deducted from their pocket money on a weekly basis until the damage is paid for. In any case, no more than a maximum of two-thirds of a child's pocket money should be used per week. The young person is also encouraged and supported by staff to replace or fix any damaged property where possible and appropriate.
- Extra chores – young people can choose an extra chore as an alternative to a sanction – e.g. picking up litter, cleaning bins, weeding, helping the neighbours
- P.C. ban
- DVD ban
- Personal TV in rooms ban
- Internet access ban
- Earlier bedtime

This is not an exhaustive list and will be subject to individual need.

It is acknowledged that due to the complex difficulties of many of the young people we support, the effectiveness of each of the consequences may only be seen after a period of consistent implementation. The consequences will be monitored and reviewed each month by a staff team in order to evaluate the effectiveness. Staff will take the opportunity to discuss the topic of consequences at team meetings.

Where possible all examples of positive behaviour are praised and encouraged by the staff team and by doing so help the young people to be proud of their achievements and help build confidence and self-esteem.

Rewards can also be given to a child or young person who displays behaviour that is so positive the staff feel warrants a reward. These are used to reinforce positive behaviours. Again good professional practice indicates that these rewards should be relevant and just.

Incentives and rewards will include:

- Verbal praise and encouragement
- Certificates and 'thank you' cards
- Sweets
- Additional privileges – These will be negotiated with the children and young people. This could include later bedtimes for example.
- Additional activities/holidays.
- Agreed financial incentives. These are not excessive and fit the purpose. This includes vouchers.
- Agreed rewards such as make up/games/toys/books or beauty treatments. Again these are appropriate and fit the purpose.

## **Restorative Practice**

Auton Villa adopts the restorative justice approach to guide the way we support our children and young people. The fundamental premise of our approach is that our children and young people will be happier, more cooperative and productive and are likely to make positive changes when staff supporting them do things with them apposed to for them or to them. By using restorative practice on a day to day basis it encourages children and young people to take responsibility for their behaviour in accordance with their age and ability whilst promoting an environment where there is mutual respect and trust. The expectation of standards of behaviour for staff and young people is high. Developing safe, stable relationships with staff is central to the ethos of the home and will promote secure attachments where possible over a period of time.

### **(a) the children's home's approach to the use of restraint with respect to children accommodated there;**

St Cuthberts Care currently practice the Management of Actual or Potential Aggression, 'MAPA' is a BILD accredited form of behaviour management and promotes de-escalation apposed to physical intervention. MAPA has a clear emphasis on establishing therapeutic rapport in the form of the 'COPING' model. This allows both staff and children to reflect on incidents or risk behaviour and identify patterns and strategies to support them in future.

### **Management of Actual and Potential Aggression**

The key values underpinning MAPA are:

- Best interests of the service user
- Least restrictive methods to be used for the minimum amount of time.
- Prevent injury, pain and distress
- Maintain dignity
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Physical intervention is used as a last resort.
- maintaining *Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security*<sup>SM</sup>

However, the only 100% safe way to restrain is to not restrain. There is no tried and tested fool proof way to physically intervene and restrain any child. Physical intervention carries risk every time, for both staff and children. There are however ways of physically intervening that are much safer than others which are incorporated into the MAPA training package.

St. Cuthberts Care will always take the view that it best to prevent behaviours happening than to deal with the outcome of aggressive outbursts. With this in mind we actively promote and reward positive behaviour, identifying what works for each young person and incorporating this into their risk management plan.

**(b) how persons working in the children's home are trained in the use of restraint and how their competence is assessed.**

All staff are provided with a two day MAPA foundation training package when they commence employment with St. Cuthberts care, with annual refreshers to ensure ongoing competence and assessment. Within St. Cuthberts care there are currently three MAPA certified instructors who are available for support and guidance. One MAPA certified instructor is based at Auton Villa for regular advice and support regarding behaviour management and physical intervention. MAPA is regularly refreshed in staff meetings to review and devise strategies to best support and maintain the safety and wellbeing of our young people.

