Statement of Purpose

Home Manager	Chloe Holt
Email	Chloe.Holt@steppingstonescare.com
Tel	07386679650
Responsible Individual	Lucy Mitchell
Email:	Lucy.Mitchell@steppingstonescare.com
Tel:	07780397216

Onyx House

Stepping Stones Care

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1. Quality & Purpose of Care

1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

PROVIDING A SAFE, NURTURING AND ASPIRATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEAD HAPPY, INDEPENDENT LIVES.

1.2 OUR VISION

Help our young people find their path in life

"We aim to give our Young People the tools to thrive and excel in their future endeavours by giving them the confidence to put aside their past hurdles for brighter futures. The key aim is to provide a stepping stone for them to achieve their future goals through signposting, support and meeting key social and educational needs."

Commit to deliver Outstanding provisions

"We aim to deliver Ofsted Outstanding provisions throughout our company. Striving for excellence through innovation, constant development and a passion for bettering ourselves. We are always looking for new ways to exceed the standards laid out in the Children's Home Regulations while providing the safest environment for our Young People to learn and grow."

Develop our Staff into Residential Leaders of Tomorrow

"We aim to develop the next generation of residential leaders through the fostering of an ever-learning environment where personalised training plans, mentorship programmes and learning led Supervisions are at the forefront of our practice. We will use all the tools at our disposal to develop all of our staff into thoughtful, reflective and child-focused practitioners, carer's and leaders."

Create warm, modern & welcoming homes

"We aim to provide our young people with warm, modern and welcoming homes. We will do this through the purchasing and refurbishment of suitable properties, using high quality furnishings and fittings and most importantly, having our managers, staff and young people have their say in the decoration of the home. With a personal touch in decorations and furnishings comes a pride of place. We want all our managers and staff to build their home to a standard that they would be happy to live and work in every day, and we want our young people to be proud to call our properties, home."

Raise the standard of Children's Homes

"We aim to raise the standard of Children's Homes through a three- pronged approach that encompasses pro- active and reflective learning, innovation and the constant pursuit for the best possible outcomes. By utilising all of the tools at our disposal, we can help raise the standards within our own homes and become a model for Children's Homes of the future."

Deliver continued care post placement

"We aim to offer meaningful and ongoing outreach to any young person who wishes to maintain relationships with identified individuals from their time in our care. We recognise the importance of continuity and connection, and we aim to ensure that no young person is forgotten once they leave

our direct care. We want to remain part of their story, celebrating successes, offering guidance where needed, and being a trusted presence, however small or symbolic, during their early steps into adulthood”

1.3 ETHOS

Our ethos and vision for the home is to be an outstanding provision which is child focused and friendly in everything that we do, whilst providing the highest quality of care in achieving outstanding outcomes - for children, staff, families and the community.

At the core of our Children’s Residential Services, we promote access to education opportunities, hobbies & interests, enjoyment, positive relationships and for the children in our care to achieve and recognise their strengths.

Our home aims to provide a standard of care, which is extremely aspirational. All our practices are child-focused in order to keep Children and Young People safe and to help them enjoy and achieve in a positive way supporting each child to develop to their full potential.

We want to make a positive difference in every child’s life. We will help each child learn to understand and manage the impact of any experience of trauma and abuse. We will support children to develop resilience and skills to prepare the child to return home, to live in a new environment or to live independently as an adult.

We aim to support Children and Young People to take control of their lives and make positive choices for their future. We know that Children and Young People who have experienced trauma and abuse are in need of therapeutic parenting through attachment building and nurturing responses from the people that care for them. We aim to provide this within our homes through a family like atmosphere and Adults that are attuned to the needs of the children and young people,

We also want to create an environment where children take positive risks and are able to experience a range of activities and feel a sense of community involvement.

1.4 THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT

The STEPS Model of Care draws on contemporary theories and ideas within trauma, attachment and therapeutic parenting. The explicit intention of the model is to ensure better outcomes for Looked After Children by having theory led practice and practice led theory focussed in relationships.

Step 1 - Seek to understand

This step is the initial step and begins pre-placement but runs throughout the child's time in our homes. There is a matching form that takes into account the thoughts and feelings of the other children. This form needs to be completed before any referral is received by the home and is the beginning of any child's journey with us. The therapeutic principle here is that we are 'matching' to the needs of the children balanced with the skill set of the staff team, we will be a child's last residential placement and as such we are thinking pre-referral about the children we can best look after.

Gathering of information stage

Our Placements Manager will screen the referrals and look for children that they feel will be well suited to the Stepping Stones Model. The referral documentation will be scrutinised and Commissioners and Social Workers consulted with. If all of this satisfies the Placements manager then the referral will be sent to the Home Manager. The home manager will then = scrutinise the information supplied. This will also include talking to Social Worker and if possible the previous placement. They will then make a decision about whether the child would be appropriately placed with them/in their home.

Once the conditional offer is made and if agreed to by the local authority a pre-assessment meeting will be called involving the Manager, Responsible Individual and Placements Manager. This will take place as within 48 hours. If all 3 members of the Multidisciplinary team agree with the offer to place then the placement can proceed if accepted. If not then the Placements Manager will withdraw the offer.

Transition stage

As soon as the offer is accepted an Understanding the Child (UTC) meeting will be called and chaired by our Psychologist or one of the team. This meeting will be designed to help the team paint a picture of the child's Internal Working Model (Attachment theory, John Bowlby) and start to plan how best they will approach the child's care. The referral documentation will be shared with the team and if the assessments are back in time for the initial meeting then they will also be discussed and planned for.

The Manager will take the identified Key Worker to meet the child and visit them at their current home if possible. They will pay close attention to the child's wishes and feelings and this understanding will help to influence the welcome basket and also the communication that be given to the current children at the home.

The home's manager in conjunction with the clinical team will then design a bespoke transition plan that will involve visits to and from the over home and if appropriate have overnight stays.

Initial planning stage

Once the child is placed in the home an assessment period will begin for a period of between 10-12 weeks, paperwork will be designed to capture outcomes and assessments will be completed by the Key worker, Manager and a member of the clinical team collectively.

Consultation will be facilitated by the Clinical Lead and/or members of the clinical team fortnightly with an emphasis on understanding the child and collecting information that will help the team plan for the next step (Thoughtful care)
At Week 10-12 an Understanding the child meeting will be called and chaired by our psychologist, where the assessment will be discussed, explored and understood and the Initial Therapeutic Support Plan will be created.

Continued planning and care

Understanding the child's experiences, needs and understanding of themselves and the world is a vital piece of the model and a step that will need to be revisited as the child develops and grows. Training for teams in the homes will focus heavily on Attachment and Trauma and Practitioners will be taught to look for 'Hidden needs. The child's presentation is a communication that needs to be understood and managed in a curious 'open and engaged way' (therapeutic parenting, as described by Kim Golding). The ethos of the Stepping Stones Model is that in order to be a truly therapeutic organisation, we will seek to understand not only the needs of the children but that of all employees. We will be an organisation that values a genuine sense of understanding in everything that we do.

Step 2 - Thoughtful care

This is step 2 of the Stepping Stones model of care and is where everything we have learnt in Step 1 comes together.

The clinical team will analyse the assessments that have taken place and create bespoke Therapeutic Support Plans, which will inform the homes daily plans and activities. It is through training and consultation (NICE guidelines) that the teams within the homes will then develop dynamic plans which cater to the individual needs of the child.

Outcome measures will be implemented periodically to capture the progress of the child and help the team refine the nature of support which is offered to them. This will be undertaken on a three-monthly basis.

The two hands of parenting will be implemented ensuring that we connect before correcting and follow an approach that is embedded with PACE and DDP principles (as described by Dan Hughes and Kim Goulding). The team will be trained in this and ongoing personal development will be delivered through consultancy and bespoke PDPs for the staff ensuring they are as up to date with theory as they can be.
The children will be offered opportunities to take safe risks that is tailored to their needs.

Step 3 - Enabling meaningful Relationships

The third step in our model is the actual implementation of steps 1 and 2. This step is where everything we have understood and planned for comes together.

The practitioners will implement a Therapeutic Support Plan that is tailored to the individual needs of the child. They will be curious as to what the 'hidden needs' of the child (attachment theory) is and look to offer a safe and nurturing environment punctuated by the principle of therapeutic parenting. Key workers will play a central role in developing the child's narrative and sharing this with other professionals and significant people in their lives. Key activities such as planned direct work and life story work (as described by Richard Rose) will enable the young person to explore their connection to the people and experiences that are significant in their lives and develop a consistent autobiographical narrative (as described by Dan Hughes).

