



**Becca
House**

Statement of Purpose and Function

To find out more please visit www.acorneducationandcare.co.uk
24hr referral line: 03458 727477

**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

Better days, Better lives

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1. Mission Statement

Acorn Education and Care is part of the NFA Group, the largest combined children's services group in the UK. Our operating businesses successfully deliver frontline fostering, educational and care services to children, their families and local authority customers.

Our purpose is to provide outstanding care and education to the UK's most vulnerable and difficult to place children and young people whether with specialist foster parents, within education or in a supportive and understanding environment of residential care.

We offer each and every child and young person courtesy and respect, and work in conjunction with local authorities to deliver a range of care, education and other specialist services which offer best value whilst ensuring the best possible outcomes for each child.

As a group, we benefit from a wealth of experience allowing young people the opportunity to thrive and develop by realising their potential whilst being happy and feeling valued.

2. Objectives of Becca House

Becca House is a Acorn Education and Care home committed to providing care to children/young people with learning disabilities with a specialism in autism on a long to medium/short/shared care term basis depending on the needs of the young person. Becca House provides a holistic, safe, stimulating and supporting family environment where children/young people cared for can live, learn and develop.

The home provides a high standard of care, educational support and accommodation for up to four young people, aged eight and to eighteen. We work in partnership with relevant Social Services departments, and other agencies within a clear and comprehensive policy framework, in line with Acorn Education and Care corporate policy statement.

The staff team at Becca House are highly committed to working intensively providing care and support to all young people who come to live here.

The home endeavours to avoid the negative aspects usually associated with institutional residential living and create an environment and atmosphere, which reflects many of the positive aspects of a normal family home.

The aims of the home are to work towards the following for each young person (depending on their identified individual needs):

- Promote opportunities to help children and young people with learning disabilities achieve their full potential.
- Provide accommodation, which is suitably meets the needs of children with learning disabilities
- Provide a safe and supportive environment where children and young people are listened to and encouraged to express their needs, wishes and feelings.

Becca House Statement of Purpose

- Promote confidence and independence.
- Provide opportunities for children and young people to make choices.
- Develop individual care plans to meet the needs of each child or young person.
- Work in partnership with children, their families and significant others.
- Assess and take acceptable risks in order to enable children and young people to develop their full potential.

Prior to admission every effort is made to establish the ongoing plans for each young person and a care plan is prepared which clearly focuses on his or her individual needs

If appropriate, young people can be referred to counselling services. Care plans aim to address areas such as behaviour support, the development of life skills and semi/full independent living packages and emotional well-being.

The objectives of the care plan are to:

- Support young people to access daily life in a stable environment
- Develop life skills to promote independent living
- Assist the young person to form, maintain and build relationships with other young people and adults and to integrate into social groups.

Progress by the young person towards achieving the main objectives of the care plan is monitored and reviewed regularly and with other professional representatives of the responsible local authority at reviews/planning meetings. The home will maintain consistent and regular communication with the placing authority on progress made.

The staff team at the home value the role of the key worker and on arrival each young person will be allocated one, together with a co-key worker who can act on the key worker's behalf when they are not available. The role of the key worker will include responsibility for:

- Promoting the young person's participation in and the ownership of their care plan or independent life skill package
- Planning appropriate key working sessions taken from the care plan
- Ensuring the care plan or independent skills package is reviewed at appropriate intervals
- Ensuring the main aims of the placement are kept on target
- Ensuring that the young person's file is kept in order and up to date
- Ensuring that all necessary appointments are arranged and social workers, parents or significant others are kept well informed.
- Being a contact person for the young person to approach if they have any concerns, worries or aspirations they want to discuss.
- Being responsible for promoting personal health and hygiene, active participation in all individual or group activities and the attendance at the resident's meetings and discussions relating to planning the weekly menus and activities.
- Assisting the young person to establish, promote and maintain positive links with school, family members (or significant others) and other professionals involved in their care.

Becca House Statement of Purpose

Acorn Education and Care believe that:

Residential care should provide children and young people with skilled support from committed staff in a safe, caring and ordered environment.

We have a responsibility to ensure that children and young people in residential care are protected from abuse and neglect.

Care should form part of a range of services, which combine to meet children and young people's needs and support their families and carers.

We recruit and support staff that are carefully selected and who have opportunities to develop skills and professional practice through training and supervision.

Disabled children are put first.

We have a number of values, which are important to the home and for the children and young people who are looked after:

- **Dignity and Respect:** recognising the value of young people, their uniqueness and their right to be treated with dignity and respect. A commitment to treat children and young people well.
- **Equality:** ensuring that the services and facilities of the home are accessible and available to all. The service provided by our staff should not judge children and young people's circumstances, backgrounds and lifestyles. It should not discriminate on the grounds of race, culture, language, religious beliefs, gender, sexuality or disability. Individuality will be valued. A commitment to treat children and young people fairly.
- **Quality:** promoting quality services which are based on agreed standards and meet legal and good practice requirements. A commitment to ensure that staff working with children and young people will do what they say they do.
- **Independence:** a commitment to provide opportunities for children and young people to think and act independently whilst ensuring their safety at all times. To include a child or young person's need for privacy.
- **Rights:** a commitment to children and young people, rights and entitlements as set out in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- **Listening:** a commitment to listen to children and young people and help them express their wishes and needs in whatever way is best suited to the individual child or young person.
- **Development and fulfilment:** a recognition that children with disabilities are children first; all encouragement will be given to realise their full potential and to help.
- **Children and Young People achieve their hopes and ambitions and to develop their abilities in their daily lives.** A commitment to ensure they have a good start in life.
- **Confidentiality:** treating all personal information in confidence.