**Leadership and Management**

**18. The name and work address of—**

**(a) the registered provider (including details of the company owning the children's home);**

**(b) if nominated, the responsible individual;**

<b>Organisation (Registered Provider)</b>	Sheila Errington Deputy CEO and Director of Care Services St. Cuthberts Care St. Cuthberts House West Road Newcastle NE15 7 PY Telephone: 0191 228 0111 Email: sheila.errington@stcuthbertscare.org.uk
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**Qualifications**

Qualified Social Worker (social care registration number SW05343)  
Practice Teacher  
A1 Assessor / CTLLS  
NNEB  
CMS

**Experience**

- Overs 30 years working with vulnerable children, young people and families 'in need'
- Family Assessment Practitioner for children and families engaged in court proceedings
- Deputy Manager Family Centre
- Manager of Family Centre
- Practice teacher for student social workers on placement
- Registered Provider for assessment supervised contact service

- Organisation Registered Provider for fostering services, children's homes, post adoption services
- Director of Developments
- Director of St Cuthberts Care
- Director of Children & Young People's Services

**(c) if applicable, the manager**

**Home (Manager)**            Rob Birkbeck  
                                      182 Wingrove Road  
    Newcastle  
    NE4 9DB  
    Telephone: 0191 2738861  
    Email: rob.birkbeck@stcuthbertscare.org.uk

Qualifications

NVQ level 5 in children and young people.  
 MA Counselling  
 BA Community and Youth Work

Experience

- Over 10 years' experience of with young people in Youth Work Settings, Secure Training Centres and Residential Care.
- Author of Person Centred counselling toolkit and metaphors for work with disruptive young people published in BACP journal.
- Author of a chapter describing how Youth Work can help support young people with bereavement, anti-social behaviour and parental addiction issues. In a publication to present the positive influence of Youth Work nationwide.

**Inspection Service**

**Ofsted**  
 Piccadilly Gate  
 Store Street  
 Manchester  
 M1 2WD  
 Telephone: 0300 123 1231  
 Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

**19. Details of the experience and qualifications of staff working at the children's home, including any staff commissioned to provide education and health care.**

Position	Start Date	Qualifications	Experience
Manager Full Time-37 hours Male	10/12/2012	MA in Counselling -BA Youth Work Level 2 Safe Handling of Medication NVQ Level 3 Children and Young People -NVQ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Children and Young People's Workforce.	Experienced Youth Worker, counsellor. Experience working in hostels, and in secure accommodation with youth offenders
Deputy Manager Full time -37 Hours Female	08/05/2019	8 O' Levels, 2 A' Levels Level 3 National Nursery Nursing Qualification Level 4 Teaching and Assessing in Further Education Qualifications Level 5 Leadership and Management Currently Studying: Degree in Health and Social Care inc Level 7 Leadership and Management	Range of work with Children and Families (Social Services). Deputy Manager Private Day Nursery. Inspector of Services for Children. Lecturer in Health, Social Care and Early Years. Quality Manager: Domiciliary Care Children and Young People's Development Officer(Jigsaw Project) Senior Residential Care Officer, Children and Young People
Senior Residential Child Care Officer Full Time – 37 hours Female	01/09/2011	-NVQ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Children and Young People's Workforce -NVQ Level 3 Working with Children and Young People -NVQ Level 3 Health and Social Care-Adults -BA History and American Studies T.E.F.L Diploma	Support worker for adults with learning difficulties Worked in children's residential care for 7 years.
Senior Residential Care Officer Full Time-37 hours Female	17/10/2016	BA (hons) Working with Children and Families Foundation Degree in Childrens Workforce NVQ Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young Peoples Workforce	Previous experience of supporting young people in a residential setting
Residential Care Officer Full time- 37 hours Male	01/12/2004	-NVQ 3 Children and Young People	Experience working with families in assessment Experience working with children and young people in a residential setting