Visits with family and significant others will be supported and planned for in conjunction with the clinical team and the home to ensure that the child has the best possible experience. Activities with friends and family will be promoted and encouraged outside the home to allow the child to explore their identity and place in the world (as described by Van Manen).

Steps 1 – 3 will form the basis of the care that children experience on a daily basis with the care teams continuously revisiting the questions – How do I understand this? What is the child communicating through their behaviour? How do I respond thoughtfully and with understanding to the expressed and the hidden needs? How has my response enabled and supported meaningful relationships for the child?

Step 4 - Progressing beyond trauma

The child will have a consistent autobiographical narrative (as described by Dan Hughes) and will begin to process their own history and trauma.

Stepping Stones Care's primary task will be to ensure that we are the last residential home for any child. Through therapeutic parenting, life story work and direct therapy the child will be able to tell their story, understand their story and have a positive outlook for their future.
This is also the stage in the model where we are actively planning for the future outside of Stepping Stones Care in regard to the transition out. This will involve strengthening networks outside of the home and working as an MDT in the best interest of the child.

The child will be coming towards the end of their Life Story journey, and be in the process of developing supportive relationships outside of those built at Stepping Stones Care.

The child will have been at Stepping Stones for approximately 2 years at this point with the overall aim of the Stepping Stones model to help transition a child out of Residential Care within 2-3 years of being placed with us.
In order to process and begin to recover from trauma the child has to feel safe enough to re-visit past trauma and this is not something that can be done in 6 months. We will need this understanding and commitment from the Local Authority of this fact and be very clear the model is a long-term plan.

Step 5 - Successful Transitions

The final step of the model and arguably the most important. In order for a successful transition, we need to ensure there is a positive ending and this means ensuring there is a plan that has been worked on throughout the steps.

Seeking to understand in the first step means the final step will have been planned for throughout a child's journey with us. We will have and hold onto a vision for the child.
Pathway planning will begin after the first 12 months with a tool for identifying if a child is ready to be fostered or if Semi independence is the right transition for that child. This will be called a step to the future plan.

We will look to offer care beyond care, encourage ongoing support from a familiar and committed care team in a boundaries and professional way. At Stepping Stones, we promote enduring relationships and our sense of this is that our support transcends just the confines of children's time in our homes. The ultimate aim of the final step is to ensure we are the last residential home for any child.

Steps 4 & 5 will flow from effective implementation of Steps 1 – 3 (as a PS, if you will) and will be explicitly thought about throughout the child's placement via the Understand The Child meetings.

When	What	How	Who
Pre Placement / Referral Stage.	**S**eek To Understand	Gather all available info.	Home Manager Placements Manager, RI
		Match to home and young people in the home.	
Placement agreed.	**T**houghtful Care / **E**nable Meaningful Relationships	UTC Meeting.	Home Manager, Clinical Team, Key worker, Care Team.
		Meet the child.	
		Develop transition plan.	
		Begin developing Placement Plan.	

Child moves in.	**STE**	Outcomes and assessment tool completed. Develop Placement Plan, Risk Assessments, Routines, etc.	Home Manager, Care Team.
Fortnightly throughout placement.	STE	Team Consultations. Visits from the home's clinicians	Home Manager, Clinical Team, Key Worker, Care Team.
Week 12.	STE	UTC Meeting (ongoing assessments completed for every UTC). Initial therapeutic Support Plan created to inform Placement Plan.	Home Manager, Clinical Team, Key worker, Care Team.
Week 24 and 3 monthly thereafter	STE	UTC Meeting with consideration to steps P and S. Assessments/outcomes completed for every UTC. Therapeutic Support Plan reviewed and updated, informing Placement Plans.	Home Manager, Clinical Team, Care Team. Social Worker/IRO to be invited
Week 52 +	**STEPS** **P**rogress Through Trauma / **S**uccessful Transitions	Continued 3 monthly UTC Meetings focussing on developments and transitions.	Home Manager, Clinical Team, Care Team.

At Onyx House, our initial and repeating aim is to seek to understand our children and their needs, before providing thoughtful care, which will enable meaningful relationships from which our children have the opportunity to heal, grow and develop before moving on to progress beyond trauma and enjoy successful transitions. The model aims to help our children develop the ability to tell their story, understand their story and have a positive outlook for their future. This will be achieved through direct therapy, and therapeutic parenting with the aim that their home at Onyx House will be their last experience of residential childcare.

The implementation of the model will commence prior to any child arriving at the home. An Understanding the Child Meeting will be informed by all available information gathered through the referral process, led by one of the clinical team, this meeting will inform a therapeutic care plan for the child that will, in turn, inform the development of all plans and assessments to support the child at the home. Understanding the Child Meetings will take place every 12 weeks, throughout a child's journey with us; following each meeting plans will be reviewed and updated to reflect the child's progress and ongoing needs.

The care team at Onyx House will undertake a two-day training programme during induction to support their understanding and implementation of the model of care. A member of the clinical team will support and develop this understanding through monthly consultations for the care team, where the needs of the children and the difficulties faced by the staff in implementing plans and/or deepening relationships will be explored and addressed. Therapeutic parenting skills will also be practiced and developed through these consultations.

Further training will be provided to the care team, where required to understand and meet the needs of the individual children in their care.

1.5 RANGE OF NEEDS OF ACCOMMODATION

Onyx House is a residential home providing accommodation for Children and Young People with emotional and behavioural difficulties, often related to complex trauma and attachment difficulties, aged from 8-18. We can also provide care for children and young people who present with mild learning difficulties but whom are cognitively able.

The Home can provide accommodation for up to four Children and Young People of any gender. Consideration as to how the home will manage mixed gender placements will take place at the pre-admission stage and will be laid out in the home's risk assessments and in individual children's risk assessments.

Children and Young People placed with us will be able to continue to develop into adult life. We aim to transition a child either into Foster Care, Semi-Independence or return to family.

We are committed to creating environments where children and young people can have their care, emotional, educational and health needs met by an experienced and informed staff team.

Our aim is to help children reach their full potential and we will have aspirational outcomes for them at the heart of what we do.



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1.6 LOCATION

Onyx House
24 Portway Road
Rowley Regis
B65 9DB

Onyx House is a well-appointed 5-bedroom property. There is a large driveway allowing for ample parking, also comprising of a very large, lawned rear garden with outbuilding.

Onyx House is furnished to a very high standard and homely and welcoming throughout. We provide 4 ample sized bedrooms for long term residential placements whose needs will be met through a fully trained a committed staff team.

The kitchen is a generous size L- Shape with modern fittings. There is an office at the front of the property with a staff sleep-in room and 2 good-sized lounges and a dining room off the kitchen. There is a w/c downstairs with shower and two family bathrooms on the 2nd floor. There is also a chill out area on the top floor as well as the second staff sleep-in room.

Onyx House is on Portway Road in Rowley Regis. It is in the West Midlands region of England. The postcode is within the ward/ electoral division Rowley Regis which is in the constituency of Sandwell West.

The home is situated in a pleasant residential area close to direct bus routes into town and within a short walk of local amenities including shops, pharmacies, hairdressers, restaurants, various cafes.



There is a wide range of quality activities available in close proximity to the home. In the local area and in with a short journey of the home, there is a number of attractions such as parks, safari park, museums, cinema, leisure centre, bowling, swimming pools, gyms and restaurants.

- Parks
- Safari Park
- Museums
- Cinema
- Leisure Centre
- Bowling
- Swimming Pools
- Gym

- Restaurants

1.7 CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS NEEDS

Onyx House recognises that religion maybe a key element of a Child/ Young Person's cultural identity.

All adults will ensure that each Child/ Young Person is encouraged and fully assisted to attend to their chosen religious practices, receive instruction and to observe requirements (including dress, diet or other) of the religious persuasion to which they belong.

Our adults are representative of the local community and includes members from a variety of faiths and cultural groups.

As far, as is possible, Children and Young People will be matched with adults who are able to positively promote their cultural and religious needs.

Children and Young People will be supported in their religious observance needs by the purchasing of specialist equipment (i.e. prayer mats), or with liaison with places of worship to facilitate religious observance.