3. Facilities Provided by Becca House

- Four generously sized children's bedrooms
- Two bathrooms, one of which is a wet room with basin and toilet and the other a jacuzzi bath, toilet and basin
- Staff have a separate shower room with basin and toilet
- Communal Lounge
- Resource room
- Kitchen / Dining room
- Staff Office with attached sleep in room
- Additional sleeping in room for staff
- Large Garden with play equipment including swings and trampoline in addition to a small garden
- Sensory room
- Utility Room

Location and Accommodation

Nottingham is a vibrant and friendly city that is a centre of excellence in many fields, with a unique combination of strong historical roots, coupled with a fast expanding business and retail sector. This cosmopolitan city offers unrivalled state of the art leisure and entertainment opportunities, as well as excellent health and education facilities.

Based within the pleasant, highly sought after residential area of Sherwood and conveniently situated near to the City Centre, Becca House is ideally suited for children/young people. It has a location close to the city centre with easily accessible bus links and routes to schools, colleges and key locations across the city of Nottingham.

Becca House is a large detached bungalow with many attractive and practical features, including large sized rooms and creative enclosed gardens and a private, secluded location. The garden to the rear of the property is enclosed and thoughtfully designed to create a safe and imaginative environment for children.

All bedrooms are large in size, furnished and equipped to a high standard, and decorated in consultation with the children/young people resident in the room at the time. Children at Becca House do not share bedrooms unless the placing authority stipulates this as a planned care requirement. The home has door sensors fitted to each of the bedroom doors which are only used between the hours of 9pm and 8am to ensure that staff can support any young person promptly in the night. There is also a front door sounder which comes on when the bedroom door alarms are activated.

The communal lounge area includes a T.V. equipped with a DVD, free view and a variety of games and DVDs. There is also a resource room which is equipped with a range of toys/books/arts and crafts equipment.

The home has kitchen/diner, which provides for a homely, friendly atmosphere large enough for the preparation and consumption of meals by all staff and children.

There are adequate laundry facilities including a utility room where the young people can develop their independent skills and can learn to carry out related domestic tasks. There is an adequate number of bathrooms/shower rooms located within the property. There is also a well-equipped sensory room to engage young people.

Staff are provided with sleeping accommodation located close to the bedrooms occupied by the children. All Acorn Education and Care homes operate a waking staff system and when required are able to provide a 1:1 staff to child ratio.

The doors at Becca house have thumb locks to enable easy exit, the doors are mainly kept locked or closed this is to stop unauthorised access into the house to prevent potential harm.

4. Responsible Body for Becca House

Our head office is located at:

Westbourne School, Huthwaite Road, Sutton-in-Asfield, NG17 2EL

Tel: 01623 392 430

Acorn Education and Care is a [wholly owned] subsidiary of the wider Outcomes First Group.

Regional Director for Yorkshire and the Midlands

Lynette Edwards

Principal of Westbourne School

Vacant Post

Responsible Individual and Head of Care: Donna Carlin

Donna has been with Acorn Education and Care for a number of years - managing a sister home before coming to Elm. Prior to working for Acorn Education and Care Donna worked as a children and families social worker for Nottinghamshire and is DIPSW qualified.

This compliments her DIP 5 in Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care

Donna currently has a Matrix Management role for Acorn Education and Care and oversees all of the Nottingham based homes.

In her spare time Donna enjoys watching her boys play football in the Notts Young Elizabethan league

Registered Homes Manager: Selina Bartram

Has been at Acorn Education and Care since 2004 working my way up from a trainee to a management position and most recently from June 2019 a senior management role. Selina took 9 months off maternity leave in 2011 before returning as an assistant manager at Becca house in August 2012. Selina has a vast amount of experience, mainly based around working with children and young people with learning disabilities, her experience is in areas such as autism, global development delay, sensory modulation disorder and epilepsy.

Selina has completed courses to assist with her work this includes safeguarding (including learning disability safeguarding), fire training, MAPA, first aid, attachment and trauma, self-harm and manual handling.

5. Qualifications and Experience

The manager holds the following qualifications: -

Miss Bartram has worked within Acorn Education and Care since 2004, She has the following qualifications NVQ 3 children and young people and has completed her level 5 diploma in management.

6. Staffing Qualifications and Experience

The staff team at Becca House is made up of:

- 1 x Registered Manager
- 2x Assistant Manager who job share
- Senior Residential Child Care Workers.
- Residential Child Care Workers (Full Time and Part time)

The staff team is a mixed gender team therefore providing a balance of adult support and guidance throughout a young person's stay.