Residential Care Officer  Full Time- 37 Hours  Female	17/12/2018	BSC (hons) Psychology and Counselling  MSC Forensic Psychology	Previous experience working with children in school setting, including LA children.
Residential Care Officer  Part time- 5 hours  Female	22/02/2016	BSC (HONS) in Adult Nursing Foundation of Sexual Health Practice  Working towards Level 3 Diploma	Experience working with young people regarding sexual health, time spent in schools in relation to this.
Residential Care Officer  Part Time- 16 hours  Female	14/05/2015	1 BA Social work (hons)	Experience working with children with disabilities Youth worker and Team leader
Residential Care Officer  Part Time- 5 hours  Female	07/08/2015	PGDIP Social Work MA Criminology and Criminal Justice BA (Hons) Social Care NVQ Level 3 Working with Children and Young People Prepare to Teach in the Lifelong Sector (PTLS)	Registered foster carer with 20 years experience of therapeutic parenting / caring of children with additional needs. Mentor for young people involved with the criminal justice system (Odyssey Project) Independent Monitoring Board member (criminal justice)
Residential Care Officer  Part Time- 25 hours  Female	13/05/2019	Wide ranging continuous professional development e.g.: bonding and attachment, safeguarding, drugs and alcohol abuse, confidentiality, challenging behaviour, children and young people with additional complex needs.	Registered foster carer with 9 years' experience. Volunteer work supporting a family living with autism.
Residential Care Officer  Regular Relief Staff  Female	15/12/2018	Level 2 Essential Knowledge of Key Stage Teaching NVQ Level 3 Children and Young People Tec National Diploma in Care	Experience of working with children with challenging behaviour, learning difficulties and autism including residential SEN and LAC.

**20. Details of the management and staffing structure of the children's home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff employed at the children's home, including staff that provide education or health care.**

Auton Villa staffing structure is as follows;

**1 Manager**

**1 Deputy Manager**

**2 Senior Residential Care Officers**

**5 Residential Care Officers**

The staffing levels at Auton Villa will be determined by the number of young people who are placed in the home at that time, however we will ensure that there is always a good child-staff ratio to enable staff to undertake individual work without compromising the needs of the group or administrative tasks.

The amount of staff on duty should be no less than one member of staff to two young people at any one time. Two members of staff will be responsible for 'sleeping-in' each evening. Should there be a requirement for a 'waking night' staff, one staff will remain awake and a second staff member will 'sleep in'.

The home will usually be staffed when the young people are at school however there will be times when the home is empty as all members of staff are either out with the young people or implementing another area of their role. During such times staff will be required to work within the guidelines of relevant risk assessments.

If a situation arises where a young person is presenting significant risk to others or themselves it is possible that staffing levels will be increased. This will be at the discretion of the Director of Care. This may require additional funding from the placing authority.

Auton Villa is strongly committed to the personal and continuous professional development of all staff. We are currently working with outside agencies to ensure that staff meet the Quality Standards for Children's Homes guideline for NVQ qualifications.

We provide a comprehensive in-house training programme and access external specialist courses.

Auton Villa ensures that staff at all levels receives effective supervision, in accordance with anti-discriminatory practice. All full time staff will be allocated supervision each month, part time staff may have less supervision but it will remain 'regular'. New staff members will have supervisory time allocated on a twice monthly basis; the induction programme will be the primary focus of this supervision. Staff members who work on a relief basis will have formal supervision every eight shifts.

The purpose of supervision is:

- To ensure management accountability, including allocation of work, management of time, monitoring records, completion of administrative tasks, setting of priorities while promoting consistency between the individual's work and the goals of the agency
- Case management discussion including review of the homes safeguarding policies and procedures.
- To offer professional consultation, with opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice
- To facilitate the supervisee's learning and professional development by providing feedback on his or her practices, including recognition of good work. The supervisor

has a particular responsibility for building on good practice and attention to departures from it, and for ensuring that professional relationships and sound judgement in the work are maintained.