This aims at ensuring:

- The Child/ Young Person has the opportunity to practice their religion in a safe receptive environment.
- Adults will aim to have a considerable amount of knowledge of the cultural, linguistic and cultural background of the Children and Young People in their care. If there are any gaps identified then specific training will be sourced.
- Children and Young People will also be encouraged to contribute to the homes menu and will be supported to purchase, cook and consume foods from their cultural background.
- Throughout the course of the year, religious festivals will be acknowledged and promoted so that all cultural and religious needs are met.
- Where religious needs are identified during the assessment/admission process, or at subsequent reviews, Onyx House aims to gather as much information about the young person's religious practise in order to facilitate the continued support of their religious commitments, including the child's wishes and feelings. The adults will actively seek to promote that Child/ Young Persons religion by using resources within the vicinity of the placement and the community as a whole.
- All staff will ensure that each Child and Young person is encouraged and fully assisted to attend services, receive instruction and observe requirements (including dress, diet or other) of the religious persuasion to which he/she belongs. If a young person makes the decision not to practice their religion, this choice will be adhered to.

1.8 COMPLAINTS

Onyx House has a policy, which fully acknowledges the principles of the Children's Act, the Representations Procedure (Children) Regulations 1991, and the requirements of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

This is made known to children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. If any parent, child or any other party wishes to access the Home's complaints policy and procedures, they can contact the **Registered Homes Manager, Chloe Holt** at:
Email: Chloe.Holt@steppingstonescare.com
Tel: **07386 679650**

Or the Homes **Responsible Individual**, **Lucy Mitchell** at:
Email: Lucy.Mitchell@steppingstonescare.com
Tel: **07780 397216**

Who will both be able to provide copies. The Registered Manager will ensure that all complaints and representations are be recorded in writing along with any action taken and the outcome of the investigation. It is our aim for any complaint to be resolved as soon as possible.

All complaints will be addressed seriously and be acknowledged by the manager within 48 hours. The response will be given within 14 days maximum. If the complainant is not satisfied, they can take the complaint to the RI who will respond in a further 14 days up to a maximum of 28 days. All children are advised of the complaint's procedure when they move into the home.

Children and Young People are encouraged to become more assertive and value themselves more highly by participating in regular house meetings. We also encourage them to share their views and opinions in regard to the development of the service we provide by means of consultation, and our feedback form.

Onyx House has developed various ways in which children and young people can make formal and informal complaints, comments, or observations. These are made accessible in the Children's Guide, as well as full advice on how to make a complaint and where to find support in doing so.

We hope to be able to deal with minor concerns and complaints through informal processes of discussion and negotiation. If necessary or requested, staff should assist the child or young person in making a complaint. The complaint forms will be made available to the children and young people in the home. All complaints (including those concluded at stage one of the procedures) are to be recorded and saved within our in house computer system and/or safeguarding file. This record shall include; who made the complaint, date of the complaint, nature of the complaint, action taken and outcome of the complaint. Children and young people or others will be informed that there will be no reprisals against them for making a complaint and that they will be given assistance and support as considered appropriate and/or necessary.

The following complaint procedure will be followed:

Stage 1

In the first instance, children and young people, their families, significant others, professionals and any other third party should raise their concerns with a senior member of staff or the manager.

This provides an opportunity for the home to resolve the complaint as close as possible to the point of contact with the young person. If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved at this stage, there is clearly no need to move into stage two of the complaint procedure.

The Manager of the home –**Chloe Holt**- can be contacted at:
Home Address **24 Portway Road, Rowley Regis, B65 9DB**
Email: Chloe.Holt@steppingstonescare.com
Tel: **07386 679650**

Stage 2

Where the matter is not resolved, the complainant has the right to go to stage two. Representation should be made to the home's Responsible Individual who will review the complaint. An investigation and a written response will be completed within 28 days maximum.

Responsible Individual: Lucy Mitchell
Email: Lucy.Mitchell@steppingstonescare.com
Tel: 07780 397216

Stage 3

Should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the outcome, they can contact Ofsted directly.

We take all complaints seriously and we would like the opportunity to look into the matter and try to resolve it. However, the complainant is well within their rights to directly refer the matter to Ofsted at any stage of the process or directly go to Ofsted straight away.

OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231

In the event that the complaint is against the Registered Manager of the home or Registered Individual, the complainant has the right to make representation directly to OFSTED. The management of all complaints will be monitored through the monthly Regulation 44 visits.

This policy ensures that no person who is the subject of the complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the Registered Manager considers it appropriate.

All staff employed at Onyx House receive adequate training in the complaint's procedure covering the following areas:

- What constitutes a complaint/who can make a complaint
- What the procedure is for dealing with both informal and formal complaints in the home and how this is recorded
- Internal timeframes for investigating a complaint
- The procedure to be followed should a complaint not be resolved promptly by informal means, including who should be notified and the keeping of records
- How the child can be assisted in making a complaint

Onyx House ensures that no child or young person is subject to any reprisal for making a complaint or representation.

The Registered Manger will supply to HMCI, at HMCI's request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint.

1.9 USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

With a knowledge base rooted in Positive Behaviour Support and trauma informed, practice our internal PRICE trainer delivers the course to all adults working within the home. By delivering PRICE we are working within their human rights and person-centred framework that recognises the importance of promoting dignity, choice and inclusion for our children and young people whom we support. This coupled with a range of primary, secondary and tertiary strategies, our 3-day PRICE Training course equips our adults to make sense of behaviour/connect with and respond positively to reduce the use of restraint in all circumstances. Staff complete a 2-day refresher course annually.

Whether triggers such as family contact, a change of group dynamics within the home or the revisiting of past trauma, children can quickly find themselves in situations where they can no longer regulate their behaviour, placing themselves and others at risk.

Our range of Positive Approaches to Challenging Behaviour equip our adults with the knowledge, skills and confidence to practice safely, understand and respond appropriately to behaviours of concern, resulting in better outcomes and reducing the likelihood of a tertiary strategy being used.

During our 3-day course, we provide participants with a knowledge of:
• The values, which underpin inclusive, person-centred behaviour, support
• Understanding functions of behaviour
• An introduction to Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)
• Specific de-escalation and diffusion strategies
• Current law and guidance in relation to physical interventions
• The use of restrictive physical restraint in extreme last resort scenarios
• The importance of reducing restrictive practices
• Best practice in debriefing staff and people we support following incidents
• Requirements for recording and analysing data

Under normal circumstances PRICE interventions would only be used when all other options have been exhausted.
• Under exceptional circumstances it may be the first course of action, for example where a person was in immediate danger of harm (putting their fist through a window or about to run in front of a car) and there is no time to try other strategies.
• Physical intervention should be part of a wider strategy including 'proactive approaches', 'primary and secondary strategies' and 'restraint reduction strategies'. Other areas might Include 'communication approaches', 'de-escalation and diffusion' strategies, 'behavioural audits', 'risk assessments' etc.
• All of the above strategies will be recorded within each child's Positive Behaviour Support Plan.
• Primary Prevention Strategies form the greater part of our approach to challenging behaviour. Even at the most heightened states of arousal there are still non-restrictive strategies that may work. Physical restraint is always a last resort.

The PRICE value base emphasises that the force used should be the absolute minimum, for the minimum amount of time in relation to the circumstances. The training we provide prompts all our adults to think about the reality of the application of reasonable force and the possible consequences.

The only time a situation would warrant physical intervention is:

- A child or young person was placing himself or herself at an unacceptably high level of risk or danger of harm.
- Another person was at risk of being injured
- They were causing significant damage to the property.

Restrictive physical interventions are monitored by the Registered Manager, the monthly Regulation 44 visitor, and the responsible individual, as well through monthly internal quality assurance audits.
We understand the importance of analysing trends, as well as antecedents, triggers so that we can adapt our homes primary prevention strategies, and adapt their positive behaviour support plans accordingly. Some analysis could lead to us advocating for change for a child such as an increase in family contact.

In all circumstance's restraint will be always recorded and documented under a separate restraint form. The registered manager will be notified along with the social worker

We have robust behaviour management policies and procedures in place; this information is also embedded through our other relevant training sessions, group and 1:1 supervision.

All professional bodies working in partnership with Stepping Stones Care are able to access our child protection policies and behaviour management policies on request.

1.10 RECORDING AND REPORTING

All incidents including physical intervention, are recorded comprehensively, cross referenced and then sent to child's network, this is then placed on that child/ young person's profile within our sue solutions computer system.

All recordings are monitored by the manager, Regulation 44 inspector and internal quality assurance systems carried by the service development manager.

We have robust internal care planning documents in which our children and young people have the opportunity to have an input and their say on aspects of their own care. These are shared with important stakeholders as well as our weekly or monthly reports and any events led incidents.



2. Views, Wishes And Feelings

2.1 CONSULTATION WITH THE YOUNG PERSON

Children and Young People are encouraged to contribute to the day-to-day routine and planning of their daily schedule as much as possible. This will include activities, meetings, i.e. family contact, medical appointments or social work visits. In addition, Children and Young People are offered choice around their chosen activities and are asked to feedback on all aspects of their quality of care.