Members of the staff team hold qualifications for example NVQ 2 and 3 Caring for Children & Young people, diploma level 3 children and young people, First Aid, Fire Training, Food Hygiene, have attended a 3-day training course which is the Learning Disabilities Induction Programme, Sensory Modulation Disorder Training, Safeguarding Training and have a wide knowledge and experience in working with young people with learning disabilities.

The staff team come from various backgrounds and bring to their work a varying level of skills, experience and qualifications, e.g. counselling qualifications etc. All recent new starters have completed an induction course, which includes several essential training elements, with a requirement to complete an LDQ / NVQ at either Level 2 or 3 or a Diploma Level 3 Children and Young People.

The company also offers other training courses which focus on specific areas, i.e. risk assessments and child care practices, safeguarding, autism, administration of medication and many others. Additional training can be offered to support additional needs such as sensory modulation disorder.

Staff Support and Supervision

Acorn Education and Care Directors oversee the management of Becca House and ensure that the company's core values are adhered to on a day-to-day basis.

All staff have been, or will be trained in the following:

- Health & Safety
- Food hygiene
- Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Fire training
- (MAPA – Managing actual potential aggression)
- Equality and Diversity
- LDIP (learning disability induction programme)

Staff receive regular supervision and training and is required to hold or pursue:
Diploma Level 3 in children and young people (as a minimum).

Managers must hold or pursue a minimum Diploma in Social Work or NVQ level 4 (or equivalent).

Each young person has a designated key worker. Becca House is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All Acorn Education and Care staff are committed to providing high quality user-friendly services to the young people in our care. Young People benefit from Acorn Education and Care commitment to a small homes policy, and a high staff to child ratio, this ensures that young people get the focused care and attention they need and deserve.

7. Organisational Structure of the Home

Becca House adopts a holistic approach to care and development, addressing the emotional, social, cultural, physical and educational needs of the children.

We believe that our children/young people should be cared for in a positive non-discriminatory environment. Soon after admission each young person has a Placement Plan which aims to support and develop them and keyworkers will aim to form a relationship based on equality and trust where they can feel valued and respected. We provide a safe and accepting environment where expression of feelings are encouraged in a positive and appropriate manner.

Accurate and regular communication is ensured to protect the safety of the children/young people in our care. In addition to these issues, the arrangements made are as follows:

- Main meals are taken together in a family style atmosphere and special dietary needs are catered for.
- Communal as well as individual leisure/recreational activities are made available and pro-actively encouraged.
- Becca House is well equipped with a variety of therapeutic tools and equipment, e.g. sensory items, games, videos, DVDs, books, music, craft and other resources.
- A variety of working methods are used with children/young people. These are tailored to suit individual needs. Such methods include one to one direct work and group work

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Whilst living at Becca House, all children/young people receive the following allowances:

- o Pocket money
- o Clothing Money
- o Personal allowances for activities/interests
- o Birthday Money, Christmas money

8. Who may be referred to Becca House

Becca House is able to accommodate:

- Up to four young people ranging from the ages of 8 to 18 years
- Male or Female, whose main and principal care need is learning disabilities
- Children/young people with moderate to severe learning disabilities
- Children on the Autistic Spectrum and or associated conditions such as Sensory Modulation disorder, epilepsy
- The home can support Young People with sensory needs
- Shared Care

In accordance with Acorn Education and Care Equal Opportunities Policy, children of any gender or ethnic origin may be referred.

Acorn Education and Care carefully considers all referrals as part of a caring and responsible approach to admissions. However, in recognition of the extreme pressures faced by Case Managers, our decision-making processes are fast and effective.

The layout and design of Becca House is such, that the unit could accommodate a young person with some mobility difficulties due to the house being on one level; it would not however be suited for children with severe mobility difficulties.

Any child looking to be placed at Becca House may have a severe learning disability.

The child/young person should be of school age and between the ages of 8 and 17 (on admission) for residential placements.

Parents/carers and the child/young person (given their age/ understanding and cognitive ability) should fully participate in their care planning.