- Personal circumstances which affect the worker's professional activities should be acknowledged and discussed as appropriate.
- To acknowledge the stress inherent in working in a social care agency and to provide opportunities for dealing with this where appropriate, recognising that there are times where it is more appropriate for staff to access the St Cuthberts Care Counselling Service.

Additionally, regular practice observations are carried out throughout the year to support development along with regular informal practice discussions.

The manager receives monthly supervision from the Director of Care Services.

**21. If the staff working at the children's home are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the children's home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes."**

Auton Villa has a diverse staff team and has both male and female staff members.

### **Care Planning**

**22. Any criteria used for the admission of children to the children's home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission.**

#### **Criteria for Admission**

Auton Villa will accept referrals where:

- The child is in need of an alternative placement, either where they are new to children's services or because their previous accommodation arrangements have broken down. Children who have previously been placed at Auton Villa will also be taken into consideration.
- It is felt the child would benefit from a period of stability and individually tailored support before being supported to independent living
- There is an indication that the child would benefit from being accommodated to enable an assessment to be carried out to secure a future care plan to most effectively meet his/her needs
- An assessment has been completed and it has been highlighted that the individual may benefit from a therapeutic environment with an open-ended period of stability to work on individual targets and outcomes to secure a positive future
- The child/young person has an identified educational placement or is in a training programme if they are within the age range required by statutory legal requirements. Should a child be moving from a distance, a clear plan of education/training is required.

Admissions to Auton Villa will happen in a planned way to ensure that the full referral procedure can be followed. We will consider emergency admissions if the existing young people's needs are not compromised. However, a full risk assessment would be in place prior to admission. Without exception the process can be tailored to suit the individual needs of the young person. If there is not a current vacancy, the child's name will be placed on the waiting list.

## Referral and Acceptance Procedure

1. All referring agencies will be expected to complete a referral form and pre-admission risk assessment before the young person will be considered for the service. The home manager will contact the referrer within two days of receipt of the information to give feedback on the referral status.
2. A discussion will take place between the manager and the director of care to assess the suitability of the placement.
3. The home manager will inform the referrer within five working days of the panel decision.
4. If there is a vacancy in the service, a key worker will be allocated who will be involved in all stages of the admission process. Otherwise the child's name will be placed on a waiting list.
5. Where possible, the home manager and key worker will arrange a contact visit to spend time with the child to explore their understanding and expectations of the placement and gain a stronger understanding of their wishes and feelings. The young person will be encouraged to share their views and wishes to gain a sense of control during the admission period.
6. The child will then commence an induction process to the home, which will incorporate visits working towards an overnight stay if it is felt to be in their best interests
7. Time will be allocated to the child during each visit to answer any questions, queries or anxieties.
8. The home will also allocate time to liaise with professionals involved in the referral and with the child's family if it is appropriate.
9. Where possible, the child's social worker will be expected to attend a pre-admission meeting before the child is admitted to the home. This will give the opportunity to share information and to obtain all relevant documentation for the child.
10. A mutually convenient date for admission must be agreed.

If a quicker admission is felt to be in the best interest of the young person this will be facilitated. However, prior to admission a comprehensive risk assessment will be in place and the young people already living at Auton Villa will be informed.

## Children with Special Needs

All referrals will be considered in line with the criteria for admission. Although we work with young people whose learning has been affected as a direct result of their experiences, the focus of our work is for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties therefore it is unlikely that we would be able to fully meet the needs of young people with severe learning disabilities or impairments.

## 23 Additional Matters

### Therapeutic techniques

The care plan that is put in place for each young person will identify the most appropriate adult to carry out individual work with the young person. This will either be the key worker or another adult who has a significant relationship with the young person.