Key working sessions with Children and Young People provide the opportunity for daily living skills to be developed which enhances independence and brings about confidence.

Children and Young People will be encouraged to communicate their wishes and feelings in a group setting or on a one-to-one basis. Children and Young People will also be asked to give their evaluation on the quality of the home, its staff and the activities undertaken.

We will gather the views, wishes and feelings of the Children and Young People in a number of ways. Feedback forms, key work sessions, children's meetings and 1:1 time with the manager will all provide opportunity for young people to have their voice heard and their wishes, wherever possible, acted upon.

The consultation information received from the Children and Young People is used to evaluate the facilities and existing services offered and support the future development of the provision, their environment and the activities undertaken.

2.2 ANTI- DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY, WHICH RESPECTS CHILDREN AND THEIR RIGHTS.

Onyx House is committed to working within anti-discriminatory and anti- oppressive values and does not tolerate discrimination.

We consider all human beings to be equals regardless of their race, culture, religion, beliefs, physical or mental capabilities, political persuasion and sexual orientation. As such it is our intention to educate, challenge and inform on any negative view that may be held in these areas.

Equal opportunity means that everyone should have the same opportunity to access services. Our aim through education, discussion and example is to instil in Children and Young people a sense of equality and fairness and a degree of understanding, tolerance and acceptance of others.

We make a positive commitment to try to address the needs and preferences of Children and Young people. We aim to assist them in understanding that individual difference should be celebrated.

Rights

The basic human right of every child and young person is to be acknowledged, appreciated and respected, without discrimination of any kind. Our adults should not judge a young person's circumstances, backgrounds and lifestyles but will see these things as a factor of who they are.

Equality

The provision does not discriminate on the grounds of race, culture, language, religious beliefs, gender, sexuality, disability, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Our Staff are committed to providing Children and Young People with equality and opportunity.

Dignity and Respect

Recognising the individuality and unique qualities of Children and Young People, to accept them as they are and appreciate their value and worth, treating them with dignity and respect at all times.

Expression of Feelings

To recognise that Children and Young People need to express their needs and feelings and those expressions should not be condemned even if they appear negative, but to help them express themselves in a positive way which is not a threat to anyone but brings about self-gratification and fulfilment.

Non-judgmental attitude

It is recognised that assessments will be made about a child concerning their care which may include attitudes, beliefs and actions. But those assessments should not include blame, guilt or any judgment about the child themselves. If any assessment needs to be expressed it should focus on the behaviour of the child and the support needed.

Empowerment

A commitment to provide opportunities for Children and Young People to think and act independently; by helping them do things for themselves wherever possible whilst ensuring their safety at all times.

Confidentiality

Ensuring that all personal information is treated in confidence and to include young person's need for privacy.

Continued

We have a policy (and further appendix) and approach in relation to:

Anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families. Children's Rights. This works within the Equality Act 2010. This act protects people in the workplace and in the wider society from discrimination.

Discrimination can manifest in any of the following forms:

- Direct discrimination - Treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.
- Indirect discrimination - Putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but put some with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.
- Harassment - Unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates some one's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.
- Victimisation - Treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.

What are protected characteristics?

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sexual orientation

At Onyx House we have a policy on anti-discriminatory practice that everyone working in the home must adhere to. No child or group of children their families will be discriminated against. Staff will not judge or treat any children or their family unfairly or unequally.

3. Education

3.1 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROMOTION OF EDUCATION

Our home recognises the central importance of educational development in the lives of children aged 8-18, and aims to enable the children in our care to achieve good educational attainment to the best of their potential.

We are not a school, so we work closely with Virtual schools and local provisions to pursue the best possible outcomes for children. We can also arrange home tuition for Children and Young People currently not accessing education.

Where children placed with us are in either mainstream education or attend an alternative provision full time, our staff will work to help them achieve high attendance rates, to support them with their school work and to help with any conflicts that arise with the Child or young person in regards to their total experience of schooling.

Through our service we aim to;

- Improvement in how our children engage with education / regular attendance
- De-escalation of inappropriate behaviours/ increase in positive behaviours
- Increase in independence
- Improvement in learning/educational achievement
- Successful return to school were identified as an individual outcome

We acknowledge that each individual young person's educational needs will be different and, in some cases, complex. Although we do not have an education provision we do work with and support the Child and young person in their educational goals. We work closely with all young people's educational providers to ensure that we maintain and support the learning outcome highlighted in the young person's personal education plan (PEP).

Children and Young People will be supported and encouraged to attend school daily and to undertake homework tasks as required. Staff will assist with any homework for Children and Young People. We are able to further support Children and Young People to attend their educational provision by implementing practical support such as transportation to and from school, attendance and preparation for PEP and EHCP reviews.

The home will provide semi-independent training to Children and young people who we are identified as ready, or partially ready for the experience.

Where Children and Young People are not participating in education because they have been excluded or for some other reason, we will work closely with the placing authority so that the young person is supported and enabled to resume full time education as soon as possible.

In the interim our service will support off site educational facilities and engage the Child/Young person in structured activities to support their learning and regain confidence in their educational path.

Where a Child/ Young person is placed from a different placing authority, the virtual school head of the placing local authority will be contacted to ensure the continuation of the young person's educational achievement.

Each Child/ Young person will be encouraged to engage in independent life skills work.

Continued

Key working Sessions

The aim of key working is to provide a safe environment for the Children and young people to learn and enhance their skills and knowledge in preparation for them leaving care and living independently.

To ensure the Child/ Young person recognises and develops their social skills to enable them to integrate into communities and society as a whole.

To enhance/develop the young person's interpersonal skills so that they can make and sustain friendships and positive relationships.

To enable the Child/ Young person to acquire knowledge and skills in household maintenance and money management. To ensure the Child/ Young person develops the necessary competencies with regards to employment and further education.

Pathway Plans will state the level of support a Child/Young person will need to achieve their progression. The Pathway Plans will ensure that as far as is possible Children and young people have developed skills necessary for independent living, so that when they leave Stepping Stones Care they are more equipped to take their place in the community with a sense of preparation, pride and anticipation.

4. Enjoyment & Achievement

4.1 ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENABLING CHILDREN TO ENJOY AND ACHIEVE

Our Service encourages all its children and young people to pursue appropriate leisure activities and events in the local community and further afield. To this end, adults maintain contact with local youth services and facilities, sports centre/gyms, and other community resources including the cinema, theatre, dance clubs, etc.

As the Home is located in close proximately of the Nation's second largest city, there is obviously an enormous number of activities and amenities on the doorstep. Just in the immediate vicinity of the home itself, there is a wide range of quality leisure opportunities for young people to enjoy including but not limited to; Ice Skating and Roller-skating, Ten Pin Bowling Alleys, Go Karting and Driving, Paintballing, Skiing and Snowboarding, Horse Riding and Stables, Cycling, Crazy Golf and in indoor sea-life centre.

Adults will also give additional support to Children and young people, participating with them when appropriate, to help them take advantage of these opportunities.

Children and Young people also have the opportunity to become involved in activities which reflect their religious, racial and cultural identity such as visiting places of worship.

Within the home we aim to create a family atmosphere and Children and Young people are encouraged to eat together, and to participate in the home's events and activities. The home has a wide range of activities, including art, games, puzzles.

In addition to this the Children and young people are encouraged to contribute to their home by helping each other and staff to keep the home clean and tidy and looking nice. They are encouraged to share their views and wishes of the home contributing to decoration ideas both in their bedrooms and social spaces.

Young people receive a weekly allowance to be spent on their chosen interests and are encouraged to budget appropriately to achieve their wishes.

Each child's placement plan will include the permissions that the placing authority has delegated to the registered person. This delegated authority will clarify our ability to give permissions for the Child/Young person for school trips and the child's involvement in sporting and leisure activities, as to promote activities like their peers. All agreements will need to be confirmed in writing by the social worker.

The Registered Manager and key workers, (working in conjunction with the parents and social worker) will strive to identify suitable pursuits and make arrangements for support to be put in place for the Children and young people to access them.

We will provide opportunities for Children and Young people that will empower them to make choices enhance confidence and promote independent living skills.

We will encourage Children and Young people to develop their own interests and hobbies and make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community.

Dependent on supervision requirements, some young people will not be able to access the community without care staff being present.

We will acknowledge and celebrate every Child's and young person's achievements.