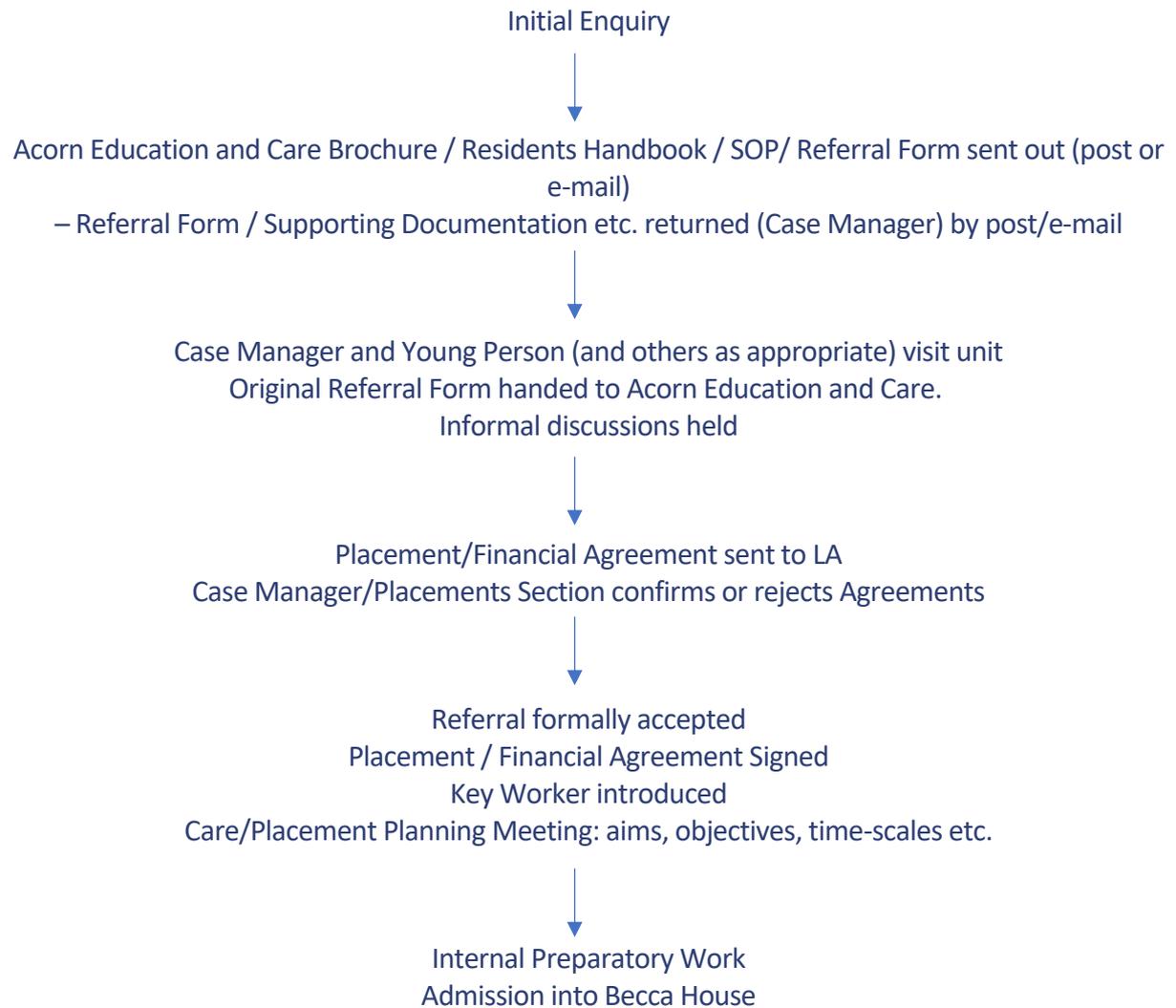
8. Admissions Procedure

We always aim to ensure the referral process is as speedy and straight forward as possible.

Preferably, placements should be planned, providing for as smooth a transition as possible for the child/young person concerned.

Becca House Statement of Purpose

The flow chart below shows the normal Referral/Admissions Process. The process can be adjusted to accommodate individual referral circumstances.



9. Available Services

Residential Placements

- Short, Medium and Long Term Residential placements
- Placements with Therapeutic Intervention
- Reception & Assessment

10. Ethos and Philosophy

The underlying ethos and philosophy of Becca House is that every child has individual recognition as to their health and well-being. The staff team ensure that the young people have opportunities to express their feelings and concerns using basic listening skills, signs and symbols to provide comfort and assurance and encourage the child to actively refocus their thoughts and help alleviate some of their feelings.

Teaching basic problem-solving skills when upsetting situations arise help the young people to make better choices, and an acknowledgement of good behaviour with rewards, praise and positive feedback helps reinforce their strengths and builds awareness of his/her own talents and abilities.

Acorn Education and Care, and each of its individual homes, takes very seriously, matters pertaining to Equality & Diversity and in doing so, seeks to address the unique needs of each individual child or young person in its care.

11. Health Care Provision at Becca House

Becca House adopts and follows Acorn Education and Care Corporate Policy and Procedural guidelines on the provision of Health Care for every child/young person. This ensures a consistent and proactive approach to health and health education by both staff and children. The central focus of our Health Policy is to empower the child/young person and to provide them with the tools to make informed decisions about their health.

All young people within our care are registered with a local General Practitioner of their choice and have access to a range of other health care facilities, which include:

- Dentists
- Chiropodists
- Counsellors
- Opticians
- Social- Psychological Services if applicable
- Other Therapeutic services as appropriate

Health education is promoted via structured key worker or group sessions, whichever are thought to be more appropriate in accordance with the feelings of the children/young people.

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Health care needs are sought on an if and when basis, Young people at Becca house benefit from the support of a specialised dentist who is experienced in learning disabilities a referral for this service is made via a social worker referral and appointments are made on a 4-6 monthly basis.

Becca staff will accommodate all young people on these visits and will complete a medical treatment form which is placed on file so that progress can be tracked and assessed accordingly.

Becca House Health Care Policy includes providing information on physical, emotional & sexual health. Our philosophy and approach is that good health is achieved through paying attention to basic needs such as nutrition, adequate sleep, regard for safety, and appropriate medical attention when required.

12. Education, Educational Services Offered and Local Schools

Becca House believes that all our young people have the right to an education suited to their needs, ability and personal aspirations. We acknowledge research suggesting that children within the care system are potentially at risk of poor educational achievement due in part to many extrinsic factors.