All individual work that is implemented at Auton Villa will be based on social work intervention. If the assessment stipulates that a more specific level of intervention is required such as child psychotherapy this would be highlighted to the parenting body and a referral would be made to local health services.

Auton Villa will work closely in partnership with the child's placing social worker and care team in identifying the appropriate method of individual work required and when would be the most optimum time to introduce this work, in collaboration with the child or young person. Auton Villa, as part of the care team, will contribute to the identification of the appropriate individual to carry out any agreed individual work. In the event that the individual identified or requested to carry out the work is a member of the Auton Villa staff team then we will be led by the care team and placing social worker with regards to this work. Where appropriate, training will be sought to enable staff to fully carry out this role/work to the best of their abilities. If another care team member is identified then Auton Villa will offer support where possible and appropriate.

Examples of individual work may include:

**Life Story Work. (This will be at the discretion of the placing social worker)**

*"Life Story Work is a structured approach to eliciting and recording the details of an individual's life with a view to identifying appropriate helping strategies" Bornat J in Davies M (pp196, 2000)*

Life story work may be implemented with young people to enable them to gain a stronger understanding of their life and identity, primarily focusing on transitions and key events that are significant. A "Life Story" book will be produced as a written reminder of the important discussions that have taken place between the adult and the child about the people and events in their life.

**Solution Focused Therapy**

*"Solution focused approaches have a very wide application their main advantage being the emphasis on listening to the service user's story and focusing on exceptions which is both anti-oppressive and empowering." Milner and O'Byrne (pp150, 2002)*

Solution focused work concentrates on understanding solutions rather than problems. It builds on a young person's existing strengths and works towards future change. Research (see Parton and O'Byrne 2000 and Milner and O'Byrne 2002), shows that this approach has been of benefit to people regardless of ethnicity, age or gender.

**Task Centred Practice**

*"Task centred social work is a practice method which provides a clear framework to guide professional intervention. It is a here-and-now, problem solving method which builds on people's strengths." Doel M in Davies M (pp345, 2000)*

Task centred practice is carried out as a focused piece of work with five specific stages, including entry and exit. It is a time limited piece of work offering approaches to problem solving, taking the young people's needs into consideration to bring about change in their situation. Task centred practice is primarily about learning. It was first described as a method of helping people with the "problem of living" (Reid and Epstein 1972). It is a systematic model of social work with a coherent and explicit value base. It is anti-oppressive in that it addresses issues of power and oppression both in the encounter between the practitioner and the service user.

**Attachment Theories**

*"Attachment theory is a theory of behaviour and personality development in close relationships. It offers an explanation of the origin of people's emotional and relationship style.....It has now been developed and expanded to consider relationships and emotional behaviour across the lifespan. It is therefore relevant to work with all client groups." D Howe in Davies M (pp25, 2000)*

If a move towards independent living is the agreed care plan, this area of work will focus on relationship skills and roles in society. The staff team will implement each individual's pathway plan to enable appropriate interventions to be carried out.

It is also acknowledged that our skills, knowledge and professional judgement are critical in helping young people learn constructive and adaptive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection, hurt and depression.

### **Quality Assurance-Service delivery**

- There is an expectation that the local authority will implement frequent care team meetings to monitor and review the young person's care plan
- The staff team will be actively involved in the Looked After Children's review conferences
- NYAS an independent agency will monitor and assess the care process through Regulation 44 visits on a monthly basis.
- The key worker will provide monthly summary reports to each social worker and parents if appropriate. It will provide both a summary of the month and a review of the implementation of the young person's care plan
- Auton will provide detailed, qualitative reports for each young person's LAC review and will encourage each child to attend their LAC review, to take ownership of their care plan. However, should the young people choose not to attend, staff will provide detailed explanations to hi-light achievements and outcomes.
- Comments from parents and social workers are requested on a monthly basis (via the monthly summaries) throughout the placement to allow parents and placing authorities to share their comments, this will be coincided with the LA review
- At the end of each placement the young person and those with parental responsibility will be sent an evaluation form to share their comments, views and recommendations for the service
- An end of placement report will be made and sent to the placing authority and those with parental responsibility.