Continued

Our Home aims to ensure that:

- All Children and Young people are supported to take part in school trips, out of school and other clubs, volunteering and leisure activities.
- We assess activities to ensure they are safe, aspirational and also achievable and reasonable for each Child/ young person and ensure appropriate opportunities are available for each young person to have fun, form friendships and enjoy life relative to their stage of development and individual needs. In addition, staff will always support and encourage Children and Young people to try activities that are new for them.

The purpose of the review is to look at the young person's progress in all relevant areas of their placement i.e., contact with family, changes since last review and make decisions/agreements about future plans.

All activities are designed and developed to provide a programme that is beneficial, varied and pleasurable. These activities are kept under constant review and are changed to avoid repetition.

5. Health

5.1 ARRANGEMENTS TO PROTECT & PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE

We will ensure that each Child and Young person placed who is not currently registered with a service within the area, will be registered with the local GP Surgery, Dental and Opticians, and appointments will be made for them within three weeks from the start of the placement. There will of course be an element of choice therein with young people being in a position to maintain their original General practitioners (if practicable).

A Child / Young Person will have their BMI's and general health monitored by both us internally and also their LAC nurse. We keep very robust health plans on file for each child and they include clear goals and action plans.

Medication and other treatments will NOT be given without the consent of the parent or other person who has parental responsibility. It is our aim to promote good health and as such young people are encouraged where possible to take a responsible attitude towards medication.

Only properly packaged and clearly marked, in-date prescribed medication will be administered to the Child / Young Person. Any other presentation of medication will be refused and returned.

Children will have access to over-the-counter medications with suitable permissions in place from those holding parental responsibility for things such as hay fever tablets, cough mixtures, creams and others none prescriptions medication. Non prescribed medication will be stored in accordance to the young person's individual risk assessments. All other medications will be administered and stored in line with our company's medication policy.

Our young people are encouraged to take a holistic overview of their lifestyle and the impact risky behaviours may have on long-term health. In particular, they are supported to pay attention to their daily diet, regular exercise and where applicable consider how, alcohol and substance abuse, smoking and anti-social behaviours impact on emotional well-being.

Each young person's file will contain a 'health section' which will detail any medical conditions, emotional wellbeing and any illnesses suffered and other medical history. All medication will be kept in a lockable cabinet with the date, time and name of person to whom they are given. Only fully trained adults are permitted to undertake medication administration which uses a two-signature system for increased safeguarding. A fully comprehensive First Aid box is easily accessible to staff.

5.2 GOOD NUTRITION

All Children and Young people are encouraged to have healthy eating habits and are educated about the health benefits of eating a well-balanced diet.

Meal times are an opportunity for Children and Young people to make decisions on choice, and get involved in snack preparation - discussing breakfast, lunch and dinner menus, food preparation and food hygiene, health and safety in the kitchen, shopping for food items, health in terms of choices, identifying nutritional options etc.

There is also an opportunity for our children to try international cuisine whilst coupled with learning through to theme nights which our home holds.

6. Positive Relationships

6.1 CONTACT ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS, RELATIVES AND OTHER AGENCIES

We are committed to supporting contact with family and significant others and believe it to be of vital importance that the family remain central to the young person's life.

In cases where contact is restricted for whatever reason, we will ensure that the young person understands the reasons why, and is supported to cope with their feelings on the situation.

Young people are encouraged to make regular telephone contact to family and friends. Where welfare is a concern, contact may need to be supervised and this is agreed prior to admission to the home.

We will facilitate transporting young people to and from home visits and provide supervision where required. Family members are welcome to visit the home but this has to be planned and agreed in advance. However, we expect all visitors to behave in a responsible manner and reserve the right to ask visitors to leave the home should their behaviour be deemed detrimental to the young person.

We actively encourage positive contact and relatives are often invited to enjoy social family activities such as ten-pin bowling, to promote informal interaction and fun.

Where appropriate, families are kept informed of significant events and receive monthly or weekly reports (discussed with social worker).

Invitations to attend statutory reviews are made via the placing authority, at which time we will provide a further up to date report. Any amendments to the placement plan are agreed in consultation and a copy is then sent to the family.

NB - Due to the complex nature of the placements at Onyx House, Young people will be assessed to the safety of them having mobile phones.

Young people will be allowed the use of Tablets or Laptops (with potential social media access) if deemed safe and age appropriate and agreed with their Social Worker, which will be monitored and have appropriate settings to allow the Adults to keep them electronically safe.

7. The Protection of Children

7.1(a) SAFER RECRUITMENT

We take the recruitment of staff and the safeguarding procedures associated with recruiting very seriously. All our staff undergo a series of checks before they begin their employment with us. This includes an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check, full Reference checks, including written and verbal verification, full identification checks, all followed by a thorough sign-off procedure.

No staff member begins working for Stepping Stones Care until the Homes Manager is satisfied that they are suitable to work with children and are fully committed to the safeguarding of children in our care. For further information, the company Safer Recruitment policy will be made available on request.

7.1(b) CCTV

The home has CCTV surveillance fitted on the exterior of the property used to monitor security of building. CCTV consent is requested to be signed before any placement is made. For further information, the Home's Surveillance and Monitoring policy will be made available on request.

7.1(c) Bedroom Door Alarms

The home has individual bedroom door alarms fitted which can be activated to alert staff when a young person enters or exits their room. These can be activated/deactivated individually and independently depending on the needs/ risk assessments of each individual young person. In alignment with Regulation 24, these alarms will only ever be activated/in use if:

a) the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;
b) the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable
c) in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and
d) the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy.

7.1(d) WI-FI

The Deko Wi-Fi solution is a parental control system that allows for the monitoring, management and protection of Children online and includes features such as content filtering, view browsing history, set bedtimes/homework times, limit screen time, enforce safe search, safe YouTube and the capacity to suspend the internet anytime on individual devices for individual young people.

This system will only be used in agreement with the placing authority and/or whoever else has Parental Responsibility and will always be used as a safeguarding measure only and in the least impactful way possible.

7.2 SAFEGUARDING

The home's Responsible Individual **Lucy Mitchell** will be the designated safeguard lead and will be the point of contact for any safeguarding concerns. These details will be available to the team in the home.

A comprehensive Safeguarding Policy is in operation and is available on request by contacting **Chloe Holt** by **Chloe.Holt@steppingstonescare.com**

It is fully recognised that children and young people who are looked after are vulnerable and our responsibility as a caring organisation is to provide a safe and caring environment from which young people grow and develop. Therefore, our policy is that the young person should always be believed in cases where an allegation of abuse is made. Our first priority in cases like this is to protect the child or young person from the alleged perpetrator. It is of paramount importance that the child or young person making the allegation is reassured by the team at the home and supported at all times.

Child Protection investigations are conducted within the remit of working together within a multi-disciplinary approach. This therefore will include investigations that are either or a combination of internal, criminal and/ or external, in nature. A comprehensive Safeguarding Policy supports this process.

Our home has a written Anti-Bullying Policy and staff are trained within their first 12 weeks to ensure that incidents of bullying are responded to appropriately.

Children will be provided with all the relevant information on admission, through the Children's Guide. Ongoing training and development for staff will contribute to keeping children safe throughout their time with us.

E-safety /Internet usage will be monitored in house. (Please refer to policy and procedure for full details).

7.3 THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND TO COUNTER BULLYING

All adults must undergo an enhanced DBS check prior to appointment and be made aware of the homes Safeguarding policy as part of the Induction.

We will endeavour to foster a warm, home-from home caring atmosphere that embraces and respects the basic values of choice, privacy, dignity, diversity, independence, rights and personal fulfilment. Bullying is totally unacceptable in the home. It is widely accepted that bullying is a pervasive and intensely damaging experience. Staff will undergo training to identify the early signs of bullying and will be guided by the home's anti- bullying policy. Each case of bullying will be dealt with on its individual circumstances. Our anti-bullying policy will be followed in each incident of bullying.

In addition to the above, our service takes seriously the inherent dangers in the growth of internet usage for all young people, and the harm that they could inadvertently expose themselves to. To ensure their protection, we have an E-Safety Policy for staff which covers the use of electronic devises and also for the safe internet use for our Children and young people.

Safeguarding concerns and procedures to follow are discussed in supervision, team meetings and management meetings.

Any safeguarding issues are given the highest priority and advice is sought from 24 relevant professionals.

All staff will receive ongoing training in safeguarding as part of their induction programme and have regular refresher training.

The home's designated safeguarding officer (DSO) is Chloe Holt
Email: Chloe.Holt@steppingstonescare.com
Tel: **07386 679650**

The DSO should be contacted in the first instance for any safeguarding concern.