Therefore, we believe that we have an Absolute Duty to ensure that children in our care achieve generally and educationally, to their highest potential. Becca House staff are all involved in proactively implementing needs assessed Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.) for each child. Key workers/Unit Management oversees the implementation of I.E.Ps and monitor progress in order to evaluate and modify I.E.Ps to maximise achievement. We also liaise effectively with the schools used by our young people in order to support their SEN/EHC plans.

Becca House creates a positive culture and environment for valuing education with adequate space and facilities for children to do their homework, including quiet well-equipped study areas.

- Specialist education for young people/children with Learning Disabilities, within the catchment areas of Nottinghamshire area.
- Also, we have strong links with schools for children with Special Educational Needs.
- Continuous liaison with Nottinghamshire Local Education Authority
- In-house personal tuition where applicable and necessary. We have access, through R.E.A.L Education to a high range of highly qualified, experienced and fully checked tutors, specially trained to deliver educational tuition to Looked after Children.
- Youth development opportunities
- Young people at Becca house benefit from transport and staff who escort them to and from school settings ensuring a smooth and consistent transition.
- Staff and school maintain close communication via home school diaries which are sent to school each day. Key workers and management also maintain close communication with schools and visit regularly to observe young people to gain a better understanding of their educational needs which in turn will also benefit their home tuition
- School teachers/ assistants attend LAC reviews as well as hosting young people's education reviews to review progress and set future targets for young people.

13. Recreational Sporting and Cultural Arrangements

There are a wide range of leisure, recreational, and social activities that are available for the child/young person to pursue whilst residing at Becca House. The Home is deliberately located in close proximity to various facilities. Our staff team ensure that every child/young person is encouraged to participate in communal and group activities of their own choice.

There are a number of leisure, recreational, and social activities available, including access to and use of fitness gyms, youth clubs, tennis, badminton, cinemas, football, cookery, billiards/snooker, bowling, indoor cricket, ice skating etc.

Each child/young person in a Acorn Education and Care home is involved in completing a weekly Personal Planner that sets out the structure of the week ahead. This ensures that both children and staff are able to form a picture of the week ahead ensuring balance and variety. This system also serves review and monitoring activity.

14. Consultation Arrangements

The way the home functions enhances every child's independence and opportunity to make everyday choices. Significant views, discussions and expressed opinions are recorded promptly in the relevant places and the young people receive regular feedback following consultation, to ensure matters are not taken for granted. Key worker sessions, meetings with the appropriate people and residents' meetings are systems that reflect the young people's differing communication needs.

All young people will receive pocket money on a regular basis.

In line with Policies Becca House operates an open access policy in relation to young people having access to their personal files, however, there may be specific reasons to withhold certain information from young people.

The young people will be offered regular access to their files; their appointed key worker will liaise with management and their social worker to undertake this task.

The young people will be given guidance on their rights regarding information contained in their personal file. They are also encouraged to see files held by their Social Workers.

15. Behaviour Support

Becca House looks to promote positive relationships between the adults and children within a clearly defined policy framework.

None of the disciplinary measures prohibited under Regulation 8 of the Children's Act 1989 /2004 are permitted at Becca House. All staff at Becca House aim to work together with children as a team to enhance our ethos of a family home within a framework of continuous positive reinforcement of good behaviour.

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In addition, appropriate use of [age/understanding-sensitive] sanctions and disciplinary measures are only applied after careful consideration as defined within Acorn Education and Care policy and procedures.

Our approach encourages reparation and restitution and we seek not to allow negative behaviour to become the focus of attention. Acorn Education and Care staff will not make excessive or unreasonable use of sanctions or physical Intervention.

Physical Intervention is used only in specified circumstances i.e. to prevent likely injury to the child concerned or to others, or likely serious damage to property. All Acorn Education and Care staff are trained in the use of Physical Intervention techniques, (MAPA) which include Avoidance and Reduction techniques. Clear records are kept of the use of sanctions and physical restraint ensuring that the application of the same can be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals.

Under the provisions of a Multi-Agency-endorsed Time-Out Behaviour Management Plan, Acorn Education and Care Soft Play facilities may be used as a Time Out room.

In such cases, the objective is to relocate the resident away from others behavioural triggers as a means of de-escalating extremely challenging behaviour by way of enabling the resident to calm down and lower his/her levels of arousal.

16. Safeguarding / Bullying

Statement of Principles

Acorn Education and Care believes that all children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, whether this, be physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect. Our approach to all aspects of care delivery is child centred. With regard to Child Protection we firmly believe that the blame for abuse will rest solely on the abuser and that the welfare of the child will always remain centre-stage.

Concerns over the safety or well-being of a child will never be ignored.

The child protection procedures are consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the Local Safe Guarding Board.

Written records of all incidents are taken by staff and reported to the relevant bodies.

The atmosphere created at Becca House is one where bullying is known to be unacceptable.

There is a policy on countering bullying, which is known to children and staff. Any child experiencing bullying is supported and regular risk assessments of the times places and circumstances are recorded, and action is taken where feasible to reduce the risk of bullying

To define abuse, Acorn Education and Care has adopted the definition provided by the National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse, 'Childhood Matters'

"Anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood."