### **Review Policy**

The concept of review is a continuous process of planning and reconsideration of the care plan of the child. (*The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 4. Residential Care*) (*Chapter 3. Review of Children's Cases*)

Whilst children and young people are resident at Auton Villa, The Children Act 1989 review requirements will apply:

*"Regulation 2 places a specific statutory duty on the responsible authority to review the case of a child who is looked after or accommodated in accordance with these regulations.*

*Regulation 3 sets out the maximum-intervals that may separate review.*

*The first review should take place no later than four weeks after the date on which the child begins to be looked after or is provided with accommodation. The second review should take place not more than three months after the date of the date of the first review.*

*Thereafter, subsequent reviews should take place at intervals of not more than six months after the date of the previous review".*

*(The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulation. Volume 4 Residential Care Chapter 3.3.5)*

## **Requirement to Review and Frequency**

It is the responsibility of the home manager at Auton Villa to support this process and ensure that relevant preparation takes place in order to satisfy the requirements of The Children Act and Regulations 4.8,9 and 10 as described below.

- The full participation of both children and parents (where appropriate) in the decision making process
- A structured co-ordinated approach to the planning of child care work in individual cases and
- A monitoring system for checking the operation of the review process

We will ensure that the child participates as far as feasible in their reviews assisting them to contribute their views and wishes to the process.

## **Key Worker**

A key worker is a named person who has a central role with a particular service user and who works within Auton Villa.

### **The Aims of the Role:**

- To promote efficient case management
- To create a named link for the service user and all significant others involved in their care.

### **Responsibilities:**

The key worker aims to promote the general wellbeing of the service user by overseeing all aspects of their care including social, emotional, health and education.

### **They will be responsible for:**

- Gathering relevant information during the service user's stay which will inform review reports and assessment reports.
- Maintaining service user's file
- The preparation of reviews in conjunction with the service user, including writing up reports and presenting them at reviews and planning meetings
- The sharing of information to staff members, social workers and all significant people with the service user
- Develop a positive working relationship with the service user with a view to supporting and addressing with them unresolved issues from past events, taking into account any therapeutic needs that may be identified
- These specific responsibilities will be undertaken alongside the need to promote the welfare of all service users within the group

### **Evaluation process:**

- The key worker will receive regular supervision from senior staff in order to evaluate their progress and identify further need
- Sessions will be recorded and reviewed

## **Training and Supervision**

St Cuthbert's Care is strongly committed to the personal and continuous professional development of all staff. We are currently working with outside agencies to ensure that all care staff have, or are working towards, the level 3 Children & Young Peoples Workforce Diploma, in line with the Quality Standards for Children's Homes guidelines.

We provide a comprehensive in-house training programme and access external specialist courses.

St Cuthberts Care ensures that staff at all levels receive effective supervision in accordance with anti-discriminatory practice.

All full time staff will be allocated formal supervision each month, part time staff may have supervision less frequently but this will remain 'regular'. New staff members will have supervisory time allocated on a twice weekly basis; the induction programme will be the primary focus of this supervision. Staff members who work on a relief basis will have formal supervision every eight shifts.

The purpose of supervision is:

- To ensure management accountability, including allocation of work, management of time, monitoring records, completion of administrative tasks, setting of priorities while promoting consistency between the individual's work and the goals of the agency
- To offer professional consultation, with opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice
- To facilitate the supervisee's learning and professional development by providing feedback on his or her practices, including recognition of good work. The supervisor has a particular responsibility for building on good practice and attention to departures from it, and for ensuring that professional relationships and sound judgement in the work are maintained
- Personal circumstances which affect the worker's professional activities should be acknowledged and discussed as appropriate
- To acknowledge the stress inherent in working in a voluntary social care agency and to provide opportunities for dealing with this where appropriate, recognising that there are times where it is more appropriate for staff to access the St Cuthberts Care Counselling Service

## **Induction and Training**

All employees are expected to familiarise themselves with the St Cuthberts Care Health and Safety Policy as they commence employment- this is supported via the induction process. The agency ensures all staff receive core health and safety training during their induction period. The young people at Auton Villa also receive fire instructions and procedures are discussed in house meetings and keyworker sessions.