If concerns raised relate to the DSL or if concerns have not been satisfactorily responded to, the Responsible Individual will take the matter up and ensure that all appropriate steps are taken to safeguard young people and that all appropriate bodies are notified.

Responsible Individual – Lucy Mitchell
Email: Lucy.Mitchell@steppingstonescare.com
Mobile: **07780 397216**

If there are still concerns, these can be raised directly with the local LADO and Ofsted.

7.4 FIRE PRECAUTIONS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is our policy to ensure as far as reasonably practical that all Children and young people in our care, adults and visitors are protected from the outbreak of fire.

In the event of a fire all staff are fully conversant with our fire evacuation procedures. Fire drills will be held monthly during the day and evening/ night and recorded in the fire log. The manager and the shift leader will have prior knowledge of a fire drill.

All young people's risk assessments include Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) information. All young people will take part in a fire drill within 24 hours of being placed. All staff will receive training in relation to each young person's (PEEP).

All our equipment is regularly serviced under contract i.e. alarms, extinguishers. Our own Health and Safety is monitored weekly with robust checks completed on our sue solutions computer system.

8. Leadership & Management

8.1 WORKING PATTERNS

Staff shift patterns operate over a 24hr period at all times. Shifts will generally be long days and sleeps. The working rota allows for a 30-minute structured staff handover. Shift working pattern are provided to all members of staff electronically and a paper base copy placed on staff noticeboards.

A Senior or allocated Shift Leader will be available on every shift to support Children and Young people and staff. Management will also operate a nightly duty on-call rota in cases of emergencies

8.2 STAFFING ARRANGEMENT

Our home provides a team of 24hr support staff who are fully trained to work with Children and Young people with additional needs and are recognised as the important resource that they are. It is they who administer to a young person's needs on a 24-hour basis through the capacity, skill, commitment and care they demonstrate to transform a young person's life and experiences.

All Children and young people are supported by Residential Support Workers (RSW). The ratio of support will depend on the needs of the individual. Senior Support Workers and the Registered Manager provide on hand support to the (RSW) to ensure the highest level of care is provided at all times.

The Registered Manager (RM) provides support to and will supervise the smooth running of all day-to-day activities and involvement with the young people and their access to universal services.

The Registered Manager works closely with all external agencies to ensure we maintain close partnership working in the best interest of our Children and young people. The Registered Manager will also be responsible for and operate within the expectations of their regulatory role and responsibilities.

Our staffing team are the single most important resource to Children and Young people looked after by our Service on behalf of local authorities. Staff are fully supported to ensure that they do not underestimate the complexity and the challenges they will face of the caring task for these Children and young people

8.3 RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

Our home has a comprehensive recruitment policy with regards to the safe recruitment of staff. This is to ensure that all staff are treated in an equal manner and a clear process in place that will enable all prospective staff to follow and understand.

There is a rigorous recruitment process to ensure that all prospective staff have all the checks required to ensure the protection of children. All members of staff must have checkable work history and be able to provide three checkable references, including current employer. Reference verification checks are also undertaken. All applicants have enhanced DBS checks in place that are renewed in line with the regulations.

8.4 STAFF TRAINING & SUPPORT

Staff Training

To ensure the team have the necessary skills and competence, everyone needs ongoing development and training opportunities. These opportunities need to be appropriate to the aims, objectives and ethos of the home and to the individual needs of team members. Team members will be expected to develop a range of techniques for supporting and building relationships with children and young people as well as specific skills required by the home's purpose and vision.

Our mandatory training will be completed within the first 12 weeks of an employee's start date. Our more specialised courses will be completed when it is identified as appropriate to meet the needs of any child or young person.

Stepping Stones Care is committed to meet the Diploma Level 4 in children's and young people's workforce for all RSWs and Level 5 in leadership and management for Deputies and Managers.

Mandatory Face to Face courses
▪ Safeguarding ▪ Safer caring ▪ Child Criminal Exploitation ▪ Child Sexual Exploitation ▪ Medication ▪ Whistleblowing ▪ PRICE ▪ Emergency First Aid at Work ▪ STEPS Model of Care ▪ Safer Caring
Mandatory Online E-Learning
▪ Fire Safety ▪ Food Hygiene ▪ Health & Safety in the workplace ▪ Medication ▪ Equality & Diversity ▪ COSHH ▪ Lone Working ▪ Positive Behaviour Support ▪ Safeguarding Children & Young People ▪ E-Safety ▪ CSE

▪ Missing from Home ▪ Anti-Bullying Awareness ▪ Radicalisation & Extremism ▪ Legionella
Specialist Additional Courses (This list is not extensive)
▪ Substance Misuse ▪ De-Escalation Techniques ▪ Positive Behaviour Support ▪ Reporting & Recording ▪ Positive Risk Taking ▪ Key Worker Role ▪ Grief & Bereavement Training ▪ Preparation for Leaving Care ▪ Domestic Abuse - Children & Young People ▪ Mental Health First Aid ▪ Sexual Health Awareness ▪ Eating Disorder Awareness ▪ Medication Internal Procedures. ▪ Managing allegations & Whistleblowing ▪ Self-Harm

9. Care Planning

9.1 ADMISSION CRITERIA

An Impact and Admissions Assessment will be carried out on every individual before admission. This is in accordance with Children's Home Regulations and Quality Standards 2015.

The registered person will only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact the placement will have on the existing group of children.

The Impact and Admissions Assessment will capture whether:

- The Child/ Young person being referred meet the admission Criteria outlined in the home's Statement of Purpose and Function.
- The Home's staff team sufficient in number and experience to meet the requirements of the child's needs care plan and continue to satisfactorily meet the needs of the existing resident group?
- The Child/ Young person being referred presents any risks to the existing residents accommodated or residents already placed present a risk under the following areas.

Admissions Procedure

All referrals of children and young people are considered and planned moves are carried out in line with availability of rooms. As much information as possible is always requested to enable the manager and staff to evaluate and match the placement to the needs of the child/young person and those already in placement.

The manager will also consider the skill set of the staff team, to ensure they are experienced to deal with the potential issues, and specific training will be sought to equip the staff team if necessary.
To ensure effective matching is in place, all relevant documentation will be requested at time of the referral under pre-placement information pack. (Identified needs, risks, targets and support required is identified and agreed with the placing authority prior to admission and confirmed in more detail within the placement planning meeting.)

From the initial referral to the placement planning meeting, regular liaison will take place between the manager, the staff and the referring authority to ensure that all needs are identified and staff are able to manage the risks if any.

The final decision for the child to come into the home is always the home's manager, however, a placement panel exists in each case and together we assess each referral prior to coming into the house/community. Once the first stage of the referral is discussed, the second step would be that the new referral is introduced to staff and the matching Criteria and Impact Risk Assessment is completed using the pre-placement information pack.

The final decision is made as a full team once an initial action plan is clear (Risk assessments, behavioural support/ management plan, health plan and placement plan will be devised in conjunction with the Local authority's statutory Care plan and placing social worker)

Onyx House will only accept emergency admissions where a referral form and risk assessment are provided prior to placement of the home.
Placements teams should anticipate placement at Onyx House for a minimum period of 6 months in order for us to be able to follow our framework, treatment and support plan to benefit the child.

In summary our minimum requirements of accepting a placement are as follows:

- Pre-placement information/referral form to contain essential information
- Impact Risk assessment
- The placing authority referral form completed in full.
- Up to date placing authority's risk assessment.
- Consideration given to the needs of the children/young person already in placement.
- Local authority placement plan and chronology.

9.2 ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK STAGES

A Plan of support as part of the Assessment Framework we will be put in place and explored in more depth during the Placement Planning Meeting for each individual child as below:

STAGE 1 - Pre - Admission Meeting

This meeting is to determine whether it is in the best interests of the child to be placed. Impact Risk Assessment analysed and final decision to be made in regards the allocation of the placement.

STAGE 2 - Placement meeting

When the child is admitted. Initial Care plan discussed and agreed.

STAGE 3 - Placement Review

Approximately one month after being admitted every young person will have a Placement Review. The main focus for this review is to consider if the Child/ Young person is benefitting from the care plan, discussing the framework including treatment and support.

The meeting will take place regularly; also look at the progress of the young person.

STAGE 4 - Looked After Children Review (L.A.C.) or Child in care Review (CIC)

These meetings are held after four weeks, at the three months' point and then every six months during the young person's stay. The review should look at the young person's care plan, their progress, any areas of concern and an agreed action plan.