Safeguarding Policy Objectives

- Provide clear and specific guidelines to enable staff to deal with Safeguarding issues effectively.

Becca House Statement of Purpose

- Set high internal standards to ensure that the children cared for by Acorn Education and Care are well protected
- Ensure Acorn Education and Care's credibility as a professional care organisation remains high and that purchasers feel assured that Acorn Education and Care is a 'safe' organisation
- Ensure that every individual working for Acorn Education and Care knows what to do in a Safeguarding Emergency.
- Ensure all staff follow, the safeguarding Action Plan.

Nottingham city LADO

Tina Wright

Nottingham city safeguarding childrens board

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Tel: 0115 97773921

Nottingham City Principal Contact:

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Loxley House

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Safeguarding Policy

At Becca House, everything we do is geared to the protection, happiness and development of the child. Our Child Protection Policy (hereafter referred to as 'the policy') is detailed, extensive and child-centred.

The policy provides detailed definitions of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, mental cruelty and neglect.

Also, the policy sets out clearly, and in considerable detail, who is responsible for dealing with suspected or actual incidents of abuse, defines how matters of abuse should be dealt with and provides supportive guidance to officers who may be involved in dealing with such matters.

Other aspects covered under the policy include:

- Disciplining Children
- Direct Work with Children – Protecting Staff
- Whistle Blowing
- Confidentiality
- The duty of care and public liability insurance
- Records and Record Keeping
- Computer Safety
- Working with Social Workers.

The Acorn Care and Education policy framework and management approach is designed to minimise the risk of child abuse. At Acorn Care and Education, no Safe Guarding issue is ignored and our response to any allegation or suspicion is child-centred, transparent and swift.

Bullying

The Home is committed to providing a residential environment where young people can live safely, without the fear of oppressive behaviour from peers by any form of bullying or intimidation.

Acorn Care and Education provides all staff and children in our homes with clear definitions of Bullying. We believe bullying can take many forms from verbal, emotional, sexual or racial abuse to actual physical assault.

In all cases Acorn Care and Education staff will:

- Investigate fully any indication of bullying.
- Support the victim to prevent any further oppressive behaviour from others.
- Re-assure the victim that being bullied is not acceptable and that it is not their fault they are bullied.
- Minimise any further opportunities for bullying to occur by whatever strategies are realistic and achievable.
- Confront the bully with their actions so their oppressive behaviour is not condoned by inertia.
- Pursue legal action should the nature of bullying indicate the need for this.
- Arrange for an urgent review to include all involved parties from whatever agency to identify an action plan to deal with the bullying including the appropriateness of placements.
- Identify and action positive alternatives for both victim perpetrator to develop those skills necessary for positive relationships.
- Keep a written record of all incidents and actions taken.

Bullying and oppressive behaviour has no place within our society of which Acorn Care and Education homes are a part. We are committed to an equality of service that demands a safe and caring environment for all service users.

17. Unauthorised Absence from the Home

Becca House provides all Residential staff and children with written procedures, which are clearly followed when a child is absent without Permission. The application of the Absence procedures is consistent but at the same time take account of the individual child's needs which are clearly set out in his or her Placement Plan.

Any child that is away from a Acorn Care and Education home is made welcome upon return – the principal aim will be work with child/young person to find out why he or she felt the need to leave his or her home without consulting or seeking permission from staff. Wherever possible, and in any case as soon as possible after he or she has returned, the child/young person will be seen by his or her social worker or a person who is independent of the home.

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If this is not possible, Acorn Care and Education will always record the reasons given by the child and these are reported to child/young person's social worker, if appropriate, changes to Placement / Care plans are recommended and agreed with appropriate people, including the child/young person.

Any reports from a child that indicates he or she went missing in response to being abused will be immediately reported to Social Services and appropriate measures are made to protect the child/young person.

When a young person is absent from the home or the supervision of a member of staff without consent or authority, and then the following procedure will be followed:

- Staff will initially conduct a search of the interior of the home then the outside surrounding area to locate and confirm the whereabouts of the young person and their safety.
- If the young person has not returned to the home within a previously specified time then a member of staff should go out and look for the young person. This should only be done after consultation with a colleague and it has been agreed that such action will not place the other young people or staff at risk.
- If the search by staff has proved inconclusive then the member of staff searching for the young person should report the young person as missing to the local police. They should also notify the young person's Social Worker, parents and any significant others. If outside normal office hours then the young person's Out of Hours Duty Team must be contacted.
- The time period for reporting young people missing to the Police when they are out with a member of staff would be made after consideration has been given to their age, personal circumstances, vulnerability and previous history. This time period should be clearly noted in the young person's care plan and risk assessment and updated according to need.

18. Surveillance

The home at present has door sensors fitted to the young person's bedroom doors to ensure that young people are appropriately supported in the night. These alarms are activated from 9pm and 8am and are linked to the front door which has a sounder when opened.

Young people are supervised on a minimum 1:1 staffing ratio both within the home and out in the community.

Young people's whereabouts is logged within the homes log book. Young people are logged on and off site at all times along with the activity and location they are going to.

All visitors are logged within the log book as well as signed into the visitors' book and are supervised at all times.