Instruction on the fire system and evacuation procedures are discussed with staff during their induction, all staff are then trained quarterly thereafter. Staff meetings will discuss fire training and scenarios will be explored.

## **Health and Safety**

St Cuthberts Care recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe environment for everyone involved with the service. St Cuthberts Care has achieved the CHAS award. The Director, the Agency Health and Safety Officer, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, Home Manager and the Home Health and Safety representative have responsibility in their respective roles for the provision and maintenance of:

### **A safe working environment**

- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances used by employees
- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work
- Period reviews and updating of health and safety procedures within their work areas of responsibility and monitoring their effectiveness by regular checks and recommendations where appropriate

The agency reminds all employees of their duties under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act to take care of their own safety and that of other workers and that of the people they work for and to co-operate with the Agency, enabling it to carry out its responsibilities successfully.

### **First Aid**

All staff at Auton Villa receive first aid training to enable them to take charge in an emergency situation.

The registered manager of Auton Villa has completed a 3 day first aid at work course in 2013 and subsequent refresher in 2015

All first aid treatment will be recorded in the accident book.

The first aid box will be fully stocked in accordance with agency guidelines and is accessible at all times.

### **COSHH**

The agency complies to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1998, (COSHH), which requires employers to prevent or control exposure to hazardous substances at work.

An assessment of health risks faced by employers and risk to service users' health from exposure to substances used in Auton Villa will be carried out every six months. All substances used in the home will be assessed in terms of potential hazard and control mechanisms introduced as necessary. All new substances being introduced will be similarly assessed. Manufacturers guidelines will be obtained and followed.

### **Accident Prevention**

Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out in relation to any hazard which may be a risk to Health and Safety on Auton Villa premises. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and shared with the Health and Safety Officer.

### **Violence at Work**

St Cuthberts Care endeavour to provide a safe working environment to all staff. All staff are trained in the 'Management of Actual Physical Aggression' Intervention during their induction period then supported with refresher courses on a frequent basis.

Risk Management plans identify and outline strategies to manage the known behaviours the young people may display and are compiled from the young person's history and continual observation whilst in the home.

Should a violent incident occur, the agency will ensure that the staff member receives appropriate support. This can be in the following forms:

- On the spot supervisory or peer de-briefing
- Supervision to support reflective practice
- Access to the agency counselling service

Incident reports are required for all violent incidents; these are communicated to the Director of Children and Young People's Services, placing social worker and parents (where appropriate).

All details will be recorded in the accident book, as required by Health and Safety regulations.

### **Fire System**

In order to comply with Health and Safety Legislation and the requirements of the Quality Standards for Children's Homes, Auton Villa has a fire alarm system and emergency lighting system.