9.3 TERMINATION OF PLACEMENT

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

- Serious sexual/violent incident resulting in a child protection strategy discussion recommending the removal of that child/young person to protect themselves or others.
- Persistent violence resulting in serious injury to other children/young people or members of staff.
- Persistently running away or going missing from care resulting in the child/young person endangering themselves or others and it is deemed necessary to safeguard them that placement can no longer continue
- On the recommendation of medical advice where a child/young person is at risk of serious self-harm or suicide.

This decision will be taken by the Registered Manager in consultation with the Responsible Individual and staff team. In these instances, in consultation with the Local Authority, a request will be made for the child/young person to be discharged and alternative accommodation sought.

Regulation 41 will follow with immediate effect. Referrals are accepted from Local Authorities who have children/ young people in their care or who are supporting families living in the community where there is a need for a residential provision.

In order to minimise the trauma experienced by young people moving away from home or other residential settings, it is our aim for all our admissions to be planned as much as possible. This will include a series of information-sharing meetings with the allocated Social Worker, the young person and their parents or those with parental responsibility. A follow up meeting to undertake the placement assessment / care plan and risk assessment is then arranged in the young person's home.

The Placement Assessment / Care Plan will encompass areas such as, contact with family / others i.e. frequency, location, and other appointments.

- Areas of responsibility between our service, the young person, local authority and parents
- Initial review date
- Health needs
- Dietary needs
- Risk Assessment
- Interests and hobbies
- Religious /Cultural needs

This process has been designed to ensure the child or young person is involved as much as possible in their stay at Onyx House.

9.4 CARE PLANNING

At the time of residential admission an impact assessment is undertaken to ensure that any new placement is suitably matched with existing residents.

We aim to ensure that a placement- planning meeting is undertaken with the referring authority within 72 hours of their admission. The provision will work with associated professionals to ensure that statutory meetings are undertaken within the required timescales.

Once a residential placement has been agreed, the provision will then notify the home's local authority of the new placement in the borough.

The Placement Plan should be discussed and if needed modified. Future plans should be made clear to all present at the review meeting with the needs and wishes of the Child/ Young person being taken into account.

Appendix 1 – Staffing & Qualifications

Name	Job Title	Overall Experience	Qualification / Training
Daniel Old	Director of Operations	Daniel has worked in the care sector for over 19 years, beginning his career in various settings such as mental health, adult care, prisons, looked after children and adults with learning difficulties. For over 16 years Daniel has worked in children's homes in both the private and public sector, developing from Residential Care Worker to Responsible Individual and Service Manager positions.	Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce: Social Care Pathway Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) (QCF) Foundation Degree in Arts: Therapeutic Childcare Master of Business Administration: Senior Leader CMI Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership DDP Level One, Dyadic Developmental Practice, Psychotherapy and Parenting DDP Level Two, Dyadic Developmental Practice, Psychotherapy and Parenting
Lucy Mitchell	Responsible individual	Lucy is a highly experienced professional in the residential care sector, having dedicated her career to supporting vulnerable children and young people since 2009. Over the years, she has built extensive expertise in a variety of specialist care environments, working directly with children and young people with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD), learning disabilities, complex health and behavioural needs, and those affected by Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). In her current role, Lucy is responsible for overseeing five children's homes at Steppingstones Care. She leads with a focus on developing cohesive teams, delivering consistent	NVQ Level 5 in Leadership and Management. Level 1 in DDP. NVQ Level 3 in Children and Young People's Workforce. NVQ level 3 Teaching Assistant

		and outstanding care, and ensuring that each home operates with the highest standards of safety, quality, and child-focused practice. Her strategic oversight supports not only operational effectiveness but also the continuous professional development of the teams she leads. Lucy's approach is rooted in compassion, resilience, and an unwavering belief in the potential of every child, no matter their background or experiences. Her leadership continues to make a significant impact on the lives of young people and the professionals who support them.	
Liam Barrett-Hawkins	Consulting Therapist	Liam joined Stepping Stones Care to form the in-house Clinical Team in Jan 24. He began working as a counsellor for children and young people in 2021, where he accumulated a case load amongst various schools and pupil referral units around Birmingham. Liam has since progressed onto different companies and worked with young people who presented with a variety of needs and presentations, all in which needed their own creative and bespoke approach within both a clinical space, and a less formal space. This approach is fundamentally person centred, as part of an integrated model of trauma informed, attachment theory, and interpersonal neurobiology theory.	Msc – Counselling for children and young people. BACP registered counsellor.

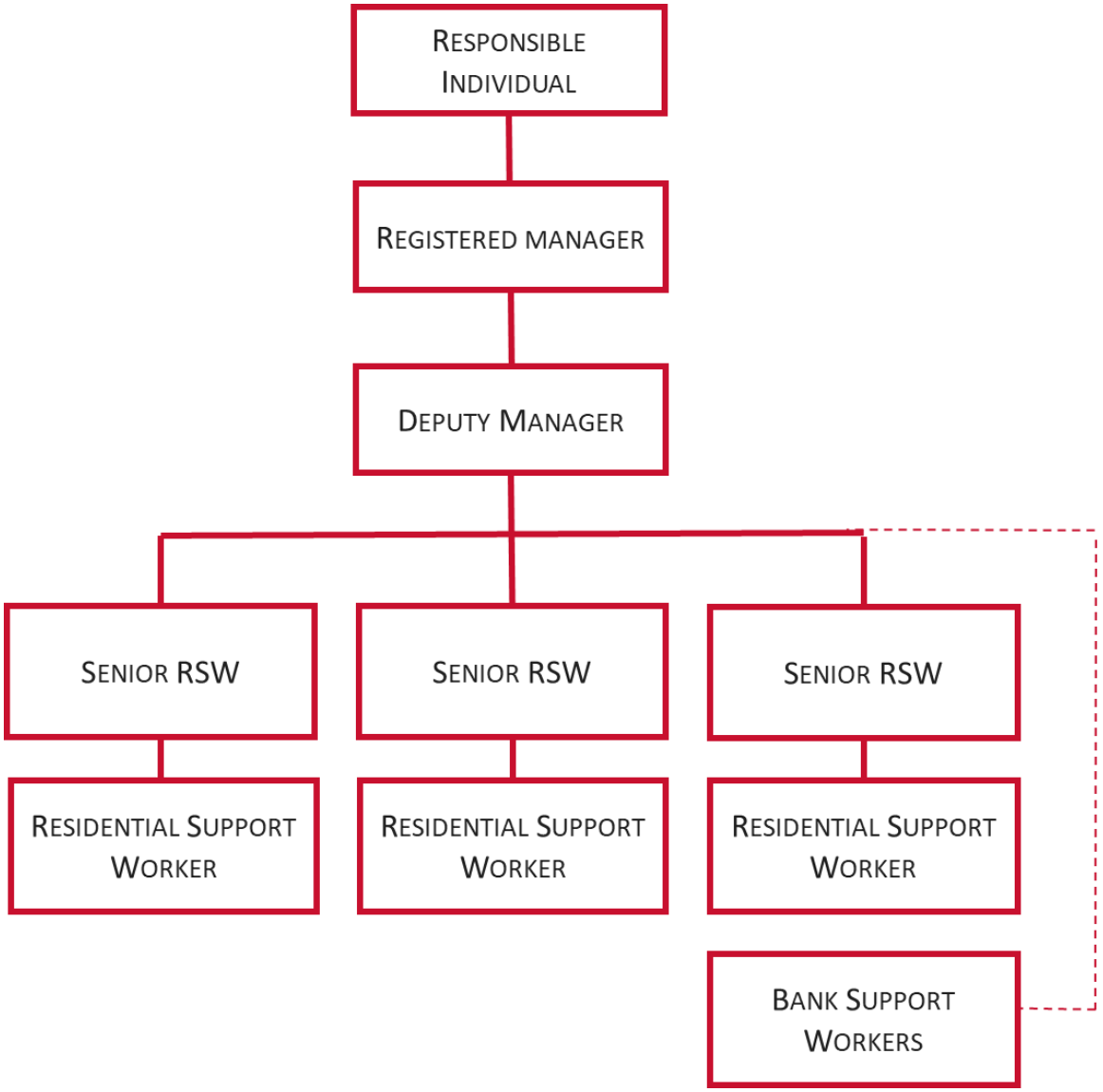
Sarah Stringfellow	Clinical Lead	Sarah provides group clinical consultation and support to our homes, and oversees our clinical work. She is a Forensic Psychologist, who has extensive experience of forensic settings, including working with young offenders. She has experience of providing consultation to teams working with children in therapeutic residential care and providing therapy, prior to joining Stepping Stones Care. Her areas of specialism are trauma, attachment, compassion and personality. She has a proven track record of being able to lead and manage teams to achieve targets, and passionate about enabling people to achieve their potential and make positive changes. She has extensive experience in managing teams, supervising others, carrying out psychological assessments and providing person-centered therapeutic interventions.	Sarah is registered with the Health Care Professions Council, chartered with the British Psychological Society, a full member of the Division of Forensic Psychology, and on the Register of Applied Psychology Practice Supervisors. She is trained in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy - level 1, has a Diploma in Compassion Focused Therapy, and has completed Foundations in Group Analysis.