Becca house young people benefit from a waking night staff and they are subject to 30 minute discreet checks during the night

19. Fire Precautions Adopted within Becca House

All Acorn Care and Education homes are subject to Fire Officer Inspections and any recommendations are implemented with the utmost priority.

Becca House has appropriate fire equipment, smoke alarms, which are regularly tested and serviced by a designated Fire and Safety Officer.

All staff and children at Becca House are familiar with all aspects of the fire policy and procedures. Regular fire drills are conducted within home, with the outcome and results continuously monitored and recorded within a logbook, in accordance with the Becca House fire policy and procedure. Such drills are undertaken to identify, clarify and resolve any issues or problems with regards to the fire safety policy. Fire Safety procedure is clearly visible throughout appropriate locations in Becca House.

20. Arrangements for Pursuing Cultural Identity and Religious Observance

In the interests of maintaining the balanced development of the child/young person and in keeping with Equality and Diversity good practice, all Becca House staff ensures that every child/young person will be given the opportunity to uphold their cultural identity, and religious beliefs. All staff will be responsible for ensuring that opportunities for religious observance are understood and respected by themselves and other children within the home.

Each young person is provided with the opportunity, as far as is reasonable and practicable, to attend religious services and receive religious instruction as are appropriate to his/her religious beliefs.

Special attention is given where religious observances may involve the provision of special facilities.

21. Contact Arrangements

The organisations policies and procedures within Becca House are all carefully followed by all staff, and are geared towards: -

- Maintaining, supporting and actively encouraging regular and consistent contact with the child's/young person's family, friends, as well as significant others. This is achieved through telephone calls, emails, home visits in addition to visits to see the child/young person within Residential Unit.
- Maintaining and encouraging regular access to, and contact with, the child's/young person's social worker, ensuring any issues or concerns can be discussed between the child/young person and his or her social worker.
- To actively promote co-operation and dialogue with relevant educational establishments through attendance at appropriate school functions, continuous discussions and dialogue regarding the needs of the child/young person. Particular attention is paid to the attendance levels.
- Also, staff will look to actively promote action programmes to help the child/young person to overcome any specific educational difficulties they encounter.

- To develop and maintain links with venues for recreational, religious, cultural and social activities, particularly those within the locality of Becca House, ensuring a balanced and structured programme for development of the child/young person is achieved.
- To maintain regular contact and co-operation with other psychologists, psychiatrists, professional associations, and workers when it is appropriate. This will ensure that our core philosophy, which is that the welfare and support of the child is central to all aspects of related care policies, is maintained.

22. Complaints, Comments and Compliments

Becca House deals with all representations and complaints seriously, sensitively and as close to the originating point as possible, ensuring that the child's best interests are of paramount importance in such proceedings. We endeavour to ensure that all children, staff, and parents are aware of, and understand Acorn Education and Care written policy and procedures on representations and complaints. Furthermore, Acorn Education and Care operates a transparent complaints procedure, which is clearly visible on notice boards and other appropriate locations.

Each young person has the right to make representations by way of comments, compliments or complaints regarding their care and accommodation whilst being looked after by Acorn Education and Care. A record is maintained in the home of such comments, compliments and complaints.

Complaints Procedures

Each young person in the home has access to:

- Acorn Education and Care Internal Complaints Procedures and the services of an independent representative.
- The Complaints Procedure of the responsible local authority
- Ofsted Tel: (0300 123 1231)
- Write to Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD
- Organisations representing the interest of young people being looked after, e.g. Child-line and Voice for the Child in Care.

Additionally, all young people are actively encouraged to express their concerns regarding the quality of care they are receiving or any other issue during individual meetings with their key worker, during the weekly residents' meetings or directly to the Manager of the home. Each young person is provided with a copy of the Acorn Education and Care Complaints Procedure on his or her admission to the home.

The Acorn Education and Care Complaints Procedure consists of three stages:

Stage 1 - Informal Stage – Discussion with the Unit Manager – recorded and signed by the young person if she/he is satisfied.

Stage 2 - Formal Stage – Investigation by a Complaints Investigation Officer (i.e. someone from outside of the home)

Stage 3 - Review Stage- Consideration by Senior Managers of Acorn Care and Education Young People are encouraged to complete feedback forms these have been adapted to the individual needs including a form that is solely in widget form for the young people at Becca house who are pre' -verbal

23. Arrangements for Reviews

Internal Placement Review Arrangements

In consultation with the child, his or her social workers and all significant others, a Placement Plan is formulated within 72 hours of the child's admission. Within 20 days, the Plan is reviewed then at 3 months then every 6 months.

Who can attend an internal Placement Review?

- The child/young person.
- The Parents (unless they are prevented from doing so by any court orders).
- The Reviewing Officer from the resident's area office.
- The resident's Social Worker.
- The resident's Key Worker.
- A Senior Manager.
- Teachers, Doctors, & Psychologists.
- Independent visitor, race advisor, interpreter.
- Other family members.

External Care Plan Reviews

In addition to the arrangements at Acorn Care and Education for internal reviews, there will be arrangements led by the child's social worker for external reviews. Typically, arrangements for external reviews will comprise:

- Core Group Meetings
- Statutory Reviews
- Inter-agency meetings

Acorn Care and Education will co-operate and support all arrangements for external reviews. We will provide written reports in advance of all review meetings to aid and assist discussion and will provide meeting facilities when required to do so.