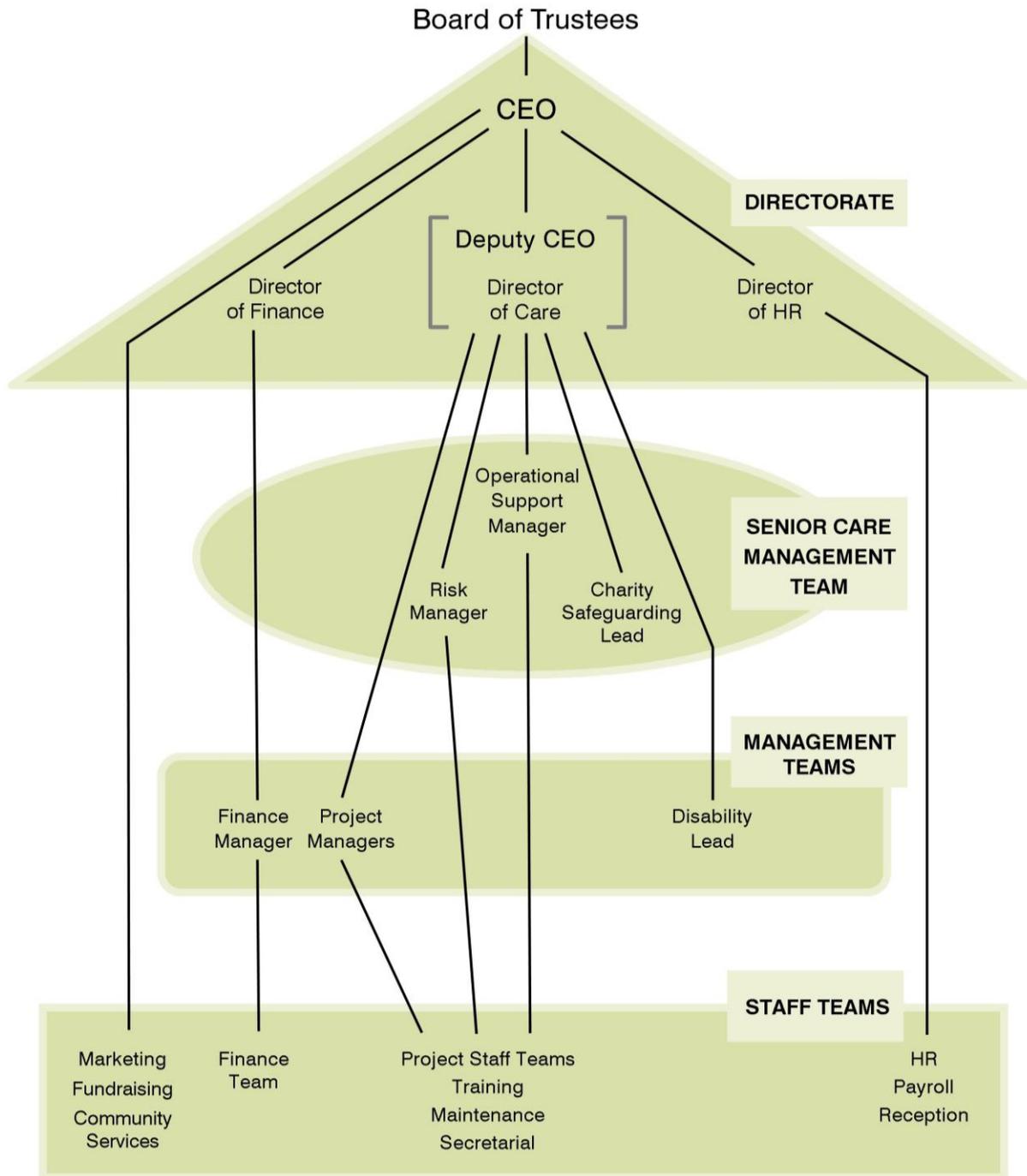
Appropriate fire extinguishers and fire blankets are situated around the home; the type, quantity and location conform to the requirements made by the Local Authority Fire Services. Standard safety checks and tests are carried out by Auton Villa staff and an external organisation that specialise in this area.

### **Risk Taking**

Although some of the young people we work with present high risks within some situations (going missing, disruption), we strive to support them to participate in as many activities as possible through taking calculated risks.

Staff accompanying young people on activities are required to ensure that the health and safety arrangements are adequate and to always follow the young person's individual risk management plan alongside any activity risk management strategies.

**Should you require further consultation in relation to the information included in this document please get in touch via the contact details enclosed.**



09.12.2015 KC