Name & Position	Overall Experience	Qualification/Training
Registered Manager Chloe Holt	Chloe joined the organisation on 27th May 2025. She began her career working in nurseries, where she built a strong foundation in early years care and development. Her passion for supporting children and young people inspired her to transition into residential care in January 2019. During this time, she progressed from a Residential Support Worker (RSW) into a managerial position, demonstrating strong leadership and a commitment to high standards of care.	• Full company induction to include both mandatory face to face training alongside comprehensive online training • Level 3 in Children's and Young People's Workforce • Level 5 in Leadership and Management in Residential Childcare • Level 3 Team Leader Supervisor and ILM (Institute of Learning for Managers) Diploma

	In May 2022, Chloe became a Registered Manager. Since then, she has achieved positive outcomes with Ofsted, including securing 'Good' judgements, and has successfully managed 6–8 bed children's homes. She also led the opening and management of a four-bedded provision for children with learning disabilities. Chloe has extensive experience supporting children and young people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and complex challenging behaviours, ensuring that care is tailored to meet their individual needs. Her commitment to delivering high-quality, person-centred care has been central to the success of the services she has led. Chloe has recently brought her expertise to Stepping Stones Care, where she continues to make a positive impact through her strong leadership, dedication, and child-focused approach.	• DDP Level 1
Deputy Manager Fiedeal (Del) Nuby	Fiedeal began his career in childcare in 2012, gaining valuable experience in early years settings until 2017, when he transitioned into residential childcare. Over the years, he progressed within the same organisation, ultimately being promoted to Deputy Manager in November 2023. Before joining Stepping Stones Care in June 2025, Fiedeal worked in two children's homes, supporting young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. As Deputy Manager, he played a key role in the day-to-day running of the home, supporting the Registered Manager and further developing his leadership skills. During this time, he also completed the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management, enhancing his knowledge and preparing him for continued growth in the field.	• Full company induction to include both mandatory face to face training alongside comprehensive online training • Level 3 in Children's and Young People's Workforce • Level 5 in Leadership and Management in Residential Childcare • DDP Level 1
Senior Residential Support Worker Ben Whyte	Ben is a qualified youth football coach who made a career change to become a Residential Support Worker. He progressed to a Deputy Manager position in his previous organisation and joined Stepping Stones as an experienced Senior. Ben was successful in securing the Deputy Manager role at Onyx; however, after five months, he chose to step back into his Senior position due to	• Level 3 Diploma in working with children and young people in residential care. • Qualified youth football coach • Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training • DDP Level 1

	personal commitments. He continues to be a dedicated and committed Senior Residential Support Worker.	
Senior Residential Support Worker Shazmeen Kausar	Shazmeen joined Stepping Stones in January 2025. Prior to joining Onyx House, she gained several years of experience working with young people, including those presenting with complex trauma and challenging behaviours. Shazmeen is now developing her leadership skills, with a strong focus on supporting both the team and the young people through a trauma-informed and child-centred approach.	• Level 3 Diploma in working with young people in residential care. • Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training
Senior Residential Support worker Habibah Choudhury	Habibah joined Stepping Stones in February 2025. She has several years of experience working with young people prior to joining Onyx House, including previous roles in schools as a mentor. Habibah has supported young people with complex trauma and challenging behaviours and is now taking on increased responsibilities as she progresses into a leadership role. She is committed to supporting both the team and the young people through a compassionate and trauma-informed approach.	• Level 4 Diploma in working with young people in residential care. • Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training
Residential Support Worker Shona Keenan	Shona joined Stepping Stones Care in September 2024. She previously worked in the catering industry before transitioning into a nursery setting, where she thoroughly enjoyed supporting young children. Seeking a new challenge and wanting to make a greater impact, Shona decided to pursue a career working with young people in a residential care setting.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training • Shona is enrolled and completing the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare
Residential Support Worker/Shift-Lead Elisha Dosanjh	Elisha joined Stepping Stones Care on 21st August 2023. She brings a wealth of experience from the care sector, having previously worked extensively with adults with learning difficulties. Elisha's background has equipped her with strong communication and support skills, which she now applies in her role working with young people in a residential setting.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training • Elisha is enrolled and completing the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare
Residential Support Worker/Shift-Lead	Kerrie joined Stepping Stones Care on 23rd October 2023.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training.

Kerrie Leaden	She brings experience from both the education and care sectors, having previously worked as a secondary school English teacher and in a residential adult mental health provision. Kerrie's diverse background supports her in building positive relationships with young people and contributing effectively to the residential care environment.	• Kerrie is enrolled and completing the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare
Residential Support Worker Callum Barnsley	Callum joined Stepping Stones Care on 11th November 2024. With a background in architecture, Callum has chosen to pursue his strong passion for supporting young people. He brings a unique perspective and dedication to his role within the residential care setting.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training. • Callum is enrolled and completing the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare
Residential Support Worker Sonia Sammons	Sonia joined Stepping Stones Care on 6th October 2025. Sonia has experience of live-in care supporting the elderly among other professions and has come to stepping stones with a strong desire to help and support young people.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training. • Sonia will be enrolled onto the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare following a successful probationary period.
Residential Support Worker Ryan O'Dwyer	Ryan joined Stepping Stones Care on 1st September 2025. Ryan has experience of working abroad with children in different environments such as teaching English and within clubs and activities. Ryan has decided to use his transferrable skills and apply them to a career in children's residential care.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training. • Ryan will be enrolled onto the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare following a successful probationary period.
Residential Support Worker Ayesha Maryam	Ayesha joined Stepping Stones Care on 18th September 2023. Initially working at another of Stepping Stones homes, Ayesha transferred to Onyx House in September 2025. Prior to coming to Stepping Stones, Ayesha had had eight years of care experience, supporting vulnerable adults.	• Full company induction and probation to include all mandatory online modular and face to face training. • Ayesha is currently completing the Level 4 Diploma for Residential Childcare.


RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL
REGISTERED MANAGER
DEPUTY MANAGER
SENIOR RSW
SENIOR RSW
SENIOR RSW
RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT WORKER
RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT WORKER
RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT WORKER
BANK SUPPORT WORKERS

Appendix 3 – Review

Date of Review / Update	Details of Review / Update	Reviewed / Updated By / Name
22.8.2023	Full review of SOP to include, COVID -19 not being a mandatory course, two new staff details added, CT new post of Deputy Manager added and LJ being registered as the Manager.	Lucy James
5.11.2023	General updates to staffing list	Lucy Mitchell
5.12.2023	Staffing updates	Lucy Mitchell
10.1.2024	Staffing updated to include the homes new therapist	Lucy Mitchell
7.3.2024	Staffing update	Lucy Mitchell
19.3.2024	Staffing update	Lucy Mitchell
27.3.2024	Staffing correction, Registered manager surname change update	Caprice Thomas
1.05.24	Staffing update & Medication update	Caprice Thomas
13.6.24	Staffing updates to include Acting Manager & staffing changes.	Caprice Thomas
31.7.24	Staffing updates	Caprice Thomas
18.9.2024	Responsible individual changes	Caprice Thomas
23.9.2024	Staffing update	Caprice Thomas
28.9.2024	Further RI amendments & additional details with contact numbers	Caprice Thomas
10.10.24	Staffing update	Caprice Thomas
16.11.24	Staffing update	Caprice Thomas
23.12.2024	Staffing updates / Training added	Caprice Thomas
01.01.2024	Change in Responsible individual	Caprice Thomas
02.02.2025	Staffing update	Caprice Thomas
1.03.2025	Staffing update - SRSW	Caprice Thomas
23.04.2025	Staffing update.	Caprice Thomas
15.5.25	Staffing update	Caprice Thomas
9.6.2025	Manager and Deputy Update, staffing update, change to RI status	Lucy Mitchell
23/07/25	Staffing Information Update	Chloe Holt
30/09/25	Staffing Information Update	Chloe Holt
03/10/25	Update to 1.2 – Continued Care	Chloe Holt
22/10/25	Staffing information update	Chloe Holt
09/02/26	Full review and updates to pictures of the home	Chloe Holt
16/02/26	Daniel Old added – new Director of Operations	Chloe Holt