24. Provisions Made Available by Becca House

As highlighted, all Residential Child Care Workers within the home are responsible for providing and promoting the provision of various developmental aspects in the life of the child/young person, which includes their health, physical needs, emotional security, social experience, sleep,

clothing, and diet. Furthermore, all Residential Child Care Workers and supporting residential staff will ensure that they:

- Develop and sustain a manner of living, which encourages within each child/young person a sense of stability, security, worth and responsibility.
- Positively promote and encourage awareness within each child of intellectual, religious, and cultural matters as part of their overall development plan.
- Develop and maintain a sound professional relationship with the child/young person, based on the principal of mutual respect, and continuous consultation. Staff will ensure that this principle is still maintained even though there may be specific periods where the behaviour of the child/young person may be seen as unacceptable.
- Promote and encourage the understanding, acceptance, and operation of acceptable forms of behaviour amongst every child/young person within Becca House.
- Develop an understanding of the individual needs of each child/young person, whilst encouraging the exchange of views and opinions between the staff and child/young person.

Child/Young Person Participation and Involvement

At Acorn Care and Education, children/young people are encouraged and supported in self-expression. They are encouraged and helped to recognise their rights and responsibilities. In support of the above children/young people are encouraged to participate in weekly House Meetings. House Meetings are designed to allow children to express their views and concerns and to celebrate things that they like or make them happy. Also, children are supported and encouraged to take part in the reviews of their Care and Placement Plans. Many various communication aids are used such as Widget, PEKs, Makaton etc. to enable young people to have a voice.

For children that struggle to participate in the group setting, although they will receive ongoing support and encouragement, regular one to one Key Work sessions allow them to feed into the Acorn Care and Education /Homes decision making processes. Through whatever channel, Acorn Care and Education staff are encouraged and expected to elicit the views of our children and to ensure these are taken into account in the day to day running of our homes.

25. Therapeutic Techniques

A diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder or learning disability does not predict the complex needs and associated behaviours of any individual young person. Our therapeutic environment can provide an opportunity for young people to gradually gain a better understanding of themselves and their needs, wishes, behaviours, strengths and challenges.

It's this environment, together with the multi-disciplinary support we provide, that can make Becca House a suitable residential placement for young people, who on a day-to-day basis have to deal with their own complex needs in the context of a world that can, at times, be very challenging for them.

The care and well-being of the young people we support are paramount and everything we do is to ensure that each young person's best interests are met.

Becca House Statement of Purpose

To keep young people safe there are times when the use of physical interventions may be needed (MAPA). This would be as a last resort to support young people in crisis, to reduce both stress and risk. In such instances, we follow BILD guidance. Acorn Education and Care have BILD accreditation for children's services.

In relation to the therapeutic methods used by staff at the home with regard to the way we work with young people at the home a specialised therapist does not always provide 'therapy'. Purposefully planned intervention is implemented in a structured way to aid the progression of all young people at the Home and any specialist service may incur an additional fee. Such intervention is clearly limited to the identified needs contained within the young person's care plan and any alterations to this plan in regard to the young person's behaviour would automatically result in a change to the method of planned intervention. If necessary, the team are able to access other professionals within the local community, which could also be beneficial to a young person, i.e. Speech therapist, CAMHS, Connexions, and Specialist Schools.

26. Anti-discrimination at Becca House

Becca House is a Child Centred home with its policy, procedural and practice framework designed to promote, in both philosophical and practical terms, the premise that the 'welfare of the child should be the paramount consideration' in any given care situation.

Our company name depicts our view that good, effective and appropriate comprehensive Care can serve to provide for the short or long-term Solutions necessary to block, reverse, prevent or stem those prohibitive and harmful factors that serve to interfere with the healthy and progressive development of our children. We believe that effective, well-planned care arrangements should serve as a Pathway to Independence.

Acorn Education and Care believes that happiness should not be a destination but rather, a journey. Children have the right to enjoy the journey through early life to independence, following a Pathway, underpinned by the following key principles:

All of our children deserve and should be afforded the opportunity to:

- Be as physically and mentally healthy and able as possible
- Enjoy maximum benefit and levels of attainment through good-quality and appropriate educational and developmental opportunities.
- Live in an environment that assures safety and protection from harm
- Feel loved, respected and valued. Be encouraged, guided, motivated and supported through a network of reliable, affectionate and safe relationships.
- Experience and enjoy emotional, mental and physical well-being.
- Feel empowered and enabled to become competent in self-care and everyday living.
- Be encouraged to believe in themselves, through the development and maintenance of positive self-esteem, confidence and respect.
- Have a secure and informed sense of identity, including cultural, racial and gender-based identity.

Becca House Statement of Purpose

- Understand and enjoy a sense of community and citizenship through the development and use of good inter-personal skills and confidence in social settings and opportunities to play a part.
- To understand and enjoy rights and responsibilities and to be able to exercise effectively both principles, both in the care setting and in later life.

Acorn Education and Care firmly believes in its care philosophy, which impacts on and guides all areas of our service provision to every child/young person.